Purpose
To consider applications for Neighbourhood Grants

Recommendations
To RESOLVE that Neighbourhood grants are allocated as follows:

(a) Chessington Cricket Club  £750
(b) Lower Mole Countryside Trust  £324

Key Points

A. The South of the Borough Neighbourhood Committee has a grants budget of £4,500 for 2015/16. For the remainder of the 2015/16 financial year, Neighbourhood Committees can award grants up to £750 towards the costs of projects or activities run by voluntary organisations in the area.

B. Application (a) has been received from Chessington Cricket Club for £750 to provide quality coaching for the colts (young cricketers) section from September 2015 to March 2016. The organisation has provided a detailed financial breakdown of how the money will be spent as well as accounts for the year ended 31 December 2014. It is recommended that the full amount requested of £750 is awarded.

C. Application (b) has been received from the Lower Mole Countryside Trust for £324 to install a kissing gate to improve access to the boundary of Castle Hill Local Nature Reserve and Scheduled Ancient Monument. The organisation has provided a detailed financial breakdown of how the money will be spent as well as accounts for the year ended 31 August 2014. It is recommended that the full amount requested of £324 is awarded.

Context

1. For the remainder of the 2015/16 financial year, subject to the criteria listed below, the Committee can decide to award grant aid where an activity is of direct benefit to the residents of the Neighbourhood in terms of social welfare, sports, art, play and leisure activities, youth provision or environmental improvement, particularly where it meets priorities set out in the Neighbourhood Community Plan.

2. From 1 April 2016 Neighbourhood Grants will be replaced by a Neighbourhood Ward Councillors Fund. Details on this fund and how it will work are currently being developed and further information will be provided in due course.
3. The criteria for this Neighbourhood’s grants are as follows:

   (a) South of the Borough Neighbourhood encourages applications that contribute towards the priorities identified in the Neighbourhood Community Plan.

   (b) The Committee is keen to prioritise applications for new activities, but will consider repeat applications where the organisation can demonstrate that their project delivers significant community benefit and can provide evidence of efforts to fundraise and/or apply for grants from elsewhere.

   (c) In any case, organisations should provide evidence of their fundraising/match funding plans as part of their application to ensure the best value for money possible for any Neighbourhood Grant contribution.

   (d) Organisations that are linked to larger, national organisations should indicate, as part of their application, the annual accounts of the national organisation and explain why these cannot be used to fund local projects. They should also detail how many paid staff they employ.

   (e) Organisations should normally identify their exit strategy as part of any application to demonstrate their sustainability and not rely on continued grant funding from the Council.

   (f) Where an organisation has applied for, or is in receipt of, an RBK Corporate Grant, they would be unlikely to be given a high priority for a Neighbourhood Grant.

   (g) Cross-Neighbourhood applications will be considered, but only where the significant proportion of beneficiaries are resident in the South of the Borough Neighbourhood. Other Neighbourhoods may be approached to support their residents benefiting from the same project.

   (h) The Neighbourhood Committee decision on all grant applications is final.

   (i) The maximum grant for each group or organisation is £750.

**Neighbourhood Grant Applications**

(a) **Chessington Cricket Club**

   Grant request: £750

4. Chessington Cricket Club, an unincorporated association with a constitution, was formed in 1919 and is affiliated to the English and Welsh Cricket Board. Located in Leatherhead Road, Chessington, the Club’s main activities are to organise opportunities to play and learn cricket and to provide social opportunities associated with club membership. Chessington Cricket Club separates the different age groups’ cricket practice nights to optimise the coaches available, get best use of the nets facilities and reduce overcrowding on the pitch.

5. Chessington Cricket Club has 130 members/users, with age ranges from seven to 70. Approximately 75% of members come from South of the Borough Neighbourhood, 10% are from outside the borough and 5% come from Maldens and Coombe, 5% from Kingston Town and 5% from Surbiton Neighbourhood.
Chessington Cricket Club has no paid staff, 13 volunteers and 16 members on the management committee which meets monthly.

The grant request for £750 is towards providing quality coaching for the Colts (young cricketers) section through the close season, which runs from September to March, to help raise standards, to raise the Club’s profile and draw in more participants.

