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| LEADER OF THE COUNCIL | DATE 29 November 2019 |
| TITLE Ward Budget – Knit & Natter and Children’s Knitting Group | WARD (S) Charlton |
| CHIEF OFFICER Director of Communities & Environment | CABINET MEMBER Leader of the Council |
| DECISION CLASSIFICATION Non-Key | FINAL DECISION IN THIS REPORT IS TO BE MADE BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL |

I. **Decision required**

- I.1 The Leader is requested to agree the allocation of a one-off payment of £1,008 to support the continuation of the monthly Knit & Natter and Children’s Knitting Group, a free community activity run by the Charlton Central Residents Association.

CHA004 – Knit & Natter and Children’s Knitting Group

The proposal has been submitted by Cllrs. Dillon, Parker and Perks

Signed

Councillor Thorpe, Leader of the Council

Dated

Call-in deadline date

2. **Purpose of Report and Executive Summary**

2.1 Under the Scheme of Delegation and arrangements agreed by Cabinet on 24th July 2018, it falls to the Leader of the Council to agree projects submitted by ward councillors in line with the Ward Budget Scheme.

2.2 In accordance with the Scheme agreed by Cabinet, Ward Budget funding should support initiatives that:

- 1) promote the well-being of the community and which are developed in response to local priorities and/or to meet a need identified from within the Ward;
- 2) look to provide additional funding where community groups are already making efforts to raise funds to support the initiative/project;
- 3) are developed and monitored by local Councillors, making use of their knowledge of local needs and priorities;
- 4) have consensus across a Ward or between Wards; and
- 5) enhance the Council's community leadership role and promote civic pride

The proposal reflects points 1, 3, 4 and 5 listed above.

2.3 The proposal has been put forward by the three Charlton ward councillors to be funded from the Ward Budget Scheme:

The application is seeking £1,008 to fund the venue hire for the Knit & Natter and the children's knitting group, which is run by volunteers of the Charlton Central Residents Association (CCRA). The group, mainly attended by older people, provides a place where members can socialise, take part in a creative activity and contribute towards good causes by donating knits to the local Hospital's Neo-Natal unit and Age UK's charity campaigns. Members also provide a programme of classes for young people where they can learn to knit and engage in creative activity. The funding will enable both groups to continue to meet on a monthly basis, while the CCRA establishes a way to become financially sustainable, in order to meet room hire costs in the future. (Details attached at Appendix A)

3. Links to the Royal Greenwich high level objectives

3.1 This proposal is consistent with the Council's high-level objectives & priorities:

- A Healthier Greenwich
- A Safer Greenwich
- A Great Place to Grow Up
- A Cleaner, Greener Greenwich
- Economic Prosperity for All
- A Great Place to Be

Specifically, this proposal relates to “A Great Place to Be” in terms of supporting the network of invaluable voluntary organisations in reducing loneliness and social isolation amongst the elderly community

4. Introduction and Background

4.1 On 24 July 2018, Cabinet agreed to allocate £530,000 of one off resources to fund a Ward Budget Scheme across the Borough for the duration of the current administration. There are 17 wards in the Borough and each has three Councillors, giving a total of 51 elected members. Each ward will be allocated £30,000 therefore, with £20,000 being set aside for administration costs.

4.2 Proposals for expenditure will be developed and put forward by the ward Councillors and recommendations for projects will go to the Leader of the Council for approval.

4.3 In accordance with the scheme agreed by Cabinet, this proposal is put forward for consideration following receipt of the completed application form from the relevant ward councillors. This form is appended and contains the information required by the scheme.

4.4 The funding in this application is compliant with the eligibility criteria for expenditure as agreed by Cabinet. This proposal specifically provides funding for “community groups are already making efforts to raise funds to support an initiative/project”.

4.5 In accordance with the Scheme agreed by Cabinet, this proposal is put forward following consideration of the Principles and Guidance of the

Scheme, including use of land, planning or other consents and the requirements that there are no on-going revenue costs to the Council.

