

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**Decision Report**

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Policy and Resources
Date:	13 June 2012
Title:	Update on Corporate Grants Project
Reference:	3918
Report From:	Chief Executive

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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this paper is to provide an update on the new Corporate grants process and the implementation of a new and modernised process for 2012/13.
- 1.2. The project went “live” across the whole organisation on 26 April 2012. Applicants can now apply for a grant to all County Council grant streams via the new streamlined e-application forms, including Members devolved grants, which opened on 4 May. Full details about all available grants including criteria, application guidance notes and the link to the new e-forms are available on the updated Hantsweb grants page (<http://www.hants.gov.uk/grants.htm>).
- 1.3. Officers now manage the grants process using the new database. All financial information relating to grants from 2012/13 will be held in the system.
- 1.4. Whilst the new streamlined arrangements provide for greater consistency and uniformity across our grants operations, there has purposely been no change to Member governance.
- 1.5. A key element of the project has been to improve the customer experience and this has been achieved by having consistent application forms and a simplified threshold for documents needed to support applications with submission only required once per annum. Representatives from the Community Voluntary Sector were involved in several stages of the project development and very much support the new modernised grants process.

2. Contextual information

- 2.1. Grant budgets recently approved as part of the 2012/13 County Council budget process exceed £9 million.
- 2.2. The new standardised grants process involves just two application forms, a shorter length application for grants up to and including £1,000 and a standard length one for grants over £1,000. Applicants will be encouraged to apply electronically so that management information is automatically uploaded into a new grants database. Two of the grants in the next Agenda item have been submitted electronically.
- 2.3. The grants database will be developed to automatically link with SAP (with appropriate safeguards built in) to enable grant payments either as one offs, or as a series of staged payments to be made. The automated payment system will be more efficient and eliminate the current manual processes used across departments.
- 2.4. A range of management reports are currently being built which will enable Members and officers to receive financial information by grant stream, equalities type data, information about organisations, applications awaiting approval, unsuccessful applications etc. Members will be sent quarterly reports showing grant activity for their District area, together with a report showing their individual devolved grant activity.
- 2.5. Training on the new grants system has been delivered to a number of officers and to those Members who have taken up the offer. In addition, detailed guidance notes have been created to help officers and Members use the new system.

3. Other Issues

- 3.1. Work continues to complete “behind the scenes” system work within IT. This is primarily in relation to the development of management reports and the automatic link to SAP for grant payment purposes.
- 3.2. Feedback is being captured from applicants, Members and grant officers, and will be used to ensure the new system continues to meet user requirements and expectations.
- 3.3. Training has been provided for a large number of officers and is still available for those who have not yet received training, and for Members.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1. To endorse the progress made on the Corporate grants project and note that the new e-application process has become operational across the whole organisation from 26 April 2012.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	No
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Maximising well-being:	No
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Enhancing our quality of place:	No
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
OR	
This proposal does not link to the Corporate Strategy but, nevertheless, is being reported to provide an update on the Corporate grants project.	

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:**1. Equalities Impact Assessment:**

1.1. There is no adverse affect regarding equalities. Applicants now have a choice of applying for grants electronically or in paper from. Details of all grants are now available in one place on the Council's website, and there is a consistent, modern and streamlined approach across all departments.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

2.1. There is no adverse impact on crime and disorder.

3. Climate Change:

a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

The modernisation of the grants process and move towards e-processes will reduce the amount of paper used.

b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts? N/A