

**FINAL REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY REVIEW PANEL ON
SHIRE COMMUNITIES GRANT AND SHIRE ENVIRONMENT GRANT**

Introduction

1. This report sets out the conclusions and recommendations arising from the Scrutiny Review Panel review of the SHIRE Community Grant and SHIRE Environment Grant schemes.

Scope of the Review

2. The MTF5 2023/24 – 2026/27 proposal to cease delivery of the SHIRE Community and Environment Grant programmes with immediate effect was questioned at the Scrutiny Commission meeting held on 30 January 2023.
3. Members requested a review to determine the future of both grant programmes in 2023/24 and onwards.
4. The Scrutiny Commissioners on 30 January 2023 appointed a Scrutiny Review Panel to:
 - i. Determine the impacts and value for money achieved through the SHIRE Community and Environment Grants programme;
 - ii. Examine the profile of past and current recipients and key metrics, including outputs, outcomes and the value of awards;
 - iii. Consider the potential impact of the discontinuation of both grant programmes, the value of the current programmes, and the Target Operating Model.
5. The Scrutiny Commissioners requested that the Panel make recommendations to the Cabinet on the future of the SHIRE Community grant and SHIRE Environment grant programmes.

Membership of the Panel

6. The following members were appointed to serve on the Panel.

Mr. C. Smith CC (Chairman) – Conservative Member
Mr. D. Harrison CC – Conservative Member
Mr. P. King CC – Conservative Member
Mr. G. A. Boulter CC – Liberal Democrat Member
Mrs. M. E. Newton CC – Labour Member

Conduct of the Review

7. The Panel met on four occasions between 23 March and 30 May 2023.

8. This report will be presented to the Scrutiny Commission and the Cabinet for consideration. The decision whether to progress any of the savings' proposals considered by the Panel for consultation has not yet been made.
9. The Panel received written and verbal evidence from senior responsible officers for both grant programmes, Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise organisations, other grant funders, partners and stakeholders. The written statements were not for publication and all verbal evidence was presented under private session by virtue of Paragraphs 1, 3 and 10 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972.
10. The Panel, during the course of the review:
 - i. Were presented with an overview of the SHIRE Community Grant and SHIRE Environment Grant programmes;
 - ii. Received feedback from officers regarding the impact and value for money of the grants programmes and investment into the local Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector;
 - iii. Considered how the grants programmes support the achievement of the Council's strategic objectives;
 - iv. Received feedback from VCSE organisations (including SHIRE Grant beneficiaries) regarding the impact of SHIRE Grants and how grant investment supports delivery of community-based projects, services and activities;
 - v. Examined case studies to demonstrate the impacts and outcomes achieved via SHIRE Grant funding;
 - vi. Received comments from other grant funders who also provide funding and/or investment into the VCSE sector; and,
 - vii. Received feedback from other partners and stakeholders regarding the impact and value for money of grants programmes and investment into the local Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector.
11. The Panel was supported in its review by the following persons and is indebted to them for their contributions:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Job Title</u>
Tom Purnell	Assistant Chief Executive
Zafar Saleem	Head of Communities, Policy and Resilience
Noel Singh	Funding Manager
Andy Hayes	Funding and Grants Officer
Vicky Cormie	Head Of Service - Environment & Waste Commissioning
James O'Brien	Team Manager, Environment Policy & Strategy
Anna Low	Team Manager, Waste Policy & Strategy
Damien Buckley	Democratic Services Officer
Rosemary Whitelaw	Head of Democratic Services
Kristy Ball	Team Leader, Communities Team
Mike Thomson	Communities Business Partner
Kate Revell	Head of Service, Commissioning and Quality

Rachel Cheney	Lead Commissioner
Simon Dalby	Strategic Lead - Community Delivery
Anna Christie	Operations Manager - Local Area Co-ordination

12. The Panel was pleased to hear from the following witnesses and welcomed their knowledge and enthusiasm:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organisation</u>
Joanna Burrows	Love 4 Life
Bruce Harrison	Leicester South Foodbank
Helen Carter	Loughborough Wellbeing Centre
Sue Willis	The Carers Centre Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland
Nita Withers	The Phoenix Children's Foundation
Clare Smith	The Phoenix Children's Foundation
Bob Mitchell	Walk on the Wild Side
Teresa Chapman	Walk on the Wild Side
Jim Houghton	Sport in Desford
Verity Graham	Charnwood Borough Council
Tracy Gaskin	Blaby District Council
Emma Trahearn	North West Leicestershire District Council
Dave Cliffe	Voluntary Action LeicesterShire
Gary Baharrell	Lloyds Bank Foundation
Annette Kendrick	Active Together
Oliver Savage	The National Lottery Community Fund