The Chessington Cricket Club Colts section has been running for over 30 years and has evolved and developed considerably during this period, while always maintaining its aim simply to make cricket fun. There are approximately 60 young players who will benefit from the coaching - Colts (the U13’s, U14’s and U15’s) who train on Monday nights, and the U9’s, U10’s, U11’s and U12’s who train on Tuesday evenings, also from 6.30pm until 8.30pm. Chessington Cricket Club offers an open 'drop in' policy to encourage youth cricketers of any age or standard to join in at these training sessions.

Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2014 show an income of £31,941.04 against expenditure of £28,953.08, leaving a surplus of £2,987.96 and a year end balance of £7,166.32. Income consisted mainly of sponsorship/grants/donations (£8,045), subscriptions (£7,146 - including Colts subscriptions of £3,280), adult match fees (£6,839.65) and a rebate from HMRC (£5,077.74). Expenditure consisted mainly of grounds maintenance (10,134), teas (£4,471), RGC pitch hire (£3,300), sight screens (£2,964) and overseas expenses (£2,500). The organisation has no reserves per se. It has an income that has to match its on-going expenditures and strives to maintain the provision without over-drawing the general account.

The projected budget for the close season Colts coaching shows income of £200 against anticipated expenditure of £1,030, leaving a shortfall of £830. Income is expected from fees (£200) whilst expenditure is projected to be on equipment purchase (£500), premises hire (£450), coaching course (£50) and publicity (£30). Chessington Cricket Club will also be fund-raising, applying for sponsorship and approaching Surrey CCC, who match funded RBK's grant towards new sight screens last year.

Chessington Cricket Club received an Emerging Needs and New Initiatives Grant of £500 in 2014/15 towards new sight screens and a South of the Borough Neighbourhood Grant of £750 in 2013/14 towards the cost of providing increased coaching opportunities, particularly for young players.

Officer’s report

Chessington Cricket Club has built up a strong Colts section over many years and works closely with several local schools - including Chessington Community College, St Phillip’s School and Shrewsbury House - to continue to promote sport and increase participation levels in cricket in the neighbourhood.

This application contributes to the Kingston Plan Objectives, particularly Objective 8 (Improve overall health and reduce health inequalities) and Objective 10 (Encourage people to take an active part in the social and cultural life in the community). Chessington Cricket Club also addresses South of the Borough Community Plan objectives, especially for Community and Health, as well as for Sport and Leisure.
14. The Club always welcomes new players and members of all ages but with an emphasis on recruiting junior, “Colt”, players. The coaching investment will allow greater community outreach work to encourage new players to go along to the Club and try cricket (for some it will be the first time). Indoor facilities enable players to improve their techniques and develop at the start of the season and for the less confident junior members there is a Saturday’s 4’s team which introduces them to adult cricket.

15. A grant of £750 is recommended towards the cost of providing quality coaching for young cricketers to help raise the Club’s profile and hopefully draw in more participants.

16. Grants are expected to be used within one year of the award and a monitoring form returned confirming how the grant has been used.

RECOMMENDATION

A grant of £750

(b) Lower Mole Countryside Trust

Grant request: £324

17. The Lower Mole Countryside Trust, formed in 2002, is a charity and limited company. Its main activities are to promote and support high quality countryside management including that carried out by the Lower Mole Countryside Management Project and its volunteers. Working closely with the Lower Mole Project, local authorities and community groups, activities take place in Kingston, Epsom and Ewell, Elmbridge and Mole Valley. The Lower Mole Countryside Trust has 64 local members of all ages but no data is collected on where they come from. The project is based in the South of the Borough Neighbourhood and is open for local people to enjoy.

18. Lower Mole Countryside Trust is run by a management committee of eight which meets every two months. The Trust has no staff or volunteers of its own but works closely with the Lower Mole Countryside Management Project who has about 50 volunteers.

19. The grant request for £324 is towards installing a kissing gate to improve access to and prevent fly tipping and motorcycles on the boundary of Castle Hill Local Nature Reserve and Scheduled Ancient Monument. The work is scheduled to take place in October 2015.

20. Accounts for the year ended 31 August 2014 show an income of £13,885.56 against expenditure of £17,393.28 leaving a year end deficit of £3,507.72 and a balance of £16,341.65. On 18 May 2015 the charity had a total of £8,808.17 in restricted and designated funds which include reserves of £2,000 held for two years expenses.

