

Report of:	Executive Member for Environment and Finance & Governance: Councillor Barrie Cooper Director of Environment and Community Services: Geoff Field
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Submitted to:	Executive - Tuesday 5 October 2021
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Subject:	Community Environmental Initiatives - To support community environmental initiatives to aid improved local environmental standards
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Summary

Proposed decision(s)
That Executive approve the proposal for the ask of £150,000 revenue (£50,000 per annum over three years) to support Community involvement in wide reaching Environmental Initiatives, to improve local environmental standards across their communities and across Middlesbrough.

Report for:	Key decision:	Confidential:	Is the report urgent? ¹
Decision	Yes, impacts two or more wards	No	No

Contribution to delivery of the 2020-23 Strategic Plan		
Business	Place	People
It will support the Councils Strategic plan, Green Strategy and locality working.	The Proposal does not directly impact on the Councils Physical Regeneration strategic objectives. However it looks to support and encourage more Community Groups and Volunteers on improving open spaces and the wider Environment, having a positive impact on the local environment	It supports the Strategic Plan as we will be working with communities and other public services to improve the lives of our residents.

¹ Remove for non-Executive reports

Ward(s) affected

The proposal impacts across all wards

What is the purpose of this report?

1. To seek approval from the executive on the funding of ancillary equipment and support to assist Community and Volunteer initiatives throughout Middlesbrough.

Why does this report require a Member decision?

2. The proposal affects more than two wards and therefore is considered a key decision requiring approval by the Executive.

Report Background

3. Community Groups and Volunteers provide important additional Environmental support to the councils services and are increasingly valued. Their work is integral to keeping Middlesbrough's environment to a good standard and further encouraging community participation.
4. This is especially important as Middlesbrough moves forward on its green agenda, striving to reaching carbon neutrality and increasing the level of bio diversity of the Town. Supporting community involvement and engaging with them in the wide reaching Environmental Initiatives, is fundamental to enhance and to continue the great work that they do. The authority need to further acknowledge and support these efforts and shared way we can to improve local environmental standards across our communities within Middlesbrough.
5. The supportive approach is leading to a growing numbers of volunteers, who are now networking with each other, leading to far reaching linked projects across the town. As well as promoting the groups projects/initiatives via social media, we can offer resource assistance by way of purchasing and holding a stock of consumable supplies so that these groups can readily access tools, equipment and technical support to deliver initiatives which are of benefit to the Environment, improving aesthetics and the well-being of residents.
6. Key milestones are to be incorporated into the plan, to enable a measurement of performance against the intended outcomes:
 - Develop a communications and marketing plan
 - Develop an education plan to raise awareness of responsible waste management and recycling
 - Develop a plan to work with Community Groups and Volunteers
 - To provide continual support and provision of equipment as required.

What decision(s) are being asked for?

7. That Executive approve a spend of £150,000 (£50,000 per annum over three years) to provide adequate support to ensure Community Groups and Volunteers have the right training, guidance and equipment to safely carry out their activities.

Why is this being recommended?

8. The proposed changes would support the Councils commitment to working with our communities and partners to ensure that we share ideas and resources to achieve our joint goals.

It will also go toward meeting our aims in our 2020-2023 Strategic Plan:

- People working with communities and other public services to improve the lives of our residents.
- We will work with communities to improve local health and wellbeing, focusing in particular on tackling obesity, poor mental health and substance misuse.
- We will work with local communities to redevelop Middlesbrough's disadvantaged estates, and introduce locality working with our partners, placing services at the heart of communities.

Other potential decisions and why these have not been recommended

9. To not supply equipment, advice and support to Community and Volunteer Groups is not an option. It would impact on our green agenda and groups would lose heart and faith in the authority and eventually lose interest in improving Middlesbrough.

Impact(s) of recommended decision(s)

Legal

10. There are no legal implications.

Financial

11. There would need to be an allocation from the MTFP of £150,000, (£50,000 p.a as from 2021/22).

Policy Framework

12. The report sets out a proposal in accordance with the Council's approach to the delivery of efficient services.

Equality and Diversity

13. An Impact Assessment has been carried out

Risk

14. The risk is that if the proposal is not accepted then there would be a steady decline in Community Groups and volunteers in turn having a detrimental impact on standards throughout Middlesbrough.
15. We would not be aspiring to a greener Middlesbrough in line with our emerging Green Strategy and therefore not meet the Mayors ambition of ensuring our town is an absolute leader on environmental issues.

Environmental

16. If the proposal is agreed there will be a number of environmental benefits:

- A reduction in litter and fly tipping across the town
- Improve the Environment, helping local wildlife to thrive.
- Will contribute toward the Councils emerging Green Strategy.
- Will support the Councils aim to become Net Carbon Neutral by 2029
- Will improve the community ownership of their areas
- Increased awareness of Environmental benefits.

Actions to be taken to implement the decision(s)

17. Agree to approve the proposal

18. A Communication, Marketing & Education campaign will be undertaken informing residents of the drive/campaign and how they can contribute.

19. To link this with colleagues in Stronger Communities so as it is picked up through the Locality working initiative.

Appendices

20. Equality impact assessment.

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