13. The Panel was also grateful for written contributions received from following organisations:

Cancer Active Recovery Support (C.A.R.S.)
 Charity Link
 Enrych
 Leicestershire Cares
 Melton and District Money Advice Centre
 The Academy for Dementia Research and Education
 Arthritis Support LeicesterShire
 Citizens Advice Charnwood
 Falcon Support Services E.M Ltd
 Helping Hands Community Trust
 Home-Start South Leicestershire
 Melton Vineyard & Storehouse
 The Marlene Reid Centre (MRC) Community Action
 Barrow Upon Soar Community Library
 BBC Children in Need
 Locality
 Sport in Desford
 Love 4 Life
 The Carers Centre Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland
 Walk on the Wild Side
 Leicestershire and Rutland Community Foundation

The Phoenix Children's Foundation

Background Information

SHIRE Community Grants (Community Grants)

14. The SHIRE Community Grant is a key feature of Leicestershire County Council's support to the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector. The programme has been running for over ten years and has contributed to the strategic aims, objectives and priorities of both the Leicestershire Communities Strategy (Communities Approach) and the Council's Strategic Plan. The grant programme invests in the VCSE sector to help it develop local social prescribing and community led solutions for a range of communities, as an alternative to more intensive and/or expensive statutory provision or reduce/delay demand for Council services.

SHIRE Environment Grants (Environment Grants)

15. The SHIRE Environment Grant scheme also aims to support the VCSE sector. This programme has been running for 13 years (in various forms) and has contributed to the delivery of the Councils Environment Strategy 2018-2030, the Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy, the Climate and Nature Pact and the new nature recovery responsibilities. The scheme also aims to strengthen the achievement of the Council's Net Zero 2045 commitment, Strategic Plan outcomes, complimentary to the Environment Action Volunteer scheme and other volunteer schemes.

Purpose of the Grants

16. Community Grant funding is currently available to cover or contribute towards:
- project delivery costs;
 - staffing costs (including volunteer expenses);
 - venue/room hire;
 - core organisational running costs;
 - capital expenditure, for example, items of capital equipment.
17. The funds can also be used to cover other eligible costs which meet the grant criteria. For example, costs related to the delivery of community-based projects and activities that are specifically focused on improving the lives, health and wellbeing of vulnerable and disadvantaged people and communities who live in Leicestershire.
18. Providing funding to community-based early intervention and prevention solutions aims to help to reduce demand on Council and other public services, and complement existing services already being delivered by the Council.
19. Environment Grant funding is currently awarded to support projects looking to improve Leicestershire's environment by minimising waste, reducing carbon

emissions and improving biodiversity through new and innovative projects.

20. The grants are often used to cover or contribute towards:
- Household waste prevention, reduction, recycling and composting projects;
 - Installation of energy efficiency measures such as LED lighting, solar panels and cavity wall insulation;
 - Improving the local environment with creation of habitats, green roofs or bird and bat boxes.
21. In terms of sustainability, the Panel heard from some other grant funders, such as Lloyds Banking Foundation and the National Lottery, that organisations applying for such funding will generally always require this. Only a small percentage benefit from other types of fundraising, for example through donations, or commercial activities.
22. The Panel was however concerned that by allowing the Grants to be used to fund things like core organisational running costs, the Council is not always providing the incentive to groups to become more sustainable, or for such organisations to try to diversify their funding streams.

Who is eligible to apply

23. The following organisations are currently eligible to apply for a SHIRE Grant:

Community Grants:

- Registered charities;
- Community groups;
- Organisations with a constitution and board of trustees or committee;
- Social Enterprises;
- Community Interest Companies;
- Faith-based organisations or places of worship.

Environment Grants:

- Constituted 'not-for-profit' village / community groups;
- Community enterprises;
- Registered charities;
- Parish and town councils;
- Community managed libraries, schools, colleges and places of worship are also considered (where these places are open for use by the wider community).

