WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCIL	**Executive Committee** **8th March 2017**	**Agenda Item No.** **12**

Title	Request for Funding for a Community Hub in Norton Lindsey
For further information about this report please contact	Chris Elliott e-mail: chris.elliott@warwickdc.gov.uk Tel No 01926 456003
Wards of the District directly affected	Budbrooke
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?	No
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number	N/A
Background Papers	None

Contrary to the policy framework:	No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	No
Key Decision?	No
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)	No
Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken	No

Officer/Councillor Approval		
Officer Approval	**Date**	**Name**
Chief Executive	09/02/17	Chris Elliott
Head of Service	09/02/17	Mike Snow
CMT	09/02/17	Bill Hunt, Andy Jones
Section 151 Officer	09/02/17	Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer	09/02/17	Andy Jones
Finance	09/02/17	Mike Snow
Portfolio Holder(s)	09/02/17	Cllr Peter Whiting

Consultation & Community Engagement	
The local community itself has undertaken extensive engagement, consultation and participation.	
Final Decision?	No
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below) A number of conditions will need to be met but no further report is of itself needed to the Executive.	

1. Summary

1.1 This report seeks to consider a funding request for £38,500 from a local community group in Norton Lindsey who have raised funds to buy the vacant village pub and in part convert it into a community hub to provide a range of services and activities to the village. The scheme falls outside of the RUCIS scheme but the Council could consider the request via its recently established Community Projects Reserve.

2. Recommendation

2.1 That Executive agrees to the funding request from Norton Lindsey Community Pub Ltd (NLCP) for up to (and no more than) £38,500 excluding VAT to be funded from the Community Project Reserve subject to the following conditions being met:

1. That the works receive planning and any other statutory consent necessary before any drawdown of the funding;
2. That a detailed project plan is submitted, and in particular confirming that the community shop has arrangements in place to operate as a shop, before any drawdown of the funding;
3. That at least 3 quotes for any and all of the proposed works are provided to verify the amount of funding being sought, before any drawdown of the funding;
4. That staged payments are made on production of supplier(s) invoices (that are addressed to NLCP)";
5. That due recognition in any publicity is given to this Council's support for the proposal;
6. That an annual report is given to the Council for the next 3 years on the performance of the business plan of the facility;
7. That any other conditions that normally apply to RUCIS schemes also apply to this scheme.

2.2 That the approval of the items listed in 2.1 above is delegated to the Chief Executive and Head of Finance in consultation with the Finance portfolio holder.

3. Reasons for the Recommendation

3.1 The village pub in Norton Lindsey has struggled commercially for a number of years and more recently has become vacant with a consequent fear that it is permanently lost and is redeveloped. The local community being disturbed at the potential loss of such a facility have formed a company (the Norton Lindsey Community Pub Ltd) and have raised funds of £340,000 to buy it. The purchase is now complete. However, it is also intended to widen the remit of the building to act as much as a community hub as a village pub and so are seeking funds of £38,500 to help with its alteration to develop a community shop, in the vein of the one in nearby Barford.

3.2 A business plan has been prepared for the overall scheme which is attached at Appendix 1. Appendix 2 contains the share offer and Appendix 3 the governance arrangements for NLCP. Appendix 4 is more specific about the community shop element. Such a scheme as proposed would normally be one that the Council would look to fund from its RUCIS scheme. However, the scheme as proposed falls outside the remit of that fund as the Group have not existed long enough to provide the 3 years accounts normally sought and the

sum being sought is over the upper £30,000 limit and the maximum 50% contribution to the overall project costs.

3.3 However, the Budget report for 2017/18 established a Community Projects Reserve and it is proposed that the sum sought is funded via that source. If the Executive so agrees, then a number of conditions are proposed as set out in the recommendation. It would be managed and monitored as other RUCIS schemes normally would be.

4 POLICY FRAMEWORK

4.1 Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)

The Rural and Urban Capital Improvement Scheme supports the Sustainable Community Strategy and the cross cutting themes which form the priorities for funding areas as follows:-

- Community Engagement & Cohesion (including Families at Risk)
- Targeting disadvantaged rural locations
- Reducing inequalities

This particular scheme will address all 3 of the above points

4.2 Fit for the Future (FFF)

The FFF Programme is designed to deliver the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) for Warwick District. The FFF Programme has 3 strands and the impact of this report's proposals in relation to each of them is as set out below:

Service
Maintain or Improve Services – the proposal will enable an existing community facility to be retained and also for a community service to be operated that currently does not exist at present in the village.

People
Engaged and Empowered Staff – not applicable.

Money
Achieve and Maintain a Sustainable Balanced Budget – not applicable.

5. Budgetary Framework

5.1 The Community projects Reserve currently has £868,000 available notwithstanding that a number of other reports on this agenda seek to draw from it. None of these works involve ongoing revenue costs for the Council.

6. Risks

6.1 The risks of this particular scheme are not significantly different to the risks inherent for other community groups submitting schemes for RUCIS funding. The worst that could happen is that it is not possible to set up a community shop operationally or that it subsequently fails. One of the conditions for the award should address the first aspect whilst the second is probably impossible to cover off entirely but the record of a nearby community shop at Barford,

illustrates that an energetic and committed community can support such ventures.

6.2 In addition, the NLCP researched as part of their business plan re: page 10,section 5 "The Market For Community Pubs" - Nationally there are approx. 70 community owned pubs and NLCP listed 4 such pubs that they looked at but in particular "The Anglers Rest" in Bamford which is successfully owned by 300 community shareholders. As well as being a pub it's the village post office and a café. It was one of the first pubs to be listed as an Asset of Community Value and NLCP is following the same proven route. The NLCP has taken advice from the team at The Anglers Rest.

6.2 The other conditions proposed should ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to secure further detailed matters before any money is transferred and that there is a reporting system on performance against the business plan.

7. Alternative Option(s) considered

7.1 The Executive could decide not to agree to the request. However, the scheme is very much in the spirit of the RUCIS scheme to which the Council is very committed, and it is therefore sensible for the Council to consider the scheme in those terms which would otherwise be very supportive.