

Faringdon Area Committee



Report of Communication and Grants Manager

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To: Faringdon Area Committee

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New Homes Bonus and Capital Grants 2017/18

Recommendation

that the Faringdon Area Committee considers two applications for capital grants and makes awards in line with the approved policy (updated March 2017).

Purpose of report

1. To give the committee the information needed to award capital grants for their area.

Strategic objectives

2. Under the 'sustainable communities and well-being' corporate priority in our 2016-2020 corporate plan we have committed to support community groups through our grants schemes.

Background

3. We opened the NHB and capital grant schemes from 1 April to 15 May 2017.
4. The Faringdon area received two eligible capital grant applications requesting a total of £12,665 against a budget of £29,080.
5. We did not receive any eligible New Homes Bonus applications for the Faringdon area.
6. Officers have evaluated the applications using the scoring matrix in the agreed policy (updated March 2017). See appendix one for the capital grant evaluations.
7. In line with the policy, officers have suggested scores and awards for the projects for the committee to consider. The scores dictate the level of funding the committee can award.

Financial implications

8. In February 2017 the Council set the 2017/18 capital grant budget at £100,000. As per the policy, the Faringdon area was allocated 29.08 per cent of the available budget (£29,080) to award in capital grants during 2017/18.

Legal implications

9. The council's legal powers to award these grants are contained in section one of the Localism Act 2011 that gives a general power of competence for local authorities.
10. In May 2017 full council delegated authority to three area committees to determine NHB and capital grant applications within the parameters of each scheme's policy.

Risks

11. There are no overarching risks of awarding these grants. Officers have highlighted any risks to a particular project in their evaluation reports.

Conclusion

12. That the committee awards two capital grants in line with the approved policy.

Background papers

Cabinet approval of the capital grant policy (updated March 2017)

Capital grants 2017-18 - officer evaluation report - Scoring summary

Ref no.	Organisation	Scheme	Scheme cost	Amount requested	% of cost requested	Suggested score	Suggested award %	Suggested maximum amount
VCap17-18/24	Buckland Memorial Hall	Refurbishment of the small hall and kitchen	£11,450	£5,725	50.00%	8	50.00%	£5,725
VCap17-18/6	Thomas Hughes Memorial Hall	Roof insulation installation	£20,640	£6,940	33.624%	8	33.624%	£6,940
			TOTAL	£12,665			Total	£12,665
							Budget	£29,080
							Balance	£16,415

Priority levels and award allowances

Score	Priority Level	Permitted Awards all awards subject to there being sufficient budget
7-9 points	High priority	Award up to the full amount requested - budget permitting (capped at 50 per cent of the cost)
4-6 points	Medium priority	Award 50%-75% of the amount requested, depending on their score and available budget
0-3 points	Low priority	No funding

Scoring matrix Community Benefit

Points	Criteria to score	Example
0	The project offers little or no direct benefit to the community.	A decorative sign or boundary wall with no other purpose.
1	A single sport or special interest group, like an art group, will benefit. However, if a sport club wanted to upgrade their pavilion and other groups frequently use it as well, it can score more.	A project to buy cricket pitch covers, IT equipment for a photography club or landscaping a nursery's garden is only benefiting their members/users.
2	Two or more specific groups will benefit. The project will have a significant impact on the health or wellbeing of one group	A football club is upgrading its changing rooms, which a hockey club also uses. Specialist equipment for a centre working with severely disabled people.
3	The project will provide a facility that's open/available to anyone to access, (not just members) Limit the maximum score for projects on sites owned by religious organisations to two points, as they can limit who can access them under special rules in the Equalities Act.	Play areas, community building or recreation ground. (e.g. a church hall or Islamic centre)

Deductions	Remove at least one point if the project will reduce an existing benefit to the community without replacing it (two points if it totally removes it).	Replacing a recreation ground with tennis courts for a member's club (open community benefit is reduced to tennis club members only).
	Remove one point if there are concerns over the ownership/lease of the property.	The term of their lease is too short or their ownership evidence is unreliable.

Extra facilities/activities

Points	Criteria to score	Examples
0	The project doesn't allow any activities to take place or provide a facility for the community's use.	A decorative village sign doesn't allow any community activities to take place or give the community a facility to use.
1	The project replaces existing facilities or allows existing activities to continue. or The project moderately improves a minor community facility or activity.	It replaces furniture in the village hall with like-for-like replacements. Replacing existing park benches with longer-lasting ones.
2	The project moderately improves or extends a substantial community facility or activity. or The project significantly improves or extends a minor community facility or activity. or The project provides a new minor facility or activity for the community.	Replacing the chairs in the village hall with more comfortable ones. Buying replacement boats for a small canoeing club. Installing three new noticeboards in the village.
3	The project will provide substantial new facilities or activities to the community. or The project significantly improves a substantial community facility.	Installing a brand new play area. Adding a large extension to a village hall.
Deductions	Deduct one point if the project reduces the community activities/facilities on offer. Deduct two points if the project removes a community facility or stops activities taking place without replacing them.	A project to overhaul and landscape a car park that reduces the number of parking spaces. Demolishing an old skate park without replacing it with anything.

