

This report will be made public on 7 March 2023

Report Number **C/22/29**

**From:** Councillor David Monk  
**Date:** 15 March 2023  
**Status:** Non-Key Decision  
**Corporate Director:** Ewan Green, Director of Place

**SUBJECT: ROMNEY MARSH BUSINESS HUB GRANT SCHEME**

**SUMMARY:**

This report sets out applications recommended for approval for the Romney Marsh Business Hub Grant scheme and seeks confirmation for the grant award.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

The Leader is asked to agree to the recommendations of the Decision Panel on grant awards, as set out below, because agreement is needed on these applications to the Romney Marsh Business Hub Grant scheme.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. To receive and note Report C/22/29
2. To approve the recommended grant applications to the Romney Marsh Business Hub grant scheme as summarised this report.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The Cabinet of Folkestone & Hythe District Council approved the mechanism for establishing and managing the Romney Marsh Business Hub Grant Scheme in July 2021 (C/21/23). The funding for this scheme has been secured from remaining Marsh Million funds which was originally established from financial contributions from Magnox/NDA, KCC, Ashford Borough Council and Folkestone & Hythe District Council.

## 2. THE ROMNEY MARSH BUSINESS GRANT (RMBG) SCHEME

- 2.1 The aim of the Romney Marsh Business Hub Grant Scheme is to provide financial support for businesses who lease an office at the Romney Marsh Business Hub.
- 2.2 The RMBG scheme provides non-repayable grants of up to £10,000 and can cover up to 100% of the costs for the items. However, where a tenant vacates the RMBH within 1 year of receipt of the grant, they may be required to pay back a proportion of the grant or forfeit assets acquired, on a proportionate basis, depending on the circumstances.
- 2.3 Any organisation signing a lease at the Romney Marsh Business Hub will be eligible to apply for a grant from this scheme.
- 2.4 The grant funding through the scheme can be used for the following:
- To meet fit out costs for a bespoke design tailored to business needs.
  - To acquire new furniture, office accessories and ICT equipment
  - To off-set up to a maximum of 3 months rent and/or business rates (if payable) for a maximum of 12 months.
- 2.5 The grant scheme was launched in September 2021 and grant applications will be accepted at any time until the closure of the scheme. The scheme is expected to run until either 31st August 2022 or until funds have been allocated.
- 2.6 Applications received are assessed in the first instance by the Economic Development Team, with decisions on individual applications made by the Decision Panel comprising the Lead Cabinet Member for the District Economy, a Councillor from the relevant high street ward, member/s of the Romney Marsh Partnership and a representative from Magnox.

## 3. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A ROMNEY MARSH BUSINESS GRANT

- 3.1 The table below lists applications recommended for approval by the Decision Panel. Reasons for the recommendations are also summarised.

Name of applicant	Purpose of Grant	Recommendations of the Decision Panel	Comments/ Conditions of grant award including
Romney Hythe & Dymchurch Railway	Office Furniture	£3,152	
Channel Fire Systems Ltd	Computer equipment & office furniture	£9,247	I.T kit should be used predominantly on site at the business hub
The Risk Partners Ltd	Computer equipment, software and office furniture	£8,199.98	I.T kit should be used predominantly on site at the business hub

#### **4. LEGAL, FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS**

##### **4.1 Legal Officer's comments (NM)**

There are no legal implications associated with the recommendations in this report. However, any grants that are made available to third parties by FHDC will need to be legally documented and the legal team can assist with this.

##### **4.2 Finance Officer's comments (RH)**

As per the previous Cabinet report July'21, £117,510 is available from the remaining Marsh Millions fund, and a further £131,131 if all the loans are repaid to KCC. Therefore up to £248,000 may be available.

##### **4.3 Equality Comment (GE)**

There are no equality and diversity implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

#### **5. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Councillors with any questions arising out of this report should contact the following officer:-

Jade Smyth, Senior Economic Development Specialist  
 Telephone: 01303 853760  
 Email: [jade.smyth@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk](mailto:jade.smyth@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk)

Romney Marsh Business Hub Grant Scheme guidelines:  
[Romney Marsh Business Hub Grant Scheme - Folkestone Works](#)