24. The Panel had concerns that the list of organisations eligible to apply for a SHIRE Grant is currently too wide. For example, it enables those which already have multiple funding options available to apply, and this is perhaps at the expense of small, grass roots organisations who have identified a gap in

provision in their local area and are looking for a way to fill it.

25. In particular, the Panel is concerned that organisations able to raise funding via precept (e.g. town and parish councils), and larger voluntary sector organisations who can employ paid staff, are also applying for SHIRE Grants.
26. There is currently no limit on the number of organisations that can apply for and receive a SHIRE Grant from any given area. The Panel notes that SHIRE Grants are very much demand led and based on who chooses to apply in any given grant round. The Panel considered the potential to divide the budget on a geographical basis to provide for a more even spread across the County, thus limiting the number of grants that can be authorised per district. The Panel heard, however, the disbenefits of such an approach which include:
 - There are more VCSE organisations operating in some districts in comparison to others (and this can be because some areas have greater need in respect of some issues);
 - There would be no guarantee/assurance that equivalent numbers of eligible applications would be received from each area;
 - Whilst there might be an identified need for support, an organisation might miss out simply because the geographical limit is reached which would be detrimental to the purpose of the Grant.
27. The Panel heard that proportionate splits in the Community Grants budget between different types of projects against set priorities had been attempted previously, but this was not successful due to the high level of administration required. Initially there had been two grants which included allocations by department and sector. The schemes had moved to a position whereby applications were now simply considered on case by case basis.

Repeat Applications

28. Given the Panel's concerns regarding sustainability, the Panel sought to understand the number of repeat grants awarded and the value of those grants.
29. It heard that 18% of organisations (58 out of 321) awarded a Community Grant in 2022/23 had been awarded a grant in 2021/22. This equates to a total of £689,000 which was awarded to these 58 organisations for consecutive grants in both years, which represents 45.6% of the total budget awarded (£1,509,985) during that period.
30. Of the organisations awarded a SHIRE Environment Grant in 2022/23, two had been awarded a repeat grant in 2021/22. This equates to a total of £1,050 which was awarded to these 2 organisations for consecutive grants in both years, which represents 2.2% of the total budget awarded (£47,118) during that period.
31. Some other local grant funders presented the Panel with information relating to their own criteria for grant funding, including their approach towards repeat applications. The Panel notes that:

- The National Lottery Community Fund has no process for repeat funding but instead focuses on the relationship with organisations and encourages diversifying their reliance on grant funds. Each application is treated on merit and the organisations expectations and learning are taken into consideration when assessing the application.
- Lloyds Bank Foundation provides repeat funding to secure the future needs of organisations and their service users.
- District Councils that offered grant funding all allowed repeat applications. Charnwood Borough Council, however, first signposts such applicants to additional sources of funding, though it offers funding where this is used to help a group continue in the absence of other funding streams. Blaby District Council only permits one grant per year, and North West Leicestershire District Council does award repeat applications where there is a compelling argument to do so, taking into account the overall aims and purpose of their fund, funding being sought, and number of times the group has received a grant previously.

32. The Panel has concerns about voluntary sector organisations submitting repeat applications for funding, as they feel that this demonstrates that organisations are not sustainable and are becoming reliant on a funding source which cannot not be guaranteed, particularly given the financial pressures currently facing the County Council.

Application Process and Assessment

33. Although the application process is accessible, the Panel heard that rigorous scrutiny of applications is undertaken to determine whether SHIRE Grant funding should be awarded, particularly in the case of repeat applicants.

34. Applications are reviewed by grant officers to ensure they meet the grant eligibility criteria which includes, but is not limited to, specific types of organisations who may apply, the type of projects which can be funded and what costs the funds are to be used to cover, and a consideration of how the project satisfies the intended outcomes of the grant scheme.

35. Grant officers then work with relevant colleagues from across the Council, or from other partner agencies, to share and consider their professional views on the proposed project/activity. Consideration is given to the following:

- How the project proposal fits within the Council's strategic priorities;
- Clarification around how the project complements existing services;
- Aspects of the project considered to be particularly positive;
- How the project could be further improved or enhanced;
- Issues that would need to be resolved before funding could be awarded;
- Alternative or additional sources of funding that may be available for the project.

