

North Yorkshire County Council

Executive Member for Climate Change and Customer Engagement

3rd March 2022

Funding offer from Arts Council England Libraries Improvement Fund

Report of the Corporate Director - Strategic Resources

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To authorise the acceptance of an offer for external funding of £200,000 from Arts Council England Libraries Improvement Fund

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Libraries Improvement Fund was announced by Arts Council England in May 2021 as part of a programme by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS), which was originally announced in 2019, but put on hold owing to the pandemic. The fund is administered by Arts Council England providing grants to upgrade their facilities to better serve their local communities. Grants could be used to refurbish a library to create flexible spaces for local people, suitable for delivering cultural events and health and wellbeing classes, or it could support the improvement of library buildings by purchasing furniture or equipment. An application was submitted for Scarborough Library and an offer letter of a grant has now been received by the council.

3.0 Issues

- 3.1 A decision is required to accept the grant of £200,000 towards the internal refurbishment of Scarborough Library. This grant will fund additional work to be undertaken to supplement previously agreed plans to enable the creation of a modern, multi-use library with much needed improvements to the public facing elements of the building enabling us to attract a wider range of customers and increase opportunities for partnerships and co-production to make the library more sustainable.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The offer is for a capital grant of £200,000. This grant is in addition to previously agreed plans budgeted at £250,000 from reserves and enables a more significant internal refurbishment. Property Services have been involved as some minor building works are included, and these were costed prior to submitting the grant application to the Arts Council.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 A Subsidy control assessment has been undertaken, and no subsidy arises from NYCC accepting this grant.
- 5.2 A compliant procurement process will be undertaken to spend the grant monies in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

6.0 Risk Management Implications

6.1 A full risk assessment has been undertaken.

7.0 Environmental Impacts/Benefits

7.1 The Service is attentive to environmental issues and all tenders (including that for library shelving) have key questions on environmental responsibility.

8.0 Equalities Impact/benefits

8.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken and no detrimental impact identified.

18.0 Recommendation(s)

18.1 Following consultation with the Corporate Director - Strategic Resources, and the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services), the NYCC Executive Member for Climate Change and Customer Engagement is asked to authorise the NYCC Corporate Director - Strategic Resources to accept the Libraries Improvement Fund grant.

Gary Fielding
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24th February 2022

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Background Documents: None

Appendices:

None