5. Cross-Cutting Issues and Implications

| Issue | Implications | Sign-off |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Legal including Human Rights Act</p> | <p>Section 1 Localism Act 2011 gives the Council a general power of competence which can be exercised anywhere and in any way, provided that any action is in accordance with any restrictions applying to existing powers that are overlapped by the general power.</p> <p>The proposal(s) included in this report are in line with the key principles and criteria as agreed by the Cabinet.</p> <p>The making of grants is an executive function and it falls to the Leader of the Council (or a person delegated by him in accordance with the Responsibility for Functions section of the Constitution) to agree whether or not projects put forward should be supported under the Ward Budgets Scheme.</p> | <p>John Scarborough, Director of Legal Services, 21st November 2019</p> |
| <p>Finance and other resources including procurement implications</p> | <p>The Director of Finance confirms that to date for the Charlton ward, £9,548 has been committed from the Ward Budget Scheme, including this proposal and that there are sufficient funds for this application.</p> | <p>Joanne Stark Accountancy & Business Change Manager, 19th November 2019</p> |
| <p>Equalities</p> | <p>The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no apparent equality impact on end users.</p> | <p>Jackie Jago, Head of Corporate Services, 19th November 2019</p> |

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6. **Report Appendices**

6.1 The following documents are to be published with and form part of the report:

- *Appendix A: Ward Budget Application*

7. **Background Papers**

Cabinet – 24.07.2018 – Ward Budget Scheme

Report Author: Sarah Murphy
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RBG Ward Budget Scheme

APPLICATION FORM for Councillors

Please complete all fields prior to submission

| | |
|---|---|
| Title of Proposal | Knit & Natter and Children’s Knitting Group |
| Ward(s) | Charlton |
| Proposed by (list all councillors who are proposing) | Linda Perks Gary Parker Gary Dillon |
| Date of Submission | 08/11/2019 |
| Summary of Proposal | <p>Knit and Natter is a monthly social group that gives the older members of the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a place to socialise, • a sense of belonging and • a way to contribute by knitting for charities and teaching children to knit. <p>We are asking you to consider the below funding application for £ 1008 to cover the cost of hall hire so that this successful group can continue.</p> <p><u>The Bid</u></p> <p>Knit and Natter and the Children’s Knitting Group are run by volunteers. Both groups are sponsored by Rowan wool who supply materials, including high quality alpaca and merino wool. This makes our charity knits very special and much sort after.</p> <p>The funding gap is in the hall hire costs. Because of mobility issues with some members the group we have traditionally met in our local church hall. St Richard’s Hall is a 1950’s scout hut but provides the group with step free access and wheelchair toilet facilities. The group meet once a month for a two hours session and then knit at home in between the formal meetings. In addition, the hall is used for one hour for the children’s session. Originally CCRA provided ‘start up’ money to initiate the group.</p> |

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|---|---|-------------------------------|---------------------------|-------|---|---------------------------|--------------|-------------|--|-------|
| | <p>Last year the hall hire cost doubled and it is now beyond the means of CCRA to fund the knitting group. With most members on pensions self-financing is not viable.</p> <p>The K&N group are therefore asking you to fund the group for the coming two years. During this time, we hope to not only sustain and grow the current group but establish sustainable way to cover the hall hire cost in the future.</p> <p>The K&N are hoping to secure the following:</p> <table data-bbox="497 459 1441 622"> <tr> <td>Hall hire for Knit and Natter</td> <td>£28 per month x 24 months</td> <td>£ 672</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hall hire for Children’s Knitting Group</td> <td>£14 per month x 24 months</td> <td><u>£ 336</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total grant</td> <td></td> <td>£1008</td> </tr> </table> <p>For only £42 per month this project</p> <ul data-bbox="549 719 1390 1093" style="list-style-type: none"> • counters social isolation, • links different generations, • builds community, • profits local organisations through the charity knits • helps finance the only community space within the CCRA area and • empowers children. <p>We hope that you can see the value in supporting K&N.</p> | Hall hire for Knit and Natter | £28 per month x 24 months | £ 672 | Hall hire for Children’s Knitting Group | £14 per month x 24 months | <u>£ 336</u> | Total grant | | £1008 |
| Hall hire for Knit and Natter | £28 per month x 24 months | £ 672 | | | | | | | | |
| Hall hire for Children’s Knitting Group | £14 per month x 24 months | <u>£ 336</u> | | | | | | | | |
| Total grant | | £1008 | | | | | | | | |
| Proposed Start and End Date of Project | December 2019 – November 2021 | | | | | | | | | |
| Grant Amount requested | £1008 | | | | | | | | | |
| Details of group(s) who would receive funding | The financial regulation of the grant would be through CCRA who have an agreed constitution, AGM, elected officers (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) and have annually audited accounts. They have successfully delivered three RBG Ward Budget grants for Playing Out (£900), Community Greening (£985), and Community Safety: No Caller Caller/Rogue Traders Zone (£740) | | | | | | | | | |
| Please confirm there are no ongoing revenue costs to the Council by clicking the box | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | |
| Funding streams (organisations and amounts) contributing to the initiative | Rowan Wool – sponsors wool (see above) | | | | | | | | | |