36. Applications for the Community Grant are taken to a Panel, made up of officers and the Cabinet Lead Member for Community and Staff Relations, which considers all the information provided before it determines whether or not to award a grant. The final decision it makes will be one of the following:
- Offer the full grant amount applied for;
 - Offer a lower level of grant funding (i.e. a contribution towards the grant requested);
 - Offer a grant subject to conditions (e.g. upon receipt of further information/clarification as requested by the Grant Officers);
 - Defer the decision pending further information/clarification being submitted, or request the application to be re-submitted with more information later;
 - Refuse to fund the application.
37. Applications for Environment Grants are considered by a panel of officers from the Environment and Waste Commissioning Service, who make a recommendation before the application is finally reviewed by the Head of Service for Environment & Waste Commissioning for a decision on whether or not to award the grant.
38. The Panel is satisfied that the application and assessment process is robust but feels that, should the schemes continue, consideration should be given to streamlining the process for awarding SHIRE grants and introducing automation where appropriate to reduce administrative costs.

Administrative Costs

39. Throughout the review, the Panel raised concerns regarding the cost to the Council of administering the Grant schemes. It therefore considered a breakdown of the administration costs including the on-costs for staff working on the schemes:
- The estimated cost of administering the SHIRE Community Grant scheme was calculated at £70,740;
 - The estimated cost of administering the SHIRE Environment Grant scheme was calculated at £14,998.

Levels of Funding currently available and MTFs Savings Proposals

Community Grants

40. The budget currently assigned to the SHIRE Community Grant programme is £550,000 annually (£500,000 revenue and £50,000 capital). Grants of up to £10,000 can currently be awarded to any one organisation at a time.
41. A summary from 2016 to 2023 showing the annual budget available, budget allocated, and the number of projects funded, is set out in the table below:

Year	Budget Available	Budget Allocated	No. of Projects Funded
2016-17	£420,000	£448,501	93
2017-18	£420,000	£420,188	104
2018-19	£350,000	£367,588	78
2019-20	£350,000	£386,715	90
2020-21	£2,594,190	£2.6m	379
2021-22	£900,000	£897,500	169
2022-23	£612,485	£600,000	152

42. It should be noted that during 2020/21 and 2021/22 the grant budget was higher due to Government grants to support the Council's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Environment Grants

43. The budget currently assigned to the SHIRE Environment Grant programme is £40,000 (revenue) annually. Grants of up to £3,000 are currently available to any one organisation at a time. Organisations can currently apply for up to 75% of the total cost of a project (subject to a maximum amount). At least 25% of the total project cost must be match funded independently, including from other sources.
44. A summary for 2016 to 2023 showing the annual budget available, budget allocated, and the number of projects funded, is set out in the table below:

Year	Budget Available	Budget Awarded	No. of projects funded
2016 –17	£20,000.00	£19,378	9
2017 – 18	£40,000.00	£19,555	12
2018 – 19	£40,000.00	£21,091	12
2019 – 20	£40,000.00	£19,122	10
2020 – 21	£40,000.00	£20,603	17
2021 – 22	£40,000.00	£17,951	17
2022 – 23	£40,000.00	£34,068	22

MTFS Savings Proposals

45. The MTFS 2023/24 – 2026/27 proposes to cease delivery of both the SHIRE community and environment Grant schemes with immediate effect.
46. Throughout the review, the Panel has highlighted the importance of the Council's financial position and the need for this to remain a key consideration in determining the future of both grant programmes. A majority of members of

the Panel have significant concerns regarding the funding gap in the MTFs. They emphasised the need for the County Council to prioritise funding its core commitments, such as children's and adult social care. However, some members of the Panel feel that financial concerns need to be balanced against the Council's social responsibility in supporting vulnerable people and community groups where possible.

