

COMMITTEE: CENTRAL AREA **REF NO:** CAC/24/03
DATE: 4 SEPTEMBER 2024
SUBJECT: FUNDING REQUEST – IPSWICH.LOVE
REPORT AUTHOR: BETH ROBINSON
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: HANNAH LEYS

Short description of report content and the decision requested:

This report requests that the Central Area Committee consider allocating £500 to Ipswich.love to expand its website's platform, add further events, and purchase marketing materials for further promotion of its services. As a web-based Ipswich-wide site, it is requesting £500 from all the five Area Committees.

List of Appendices included in this report:

- a) Completed Application

This report has been prepared by Beth Robinson ,

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This report was prepared after consultation with:

Internal consultees

External consultees

Samantha Sherman, Director of Ipswich.love

The following policies form a context to this report:

(all relevant policies must also be referred to in the body of the report)

Corporate Strategy – Proud of Ipswich: Championing our Community and Revitalising our Town.

1. Item of business and issues for consideration

- 1.1 To consider the application of Ipswich.love and decide whether to agree:
- i) Option 1 - Fund the total amount requested.
 - ii) Option 2 - Fund a different amount to the amount requested.
 - iii) Option 3 - Not fund.
- 1.2 The Committee will make its decision based on whether the application meets the funding criteria and the funds available to the Committee.
- 1.3 Ipswich.love is a Community Interest Company ([no. 15365303](#)) which aims to improve connectivity in Ipswich by celebrating and signposting to events, people and culture in Ipswich through its website and online community.
- 1.4 Its website ([www.ipswich.love](#)) and social media accounts aim to offer a complete platform for all events happening in Ipswich at any one time, including Ipswich Borough Council events and community events from both charities and local businesses.
- 1.5 Ipswich.love aim to improve the public perception of Ipswich by informing residents and visitors of leisure, cultural, heritage and community-based activities available across Ipswich.
- 1.6 Currently, Ipswich.love allows groups and users to upload their events, in addition to allowing users to add Ipswich events to their calendars. Their website and social media impressions have risen from almost none to over 3.8k within the last year.
- 1.7 Ipswich.love also aims to increase civic pride within the Borough. Residents can submit 'Love Letters' to Ipswich to communicate, educate and support emotional wellbeing of the diverse local community.
- 1.8 Through engagement with local VCFSE groups and businesses as well as research of other websites such as Ipswich Entertains, Ipswich.love have noted a need for hyper-local and joined up event sharing.
- 1.9 Ipswich.love aims to signpost residents to a hyper local focus of events through a community led space on a user friendly interface with increased visibility and reduced algorithm restrictions. Ipswich.love does not feature advertisements on its platforms in order not to distract or deter users.
- 1.10 Thus far, the website has been entirely led by directors and a panel of volunteers. The funding will allow Ipswich.love to improve website functionality expansion through additional features such as filtering, which will increase the sustainability of the website. The funding will also allow for more outreach and marketing events, which have thus far been self-funded.

- 1.11 Ipswich.love has been promoted at Ipswich Borough Council and University of Suffolk Events, business networking sessions, face to face networking meetings and on local radio and social media.
- 1.12 Success will be measured through a number of means including website and social media traction statistics and face to face feedback with users, residents and community leaders.

2. Links to Area Action Plan

- 2.1 Department of Communities and Local Government - Domains of Deprivation:
- **Education, Skills, and Training**, which is an Area Action Plan priority.
 - **Living Environment**
- 2.2 Proud of Ipswich: Championing our community and revitalising our town:
- **Promoting Community wellbeing and fairness in Ipswich**, which is *the* Area Action Plan priority.
 - **A Thriving Town Centre.**

3. Financial implications

- 3.1 There is **£16,154.30** remaining unallocated in the Central Area Committee's budget, which is available to fund grant applications.
- 3.2 Cost breakdown:

Description of expenditure		Cost (£)
Web Hosting, domain sever expansion via Google Workspace; add-on provision by Mailchimp software		£1,000
Marketing and promotional materials (postcards, banners, stickers, tote bags, badges, selfie frames)		£1,500
Total project costs		£2,500
Total requested from Area Committees	North East	£500
	North West	£500

	Central	£500
	South East	£500
	South West	£500
	TOTAL	£2,500

3.3 Ipswich.love aim to target all Ipswich residents, and hold outreach events in multiple areas, which is why the cost is split equally across all areas.

3.4 Directors will continue to contribute to the project and Ipswich.love will seek corporate and grant-funded support in future to sustain the project.

4. Legal Implications

4.1 The Council has the power to make grants to community projects through the Area Committees. The Area Committees have delegated Executive powers and devolved budgets.

4.2 Area Committees have the power to award grants in accordance with part 3, section 2 of the Council's Constitution i.e., the Area Committee terms of reference.

4.3 Ipswich.love (registered company number 15365303) has provided its constitution, named officers, proof of bank account, year-end accounts, and safeguarding policy as required by the Area Committee Funding Guidelines.

5. Risks considered

5.1

Risk Description	Consequence of risk	Risk Controls	Probability of risk occurring taking account of controls (1 almost impossible - 6 very high)	Impact of risk, if it occurred taking account of actions (1 negligible - 4 catastrophic)
Lack of Website sustainability – if the website can no longer be funded or engagement does not increase.	The site may close; improper use of public funding.	Funding and continuous promotion of engagement.	3	3
Actions to mitigate risk	One of Ipswich.love's key priorities is to engage via outreach events, and they utilise volunteers in the site's current state.			

Lack of accessibility to those without access to computers/phones/difficulty using them.	Some populations may not be able to use the website as easily as others.	Ensure uploading content and access is accessible to all.	2	2
Actions to mitigate risk	Ipswich.love conduct in-person outreach events and use volunteers who can upload events on behalf of others.			

6. Options

- 6.1 Option 1 – Approve allocation of funding of £500 to Ipswich.love.
- 6.2 Option 2 – Approve allocation of less than £500 as contribution to the same.
- 6.3 Option 3 – Do not fund.

7. Record of Decision taken

8. Exemption from call in (if applicable)

I certify that this decision is urgent and therefore exempt from call-in for the following reasons:

Signed.....

[This must be signed by the Chair of the Area Committee]