21. Projected expenditure of the project totals £324, which consists of £219 for the metal gate and posts, £69 for posts and rails for the kissing gate box and £36 for volunteer expenses. There is no projected income apart from the RBK grant and no other funding is being sought for this project.

22. Lower Mole Countryside Trust received a South of the Borough Neighbourhood Grant of £655 in 2014/15 towards the cost of environmental improvements at Winey Hill Public Open Space and £750 in 2013/14 towards a fence along the boundary between Jubilee Wood Local Nature Reserve and Fairoak Lane in Malden Rushett. Maldens and Coombe Neighbourhood also awarded the charity
a grant of £750 in 2013/14 to contribute to the costs of a Coombe Hill Wood Nature Reserve Project.

Officer’s report

23. A similar, successful project was completed by the Lower Mole Project at another access point on the same Castle Hill Local Nature Reserve and Scheduled Ancient Monument site in 2012. That was funded by Historic England (formerly English Heritage) who also supports the current Castle Hill Local Nature Reserve Project. The Lower Mole Project has carried out the initial phase of the work by clearing rubbish and removing the old fence which was broken down, to enable people to gain access to the site and installing a fence.

24. The grant application, if awarded, will enable the project’s final stage to be completed – installing a kissing gate to improve access. As a result, the boundary of Castle Hill Local Nature Reserve and Scheduled Ancient Monument will be cleaned and smartened up, and access will be improved, whilst fly tipping and motorcycle access will be prevented. Members of the public using the site (walking groups, dog walkers, hikers) will benefit from the improved route, with local Chessington residents, the main users of the nature reserve, gaining the most benefit.

25. Clearing the rubbish and waste from the site has played an important part in the Council’s campaign to move the borough “from clean to pristine”. The project also contributes to Kingston Plan Objectives, particularly Objective 3 (Protect and improve the quality of our local environment) and Objective 10 (Encourage people to take an active part in the social and cultural life in the community).

26. Installing a kissing gate at Castle Hill Local Nature Reserve and Scheduled Ancient Monument fits in with South of the Borough Neighbourhood Community Plan objectives for Environment, Community, Sport and Leisure and Health.

27. The Trust works with the Council and makes a considerable contribution to maintaining our open spaces for the benefit and enjoyment of the local residents. A grant of £324 is therefore recommended.

28. Grants are expected to be used within one year of the award and a monitoring form returned confirming how the grant has been used.

RECOMMENDATION

A grant of £324

Resource Implications

29. There is currently £4,125 in the South of the Borough Committee’s Neighbourhood Grants budget. If the recommendations in this report are supported then there will be £3,051 remaining for 2015/16.

Statutory powers for grant making

30. The Head of Legal Services advises that a local authority is able to act only if empowered to do so by statute. This includes, in specific circumstances, the making of grants to voluntary groups. The statutory power under which a particular grant may be awarded will vary according to the type of activity which the grant will support. It is a requirement for every Council that grants made
under Social Services legislation be exercised either by the statutory committee responsible for Social Services functions or by the Strategic Director. Therefore, any grants deemed to be in this category will be considered by the Neighbourhood Committee and passed to the Director of Adult Social Care Services so that the Strategic Director’s delegated powers can be exercised.

31. Application (a) may be authorised under Section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 which gives local authorities the power to provide premises for the use of clubs or societies having athletic, social or recreational objectives; to make recreational facilities available free or at reduced charges to such people as they think fit and to make grants or loans to help voluntary bodies provide recreational facilities of a kind which the local authorities have power to provide. This covers recreational facilities inside and outside of the local authority area.

32. Application (b) may be authorised under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, which gives local authorities the power to incur expenditure in the interests of their area which is not otherwise authorised, including contributing to the funds of charitable bodies in furtherance of their work in the UK, or to bodies providing any public service in the UK other than for the purposes of gain.

Environmental Implications

33. Application (b) proposes to make a positive contribution to the local environment.

Background Papers: held by Jill Darling, Team Leader, Voluntary and Community Sector (author of report), Strategic Business tel: 020 8547 5124, email: jill.darling@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

- Applications and supporting documents from the individual organisations.