Signposting to other support available

47. The Panel has been pleased to hear that when a VCSE organisation applies for grant funding, County Council grant officers work to understand the organisation's needs before deciding whether a SHIRE Grant is the most appropriate option for them to pursue.
48. The Panel heard how organisations applying for Community Grants were always signposted to other sources of funding in the first instance. Around 55% of organisations had already received funding from another source when they applied to the SHIRE Grants schemes.
49. With this in mind the Panel was keen to hear what other grant funding was being offered by other organisations in Leicestershire. A selection of public and private sector bodies were invited by the Panel to provide an overview of their schemes, as follows:
 - The National Lottery Community Fund allocates £20m annually for grant funding nationally. Its typical grant was £75,000-£100,000 over a three year period (with an additional £30,000 to secure the organisations development). The fund has provided between £135,000 and £150,000 annually to projects in Leicester and Leicestershire locally;
 - Lloyds Bank Foundation offered small grants of up to £10,000 and larger grants of on average £240,000 over a five year period.
 - Charnwood Borough Council, North West Leicestershire and Blaby District Council offer various types of grants such as:
 - Charnwood Borough Council - Member Grant Awards (up to £500 with an annual budget of £26,000); Community Grant (an annual budget of £52,000 which provides up to £5,000 in grant funding); Community Facilities Grants (a budget of around £50,000 which provides funding of up to £20,000 /to a maximum of 50% of the cost of a project); Strategic Partner Grants (a budget of £300,000 providing funding of between £8,000 and £35,000);
 - North West Leicestershire District Council has an annual budget of £16,000 to provide small grants. It also has a Strategic Grant Agreement in place with a £93,000 annual budget;
 - Blaby District Council has three community grants scheme which offered £500 per grant application. It also has two larger grants which offered up to £4,000, with match funding
50. It should be noted that Oadby and Wigston Borough Council and Harborough District Council do not operate a grant scheme, Hinckley and Bosworth

Borough Council's scheme is run by the Rural Community Council, and Melton Borough Council only operates a small scheme.

51. The Panel welcomes the range of funding opportunities available for VSCE organisations in Leicestershire and a majority of Panel members are of the view that this means that, should the SHIRE Grant schemes cease to operate, the voluntary sector in Leicestershire will continue to thrive. The Panel is particularly reassured by the knowledge and enthusiasm of other organisations providing grant funding.
52. The Council works in collaboration with Voluntary Action LeicesterShire (VAL) and in cases where organisations have not been successful in being awarded SHIRE Grant funding, they had been encouraged to contact VAL for support in sourcing alternative funding Grant officers also regularly network with other grant funders to understand what funding is available in the market at any given time.
53. The Council has been key in helping VCSE organisations to develop and diversify organisations, as well as assisting them to source alternative funding and make applications for funding. The Panel feels that this area of work is critical and should be strengthened should the Grants be either reduced or ceased so as to continue to support organisations in sourcing alternative funding in order to provide valuable support to Leicestershire residents. In particular the Panel would like to see organisations signposted to VAL as it is commissioned by the County Council to provide advice and training to VCSE organisations.

Benefits and Potential Impacts of Grant Funding

54. The Panel sought to determine the benefits the two Grant schemes provide and the potential impact if both (or either) were discontinued. It received anecdotal evidence from departmental officers that both schemes complemented their service officer and helped to deliver departmental objectives by preventing people from requiring statutory support from the Council, or at least delaying the need for the Council to provide costly support packages.
55. The Panel also heard that one key benefit identified by those in receipt of grant funding was that this often provides the initial money needed to get started and the credibility and the leverage required to source match funding and/or additional funding from elsewhere. Delivering successful projects as a result of receiving the SHIRE Grant funding, helps organisations when applying to larger grant schemes where a track record of delivery is essential.
56. To that end, the Panel notes that local authority grant schemes, which are smaller than the national schemes like the National Lottery Community Fund and Lloyds Bank Foundation, can be seen as 'seed' grants, intended to start a VCSE organisation on a journey which will see them develop a track record for delivery and become able to apply for larger grants and grow their organisation. The Panel felt that this emphasised the need to prioritise those smaller grass root organisations as being eligible to apply for the Grant funding in the first

instance and the need to signpost them and others to other funding options.

