



For Immediate Release

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### **Vital funding for support schemes to improve residents' lives**

Community organisations and voluntary groups are to get almost £1 million of funding from Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council to deliver projects that help improve residents' lives and support the borough's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Funding totalling £959,382 in grants and support for a range of projects and organisations over the next year was agreed by Cabinet at a meeting last night (Tuesday 9 March).

This includes £759,382 in strategic grants to help with the overall running of community organisations that provide specialise services that help to meet the council's priorities. Organisations awarded funding include Citizens Advice Basingstoke and Tadley, Basingstoke Consortium, Basingstoke Voluntary Action, Basingstoke Gym Club, Hampshire Cultural Trust, Proteus Theatre Company, Shopmobility, Whitchurch Silk Mill and Young People's Independent Counselling.

Anvil Arts, which run The Anvil and The Haymarket, is also expected to receive a grant in 2021/22. In 2020/21, the trust received £795,000 from the council which is 74% of all grant funding the council provided to local arts and culture organisations and 45% of the council's total strategic and programme grants budget for the year. Although the 2021/22 grant will be at a reduced level compared to previous years, this grant is still expected to form a significant element of the external funding the trust receives and the council will continue to work with Anvil Arts to review the current offer and business model to ensure the trust can operate sustainably in future years. A final decision on this grant will be made later this month following a review of the trust's business plan.

Alongside this, a further £200,000 of Community and Voluntary Sector Programme grant funding has been awarded to organisations for one-year projects that promote community cohesion and inclusion, promote community resilience, help young people maximise their potential, support people who face barriers to employment and promote mental and physical wellbeing.

Successful projects that will play a key role in the borough's recovery from the pandemic range from befriending services, support for older people and young parents, health and wellbeing programmes, support for careers and skills and arts and culture projects.

Cabinet Member for Finance and Service Improvement Cllr Hannah Golding said: "We are lucky to have so many dedicated community and voluntary organisations and groups in the borough and the amazing strength of community spirit has really shone through during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We received a large number of applications from community organisations across the borough for this round of funding so it was a very difficult task to select the successful projects.

"As helping residents and businesses to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic is a key priority for the council, we have funded a wide range of activities that will ensure our collective work makes the biggest difference to people's lives and allows them to get involved in activities in thriving communities across the borough." A full list of all the strategic and programme grants the council has awarded is available at [www.basingstoke.gov.uk/funding](http://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/funding).

**ENDS**

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