

## Agenda item 6

### For Discussion: Fundraiser support

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#### Introduction

This note sets out various items around external fundraising that we'd like to discuss with Cllrs at the Council meeting. For the purposes of the discussion, we mean funding from sources other than the precept and income from room hire, rents, retail.

#### Discussion

FTC have been successful in securing external funding to support the delivery of FTC's Strategy and associated work programme. Over the last three years we have secured funding to support the delivery of several projects totalling circa £200k and there are significant funding bids currently being reviewed by funders. Examples of funding secured include: the Climate emergency funding for the LCWIP and resilience communications, Tourism grants which have enabled us to launch the information point in the Black Swan, deliver a new series of walking maps, produce the first Frome Annual, seed funding for upcoming Frome App, Violence Reduction funding and lottery funding for the Green and Healthy Futures programme and the development of Neighbourhood Networks during the covid-19 related lockdowns.

This funding has been secured by the staff team, who have sourced funding options, reviewed criteria, terms and conditions and completed applications. In addition to grant funding the team have also secured additional district and county funding, tree packs and the commitment for a tiny forest in Frome amongst other in-kind donations.

In the coming weeks we will be developing an ambitious work programme and can see many opportunities to support FTC's objectives, detailed in the Strategy, by building on our successful track record of securing third party grant funding. We anticipate developing a work programme where several outputs / projects will be subject to external funding.

We are looking to use the existing fundraiser budget of £15k in the financial year 21/22 to recruit one or more freelance fundraisers to assist the management team in prospect research and completing applications, to create the capacity to take advantage of the current and emerging funding opportunities. We see opportunities in the following areas:

- the development of our parks and open spaces
- increased capacity to support the growth of neighbourhood networks, friends of groups and the restorative lab
- the delivery of major capital projects
- deliver a broad range of resilience, arts, regeneration and vocational training projects

As I've said above, we are at the start of drafting a work programme for 2022/23 for discussion with Cllrs in the coming months. At this stage, the management group would like a steer on whether to build projects into next year's work programme that would be dependent on sourcing external funding alongside areas of work and other projects that would be funded via the precept.

We realise that this might appear to be a “no brainer” but consideration needs to be given to whether Cllrs are happy to risk unsuccessful funding bids (and most bids are!) resulting in some projects not progressing that appear in the work programme. The alternative is to adopt a more opportunistic approach taking advantage of grants as they appear and adding them to the projects already planned. To an extent this is what we’ve normally done in recent years. The downside of this approach is that the if we are successful of securing grants, we might struggle to deliver the funded projects as well as the work programme because we didn’t plan for the extra capacity. The upside, of course, is that one of the strengths of FTC has been that we can adapt and flex to take advantage of new opportunities.

There isn’t a right or wrong on this, hence this report asking for a steer from Council. The preference from the management group is for elements of next year’s work programme listing projects that are “subject to external funding” while retaining an element of flex so that we can apply for grants that deliver our Strategy but didn’t figure explicitly as projects in the annual work programme.

As we say above, we have a fundraising budget of £15k this year so the recommendation is to recruit a fundraiser to work with partners (where applicable) to secure grants for projects in the current work programme and projects likely to appear in next year’s work programme.