



Older Persons Sub Committee

Date: 17th November 2022

Title: 55UP Project Budget Report

Purpose of the Report:

To provide updates on current budget for Older Persons Project

Contact Officer:

Nina Bailey, Cultural and Economic Support Officer

Corporate Objective/s	55UP Project- seeking to tackle loneliness and isolation with older people in the community	
Implications:		
Financial	Yes	To consider the future budget of the programme
Human Resources	No	
Operational/Service delivery	No	
Procedural/Legal	No	
Risk/Health and Safety	No	
Environmental Aims	No	

1 RECOMMENDATION/S

Should the Committee be minded, the proposals are:

- 1.1 To approve suggestion to continue to ringfence £15,000 initially allocated to tablet lending scheme for 55UP project so unallocated budget is £18,604.40.
- 1.2 To note future funding considerations for the 55UP project, including ending of current Citizens Online contract and further potential projects to support changes to adult day care provision and tackling isolation in older men.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Older Persons Project was allocated £80,000 from the 2021-2026 Leighton- Linslade Town Council 5 Year Financial Plan. This was based on some initial scoping work for a range of projects and for delivery over two financial years.
- 2.2 The funding for the Older Persons Project was split between areas of focus: Digital Inclusion (creating digital skills support and a tablet lending scheme), Creation of a Directory (online and print for older people), Visual Identity (creating the 55UP brand) and Direct Support for Local Groups (two rounds of grant applications).
- 2.3 Several aspects of the Older Persons Project came in under budget, including hosting costs for the Leighton-Linslade Helping Hands website, the tablet lending scheme, design of the 55UP Town Council website page and 55UP visual branding.
- 2.4 The decision was taken not to pursue the interactive online directory due to concerns with staff hours to create/upkeep, so focus was put onto updating existing directories and the continued publication of the “Yellow Booklet” (information booklet for older people). Therefore, the £10,700 allocated became available for other aspects of the 55UP programme.
- 2.5 The two rounds of grant schemes that took place between 2021-2022 were very successful and oversubscribed, with an overspend of £1,014,59. This expenditure was able to be absorbed through unallocated funds within the budget.
- 2.5 In July 2022, there was £11,780.40 of unallocated funding. The decision was taken by the Older Persons Subcommittee to use £8,176 of this fund to finance the Town Council’s Community Agent project from September 2022- March 2023, also part of the 55UP programme (funding for the remainder of this pilot scheme was allocated through a specific earmarked reserve).
- 2.6 From August 2022, this left £3,604.40 of unallocated funds within the Older Persons budget, plus £15,000 allocated to a possible digital tablet loan scheme.

3 PROPOSAL

- 3.1 As outlined in a separate report, a tablet lending scheme is currently being finalised between Citizens Online (charity organisation providing the Town Council's Digital Skills Programme) and Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) You can do IT scheme. The charity has funding to provide tablets and routers for residents across Bedfordshire without access to the internet. Through working with the BRCC, the tablet lending scheme will incur no additional costs to the Town Council.
- 3.2 It is suggested to Councillors that the £15,000 allocated to the tablet lending scheme is moved into the unallocated budget and is used towards other aspects of the 55UP programme.
- 3.3 This would mean that there would be £18,604.40 of unallocated funds within the Older Persons budget. This is currently part of an earmarked reserve (9507/925) for "Projects – older/young persons".

4 FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 The Sub-Committee may wish to consider possible projects beyond the scope of what has already been agreed, including:
- Potential to continue the digital support helpline once the initial two-year contract with Citizens Online terminates on 31st October 2023
 - Exploring any potential to support/complement the planned changes to Adult Day Care Support within Leighton-Linslade Parish with the closure of Duncombe Drive Day Centre and the opening of Marigold House
 - Potential further projects to help to tackle loneliness and isolation in older men, eg. A 'Men in Sheds' project
- 4.2 In addition to the continued ringfencing of the allocated earmarked reserve funding, the Sub-Committee may wish to consider making recommendations to the Cultural & Economic Services Committee in its review of revenue budget arrangements for 2023-24.

End.