

Date of Meeting: 21<sup>st</sup> April 2022

## Brookfield Community Garden – National Lottery grant application

### 1. Purpose of Report

To consider proposals for the application of a grant to the National Lottery to fund a part time fixed term contract employee to project manage the Community Garden at Brookfield.

### 2. Background

Over 12 months ago the Town Council agreed to provide an allotment free of charge to a group of volunteers with the vision to create a growing for health community garden which enabled volunteers from Sustainable Nantwich, Friends of Brookfield Park and allotment holders to begin the transformation of the allotment space into a community growing hub.

In April 2022 the Town Council resolved:

- a) that the Town Clerk would proceed with the grant application and would be responsible for the distribution of the grant
- b) that the position would be self-employed and managed by the Town Council.

The first stage of the National Lottery Grant application was made and has been successful. The Town Council has now been invited to submit the detailed grant application form which if successful would attract £35,000.

### 3. Considerations

During a meeting with the Funding Officer from the National Lottery the Town Clerk advised that the Town Council had voted not to host the Part-Time Project Coordinator due to the risks involved in employment, and that the council were therefore looking to pass the funding for this role on to another organisation that would be willing to host the role, identifying Wishing Well as a potential organisation to do this. The Clerk was advised that this approach would not be possible.

The Funding Officer advised that one of the most attractive aspects of the idea presented to the National Lottery was that a new, local, grassroots organisation had the support and backing of the Town Council and their skills and expertise. In going forward with an application to the National Lottery it is vital that all parties are in agreement to the proposal and the responsibilities that would attach to any funding if it was awarded. The National Lottery cannot fund an organisation, for them to hand it over to another organisation to deliver because the original organisation is not willing/able to assume responsibility for an employed role.

There are some circumstances, such as in a partnership application, where the lead applicant can receive all the funding to then give elements of it out to other named partners of the project if there was a clear and reasonable justification for this partnership work, and that the partner organisations (including the lead applicant) were the right partners to deliver the project. In a partnership application however the main/lead organisation still maintains responsibility under the terms and conditions of the award.

The Funding Officer advised that the options for moving forward with the current application are:

1. keep the application as it is, and take the option of Nantwich Town Council to host the Project Coordinator back to Council Members to be voted on again, and see if the Councillors change their decision – therefore continuing with the application (We could then get it to a later Panel e.g. October)
2. withdraw the application since Nantwich Town Council are not in support of hosting the Project Coordinator role (option for another organisation to apply in the future for the project instead)
3. GHCG CIC take over as lead partner and Nantwich Town Council remove themselves from the proposal – this could present some difficulty given the recent registration of GHCG CIC and their lack of a track record. As well as the difficulty that they have confirmed they are not skilled or equipped to employ staff at this stage in their development. This option would be unlikely to be successful at a decision-making panel.

The Standing Orders of the Town Council state that “a resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least ( 6 ) councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee”. The Town Council made the original resolution April 2022 so a six-month period has now lapsed and so does not prevent the Council from changing the original resolution.

#### **4. Recommendations**

- 4.1 That members reconsider the position of the town council following the advice provided by the Nation Lottery Funding Officer.
- 4.2 That members approve the completion of the second stage of the grant application.
- 4.3 That the Town Council act as the employer for the appointed fixed term project manager if the grant funding is successful.

#### **5. Financial Implications**

There would be no direct employee costs as these would be covered by the grant funding. In addition, should the employee have extended sick leave they would only be entitled to the following sick pay:

From commencement but less than 4 full months' service; one month's full pay;

After completing 4 full months' service but less than 2 full years' service; one month's full pay and 2 months' half pay.

In the unlikely event that an employment tribunal is required the Town Council has Employment Tribunal Indemnity Insurance through the HR Consultants which will cover all legal fees. It will also cover an agreed settlement and any awards that need to be honoured after the tribunal.

## **6. Equalities Impact**

The project if successful, is aimed at all ages and abilities and those from marginalized groups including patients referred by NHS partners.

## **7. Personnel Implications**

The Town Council would act as the employer providing the appointed applicant with the assurance of a good employer with the relevant policies and procedures in place.

## **8. Environmental implications**

The project will contribute to community resilience, with improved sustainability and carbon footprint.

## **9. Consultation**

n/a

**Report Author:** Samantha Roberts – Town Clerk