



Report to	Finance & Policy Committee
Subject	Living with Covid grant
Purpose	Information/Decision
Classification	Unrestricted
Meeting date	16th May 2022
Item number	11
Written By	Cathy Whitaker CLERK

Summary: This report outlines a suggestion for a Town Council application for a Suffolk Growth project – “Living with COVID” grant.

1. Provides a background of the grant and criteria.
2. Suggests a NTC application.

1.	Introduction
a.	Living with Covid Town Centre Grant 2022 funding is open to local authorities, town councils and business improvement districts in Suffolk.
2.	Context
a.	Several awards of £8,000 each approximately will be made across the county to cover costs associated with activity and protective action in town centres that support the transition of approaches to “living with Covid” and help prevent the potential spread of Covid over the autumn and winter periods.
3.	Proposal/Options
a.	This Christmas will be the first Winter Event that the council has done since the pandemic, having cancelled the 2020 event and held minimalistic, but successful, activities in 2021 at the Bill Tutte Memorial area. Returning to some normality, this grant would enable a safe return to our traditional outdoor winter event.
b.	Ice Rink entertainment has been done in the past and was very popular with adults and children. A larger area would assist in the Covid-safeness of the event.
4.	Financial/Resource Implications
a.	The rink is £10,000. Suggest applying for a 50% grant towards this to enable a viable option for the Town Council.
b.	The current year budget for the Winter Event is £8K. There is also £6K in the EMR from previous years’ Winter Events.
5.	Next Steps/Recommendations
a.	To approve an application by NTC for a £5K grant for our Winter Event from the Living with Covid Suffolk Growth grant.

Suffolk Growth project call: Town Centre support grant (2022):

“Living with COVID”

Made possible by the award of Control Outbreak Management Funding (COMF) by Suffolk Public Health, Suffolk Growth is launching the Town Centre Support Grant (2022) “Living with COVID”. Suffolk Growth is seeking to invest COMF funding of around £80k across Suffolk town centre projects led by Local Authority, Town Council or BIDs that support good practice and promote protective actions in “Living with COVID”.

What types of projects do we want to support?

The focus of the Town Centre Support Grant 2022 is to enable town centre project activity that builds on the learning of good practice across the period of the pandemic. We are looking to support projects that enable local communities to transition to “live with COVID” in their town centres.

While COVID legal restrictions have largely been removed or very limited this year, we want our town centres to take on board learning and apply this in adaptive practice and action that will support town centre resilience and recovery.

We are keen to support

- Projects enabling more **outdoor activity**, events and festivals and an extension of the local and visitor economy footfall over the autumn and winter period from September 2022 to March 2023.
- Projects that support “living with COVID” practice across **service areas most impacted from previous outbreaks**, for example the visitor economy, events, festivals and leisure or cultural venues.
- Approaches that support consumer confidence to **re-engage with town centre activity safely**, particularly communities most impacted by COVID restrictions.

In addition, eligible activities could include (but are not limited to):

- Provision of street furniture that enables outdoor socialisation safely
- Development or provision of active travel (walking and cycling) facilities, one-way walking routes and wayfinding through town centres
- Extension of outdoor event support facilities or event marquees
- Improvements to town centre outdoor market facilities and equipment
- Improvements to promote good “living with Covid” practices or equipment at council operated or Council supported facilities including for example, small ventilation adaptations, or supporting digital or contactless initiatives

Who can apply? The fund is open to local authorities, town councils and business improvement districts (BIDs) across Suffolk. We would encourage lead organisations to liaise with local partners and add value where possible through match funding or aligned projects.

Timescale: applications must be received by **1st July 2022, 5pm and awards will be announced on 15th July 2022**. We would expect projects to be delivered between **September 2022 – March 2023**. While projects do not need to conclude at this point, some agreed measurable project outcomes will be required for reporting.

Funds: Awards of grants between **£5,000 - £10,000** will be made to cover costs associated with activity and protective action in our town centres that supports the transition of approaches to “living with COVID”.

We anticipate funding between **5 – 10** projects. If the fund is significantly over-subscribed with eligible, high-quality projects we will consider part funding applications.

Conditions of grant: Full conditions of grants will be provided to successful applications, but will include requirements:

- to acknowledge Suffolk Growth Partnership and Suffolk Public Health (COMF) alongside project related media & communications.
- to complete and return a brief summary evaluation report by 31st March 2023 (template to be provided) providing details of the impact of the grant funded activity and learning to share from the activity.
- to integrate with other town centre / local funding programmes where appropriate.

Application form

Please complete the application form available via funding@suffolkgrowth.co.uk

Please note the fully completed application form should be no more than 2 sides of A4 (12-point font).

The Suffolk Growth team would be pleased to discuss plans with colleagues along with outline project plans.

info@suffolkgrowth.co.uk