Intended Benefits and outcomes of the initiative

Please include information on the groups/communities that will benefit and the outcomes that will be delivered through the grant.

Background

“As the UK’s population rapidly ages, the issue of acute loneliness and social isolation is one of the biggest challenges facing our society.”¹

Social interaction and a sense of belonging are important for all people. However, they are particularly important to older people who have an increased risk of loneliness and social isolation. Half on the two million people over 75 who live on their own in England go for a month without speaking to a friend or family member². Loneliness and social isolation in later life are not only personal problems. Both can lead to additional, preventative costs to the NHS. Older people who live alone are more likely to go to A&E and the GP than those who live with others³. In addition, more have depression and other mental health conditions.

The Knit and Natter (K&N) Group

Three years ago, CCRA set up a Knit and Natter group to bring together local women (and more recently men) to form a social network. Whilst the group originally focussed on knitting, some members now come to the group just for the ‘natter’ and social interaction. The group has been very successful and has genuinely reached its target demographic being largely attended by women over 65 with the most regular attendees being in their 80s. The group is representative of our area’s racial composition and bring together those from very different backgrounds, religions and cultures.

One of the big successes of the group has been the establishment of community involvement outside of the formal group sessions. Members of the group keep in touch and look out for each other with younger members of the group making social calls on those more elderly, having cups of tea together, helping them with shopping and other domestic tasks. This helps to foster social cohesion and reduce social isolation.

The K&N group specialise in charity knits and have a special relationship with the local hospital; Queen Elizabeth Woolwich. The group knit exclusively for the neo-natal unit and make regular gifts of incubator and cot blankets, hats, mitts and special toys.

In addition to supporting the neo-natal unit the group contribute to other good causes such as Age UK’s Innocent Smoothie campaigns, knitting little hats for juice bottles which raises money to support elderly people experiencing winter fuel and food poverty.

More recently some members of the Knit and Natter group have started teaching local children to knit. The children love coming to the group. Learning a new skill and practising it at home gives them confidence, independence and a sense of achievement. The children’s knitting group will be promoted by Fossdene school to their pupils and via the CCRA communication channels, including an article in The Grapevine and promoting the knitting group during the fortnightly Playing Out sessions, to spread the word amongst families whose children attend different local schools.

¹ <https://www.scie.org.uk/publications/ataglance/ataglance60.asp>

² <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/loneliness-in-older-people/>

³ <https://www.health.org.uk/news-and-comment/news/older-people-living-alone-are-50-more-likely-to-visit-ae-than-those-who-live-with>

Declarations of Interest

If any of the Members putting forward this application have connections/relationships with the organisation(s) receiving funding (e.g. member of the management committee, governor) please indicate below.

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|--------------------------|-----|
| Councillor's name | N/A |
| Organisation | |
| Connection/ relationship | |

Consents and Permissions

Please indicate below any permissions or consents that are required to progress this application and whether these have been granted (this includes relevant Council Departments)

| Permission needed | From Where | Date | Agreed (yes or no) |
|-------------------|------------|------|--------------------|
| N/A | | | |

Health and Safety Implications

Please indicate below if there are any health and safety issues that need to be considered as part of the proposal and whether these have been acted upon.

- Step free access to the hall and toilets: solved by choice of venue who provides both

Safeguarding Implications

Please indicate below if there are any safeguarding that need to be considered as part of the proposal and whether these have been acted upon.

N/A