Finance

Points	Financial overview
0	They don't have a plan of how they'll fund the rest of the project and haven't secured any other funding yet. They haven't given details of how they'll fund the ongoing maintenance and eventual replacements.
1	They've got a funding plan, but haven't applied for all of it yet. or They've applied for all the other funding needed, but have secured less than 50 per cent so far. They've budgeted for the ongoing maintenance but don't say how they'll fund eventual replacements in the future (if applicable).
2	They've applied for all the funding needed and have already secured over 50 per cent of the balance. They've budgeted for the ongoing costs and have a general idea how they'll fund replacements eventually (if applicable)
3	They've secured all the other funding needed for the project already (including if they're funding the rest themselves). or The organisations has requested 100 per cent of the cost and have provided evidence that they've lost a funder, can't raise money themselves (e.g. via precept) and can't apply for other grants/funding. They've budgeted for the ongoing costs and have a fund/account/pot saving for the replacements in due course.
Deductions	Remove one point if the organisation's finances suggest they could contribute towards the cost but aren't, remove two points if they can afford the whole project without any funding.

Other potential deductions/considerations:

- Their chosen supplier doesn't appear to offer value for money (their other quote was significantly cheaper for the same work).
- They have only provided one quote stating there is no alternative, but officers have found otherwise.
- Their start dates are too soon to work with our decision-making timeline for the scheme, unless we have issued permission to make an exception before submitting their application.
- They are doing lots of small, similar projects instead of doing all the work in one go, which would be more cost effective.
- The community don't support the project or would prefer a different solution.

Buckland Memorial Hall	Ref	VCap17-18/24
Refurbishment of the small hall and kitchen		

Total project cost	£11,450	
Amount requested	£5,725	Percentage of total cost requested: 50.00%
Organisation's contribution	£5,725	Organisation's latest bank balance £31,752

Previous grants

2016/17 £9,750 toilet improvements

Scoring

New facilities or activities		
This project will improve the existing small hall and kitchen, making it a more usable space for the community.	Score	2/3
Community benefit		
Anyone in the community can benefit from the improvements, as the hall is open to all to book or attend the various clubs, functions and events held there.	Score	3/3
Funding the project		
They are funding the rest of the cost from their own reserves. They had £31,752 in their bank when they applied. They need much of their reserves to help fund some other upcoming work to the hall like repointing the exterior and replacing some windows. They may have been able to secure other grants towards this work.	Score	3/3
Consultation		
They have consulted the community to identify improvements and how to prioritise the work identified.		
Project completion within timeframe		
Their intended start date in November 2017 works with our expected decision date and the 12-month term for the grant.		
Financial and project management plans		
They will incorporate the ongoing costs in their annual budget.		
OFFICER CONCERNS AND COMMENTS	Total score	8/9
	Suggested grant	50.00% of the total cost, capped to £5,725

Applicant responses (taken directly from their application form)

Details of the project	Refurbishment of the "Small Hall", repairing or replacing walls, ceilings, kitchen units with associated plumbing and making good
Financial statement from the organisation	We are able to support the running costs of the Hall from hire and fundraising. We still need to do a lot more to the Hall including pointing several of the outside walls before next winter to prevent damp and replacing some of the windows which are rotten.
Statement about town/parish support	We have not approached our parish council. The Parish council has generously helped us in the past when we needed to replace the roof on the Memorial Hall but, due to the closeness of the village and links between the BMH Management committee and the Parish Council, we know that it no longer has sufficient funds to assist us this time.
Community benefit	
Who will benefit from your project?	Primary School Breakfast Club, after school club and PE classes, WI, Parish Council, Community Diner, Buckland Toddler Group, Whist Club, Bridge Club Yoga Me Beautiful, Buckland Memorial Hall Management Committee, Open Gardens Committee, Village Bus Committee, All of the village when used as a bar for events within the main hall, Private Functions including children's birthday parties, wedding receptions and anniversaries, funeral wakes for villagers.
How did you identify a need in the community for your project or service?	The Hall Committee have held two public consultations during the refurbishment of the hall; seeking the parishioners' opinions as to what should be done and in which order. These were well attended events with all sections of our village and surrounding parish being well represented. All attendees completed a questionnaire and it was from the results of these that we established our timetable and order of works
What sustainable and/or energy saving measures does your project include or offer?	The current doors and windows are old, leaky and inefficient - replacing them will markedly reduce the heat and energy lost. We will install energy efficient fixtures wherever possible. We were prompted to do this to improve our carbon footprint and also to reduce our costs
Consultation	
What consultation have you carried out with the community or professionals?	We did not carry out any impartial professional consultations
New facilities/Activities	
What extra facilities (or equipment) will the project provide?	This project will improve existing facilities enabling us to hire out the small hall for meetings, lectures and parties in a way that we are not currently able to do. This will increase our income so that we are able to fund continuing refurbishment and repairs incumbent on an old building
What new activities will take place because of this project?	At the moment the small hall is leased alongside the main hall. Once it is refurbished the small hall will become a secure and attractive venue in its own right and start to earn income as a single room.