Monitoring Outputs and Outcomes

57. The Panel heard that illustrating the outputs and outcomes of grant funding was often difficult to quantitatively demonstrate and that it was easier to consider case studies to determine the impact which grants had on organisations and individuals.
58. The Panel notes that at the end of the funding period, organisations are asked to submit feedback detailing the activities which have taken place and the outcomes achieved as a result of the funding, including relevant case study examples. Additional evidence such as letters of support, testimonials and photographs may also be submitted. Officers may also arrange to visit to the project during or after the period of funding.
59. In terms of the Community Grant, the Panel heard how the following outcomes were being shown to be achieved:
- Improved health, wellbeing and quality of life for vulnerable and disadvantaged people;
 - Vulnerable and disadvantaged people are safer, less isolated, confident and independent;
 - Disadvantaged groups have access to appropriate information/services and are empowered to participate fully in society;
 - Reduced inequality, and increased opportunities for vulnerable/disadvantaged people and communities to develop positive lifestyle choices;
 - Less reliance on Council and other public services, particularly high-cost health and social care services;
 - Individuals who are not in employment, education or training (NEET), including disadvantaged young people, have improved opportunities to access education, training and employment;
 - Reduction in crime, offending and anti-social behaviour in communities;
 - Communities/community organisations take responsibility for identifying solutions to local issues;
 - Stronger voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector.
60. In terms of the Environment Grant, the Panel noted that the following outcomes have been identified as being achieved through this grant:
- A reduction in the amount of household waste produced in Leicestershire;
 - A reduction in the amount of greenhouse gas emissions within communities;
 - Improved biodiversity and the creation, protection, enhancement and management of sustainable green spaces;
 - Increased awareness and understanding on the above outcomes as well as providing necessary training and skills to manage and support projects.

61. Other grant funders interviewed by the Panel provided an overview of the methods they used to monitor and evaluate progress. The majority of organisations had a robust application process which considered the project aims and objectives but adopted a similar approach to the Council in that monitoring information is only gathered where necessary and that the collation of such information must be proportionate to the level of funding being provided.
62. Some organisations, such as the National Lottery Community Fund, which offered higher grants than the County Council, also undertook health checks and used monitoring forms to track project delivery as it progressed, and some, such as, Lloyds Banking Foundation and district councils, conducted visits to witness the work being carried out in the community.
63. The Panel recognises that it would neither be proportionate nor cost effective to undertake a social return on investment analysis of the grants, given both the size of the grants issued and the administrative work that would be involved. Small voluntary organisations without any paid staff would likely be unable to respond to the burden of a robust monitoring and evaluation process. However, the Panel is concerned that in the absence of any quantitative data, it is difficult to measure value for money and to understand the true impact the Grants have on communities and individuals.

Conclusion

64. The Panel welcomes the work to date on delivering the SHIRE Community grant and SHIRE Environment Grant schemes and recognises the qualitative evidence of the positive impact that the Grant schemes have had on communities. However, given the severity of the County Council's financial position, a majority of the members of the Panel feel that the Council should concentrate on meeting its statutory commitments and allocate funding accordingly.
65. At the end of its deliberations, as there was no clear consensus as to the way forward, the Panel considered the following four options:
- (i) Keep value of both grants as is and change the criteria to provide grants only to small voluntary and community groups.
 - (ii) Amend the Grant schemes as follows:
 - (a) Reduce the SHIRE community grant budget by the following amounts:
 - The capital budget reduced by £25,000 to £25,000;
 - The revenue budget reduced by £150,000 to £350,000;
 - The maximum grant award reduced by £5,000 to £5,000;

- (b) Reduce the SHIRE environment grant budget by the following amounts:
- Total funding available reduced by £10,000 to £30,000;
 - Maximum grant award reduced by £500 to £2,500;
- (c) Change the criteria to provide grants only to small voluntary and community groups.
- (iii) Cease the grants immediately as per the MTFS proposal.
- (iv) Operate the grants during the 2023/24 Financial Year with the reduced budgets proposed in (ii) above and cease the grants by the end of the 2023/24 Financial Year to enable sufficient notice to be given to beneficiaries and partners, and groups to make alternative arrangements. Change the criteria for awarding SHIRE Community Grants during the 2023/24 financial year to provide grants only to small voluntary and community groups.
66. The Panel agreed that the County Council should continue to provide advice, guidance and signposting to VCSE organisations requiring funding regardless of the option chosen. The Panel also notes that, given the size of the SHIRE Environment Grants, it would be too much of an administrative burden to change the grant guidance and conditions just for the 2023/24 financial year.
67. The decision of the Panel by majority was to support option (iv). Mr Boulter and Mrs Newton asked that it be recorded that they were opposed to this decision.

List of Appendices

None.