Thomas Hughes Memorial Hall	Ref	VCap17-18/6
Install roof/ceiling insulation		

Total project cost	£20,640	
Amount requested	£6,940	Percentage of total cost requested 33.624%
Organisation's contribution	£0	Organisation's latest bank balance £24,112
Other funding Including a parish council contribution of	£13,700 £11,000	All their other funding is now secure.

Previous grants

2014/15 £2,172 window improvements

2014/15 £5,000 toilet improvements

2011/12 £2,078 insulation improvements (walls)

Scoring

New facilities or activities		
Improving the insulation will make the hall more efficient, reducing their energy costs and making the hall more comfortable for users.	Score	2/3
Community benefit		
The whole community can access the hall and benefit from the improvements, including the savings on energy costs, as the committee can reinvest these back in the hall.	Score	3/3
Funding the project		
They have secured all their other funding for this project from external sources, including a large contribution from their parish council.	Score	3/3
They are not contributing to this project as they need £18,174 to pay for some solar panels and heating improvements. They must also keep at least £11,000 in reserves to meet their accounting policy.		
Consultation		
They have an energy audit recommending this work (although it is now six years old) however, they have asked their suppliers to quote for the latest specification of insulation to ensure they have kept up with the market.		
Project completion within timeframe		
Their intended start date in late August works with our expected decision date and the 12-month term of the grant.		
Financial and project management plans		
They will incorporate the ongoing costs in their annual budget.		
OFFICER CONCERNS AND COMMENTS	Total score	8/9
	Suggested grant	33.624% of the total cost, capped to £6,940

Applicant responses (taken directly from their application form)

Details of the project	A survey by TVEnergy in 2011 highlighted valuable improvements that would benefit the thermal efficiency and carbon footprint of Uffington Village Hall. The project aims to carry out three principal improvements, which are to insulate the main and small hall ceilings, to replace an old inefficient oil fired heating system and to fit photovoltaic panels on the large South-facing roof. We wish to apply for a grant towards the roof insulation installation.
Financial statement from the organisation	The accounts contain £24,112, which includes £4,000 in grants already received. We are not contributing as we will be paying for the heat pump and solar panels parts of the work mentioned earlier. We have also budgets to keep at least £11,000 in reserves to cover the hall running costs and act as a contingency fund.
Statement about town/parish support	Yes, they have awarded us £11,000 towards insulation.
Community benefit	
Who will benefit from your project?	The hall currently has regular weekly or monthly bookings from Scouts, Cubs, Beavers, Guides, Brownies, Mother & Toddler, Afternoon Club, Pilates, Yoga and the Parish Council. There are also several organisations that book less frequent or annual events, including the Uffington Players and very popular folk music evenings. The hall is also used for private parties / wedding receptions. The Afternoon Club and AGE UK are active in encouraging events for over 50s.
How did you identify a need in the community for your project or service?	A Community Led Plan for Uffington, Woolstone and Baulking in 2015 showed an interest in new activities being organised in the hall but volunteers were conspicuous by their absence. In 2016, a new Management Committee for the hall was elected and the energy efficiency project has moved forward with enthusiasm. There is a new sense of purpose both from the Committee and the members of the hall Council who attend the meetings.
What sustainable and/or energy saving measures does your project include?	Sustainable energy saving measures are the basis of the project. The ceiling insulation work in the main and small hall includes the replacement of the current fluorescent lighting with LED strip lighting.
Consultation	
What consultation have you carried out with the community or professional advisors?	The TV Energy survey in 2011 was a comprehensive independent examination of the hall energy sustainability. Some of the figures are now out of date (electricity prices have increased considerably in six years and increased hall use has increased electricity consumption data). However, the recommendations are still very valid and clearly support the energy efficiency project and the aim to install a PV Solar array on the roof.
New facilities/Activities	
What extra facilities (or equipment) will the project provide?	The energy efficiency project does not aim to provide new but will provide better facilities. The hall will be a more comfortable venue in Winter and the project will significantly reduce the running costs of the hall, allowing hire rates to be kept as modest as possible. The PV Solar installation, for which this grant application is made, has a payback of ten years, significantly reducing annual electricity costs.
What new activities will take place because of this project?	The PV Solar installation will not, per se, enable new activities but the energy efficiency project, by providing a more comfortable venue at a modest hire charge, will encourage greater use of the hall for a range of community activities. Friends of the Ridgeway and AGE UK are examples of organisations that are currently looking at the hall for future use and would benefit from the planned project improvements.