

Wantage Area Committee



Report of Communication and Grants Manager

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To: Wantage area committee

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Capital Grants (round two) 2017/18

Recommendation

- (a) that the Wantage area committee considers four 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. Both the New Homes Bonus (NHB) and Capital Schemes opened for applications from 20 August to 15 October 2017.
4. The Wantage area received four capital grant applications, requesting £15,970 of their £19,810 available budget and did not receive any NHB applications during this round.
5. Officers have evaluated the applications using the scoring matrix in the capital grant policy, (updated in March 2017). See appendix one for the capital grant evaluations.
6. In line with the policy, officers have suggested scores and awards for the projects for the committee to consider. The final scores will dictate the level of funding the committee can award.

Financial implications

7. In February 2017, the council set a 2017/18 capital grants budget of £100,000, of which the Wantage area committee received 28.81 per cent (£28,810). During the first round of funding the committee awarded £9,000 to two projects, leaving a budget of £19,810 available for this round of funding.

Legal implications

8. 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.
9. In May 2017, full council delegated authority to three area committees to determine NHB and capital grant applications, within the parameters of each grant policy.

Risks

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

Conclusion

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

Background papers

Cabinet approval of the new homes bonus and capital grant policies (updated March 2017).

Appendix one - Capital grants 2017-18

Officer evaluations

Scoring summary

Ref no.	Organisation	Scheme	Scheme cost	Amount requested	% of cost requested	Suggested score	Suggested award %	Suggested max grant £
VCap17-18/35	Blewbury Parish Council	Install a trim trail on the recreation ground	£12,938	£6,257	48.36%	8	48.36%	£6,257
VCap17-18/54	Harwell Village Hall	Portable staging, backdrop & wing flats	£6,623	£3,300	49.83%	8	49.83%	£3,300
VCap17-18/50	Challows Royal British Legion	Replacement roof	£10,070	£5,000	49.65%	7	49.65%	£5,000
VCap17-18/74	East Hendred Community Centre	Snells Hall lighting upgrade	£2,826	£1,413	50.00%	6	37.50%	£1,060
			Total requested	£15,970			Total award	£15,617
							Total budget	£19,810
							Unallocated balance	£4,193

Officer recommended award levels (budget permitting)

7-9 points	High priority – award as requested (up to 50 per cent of total cost)
4-6 points	Medium priority – award between 50 and 75 per cent of requested amount. Only award if there is budget left after awarding the high priorities
0-3 points	Low priority – no funding

Scoring and award matrices

SCORE	PRIORITY LEVEL	AWARDS all awards are subject to the available budget. High priorities are awarded before considering the medium priority projects.
7-9 points	High priority	Award full amount requested - budget permitting
4-6 points	Medium priority	Award between 50 and 75 per cent of the amount requested, depending on their score - budget permitting
0-3 points	Low priority	No funding

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 or improve a play area to cater for more ages. 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.	Creating a brand-new play area where there wasn't one already. Adding a large extension to a village hall.
Deductions	Deduct one point if the project reduces the activities/facilities on offer. Deduct two points if the project removes a community facility or stops activities taking place without replacing them.	Like a project to overhaul and landscape a car park that reduces the number of parking spaces. Demolishing an old skatepark without replacing it with anything.

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

Finance

Points	Financial overview
0	<p>They don't have a plan of how they'll fund the rest of the project and haven't secured any other funding yet.</p> <p>They haven't given details of how they'll fund the ongoing maintenance and eventual replacements.</p>
1	<p>They've got a funding plan, but haven't applied for all of it yet.</p> <p>or</p> <p>They've applied for all the other funding needed, but have secured less than 50 per cent so far.</p> <p>They've budgeted for the ongoing maintenance but don't say how they'll fund eventual replacements in the future (if applicable).</p>
2	<p>They've applied for all the funding needed and have already secured over 50 per cent of the balance.</p> <p>They've budgeted for the ongoing costs and have a general idea how they'll fund replacements eventually (if applicable)</p>
3	<p>They've secured all the other funding needed for the project already (including if they're funding the rest themselves).</p> <p>or</p> <p>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.</p> <p>They've budgeted for the ongoing costs and have a fund/account/pot saving for the replacements in due course.</p>
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 gave them permission to make an exceptional application 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.

Blewbury Parish Council	Ref	VCap17-18/35
Install a trim trail on the recreation ground		

Total project cost	£12,938		
Amount requested	£6,257	Percentage of total cost requested:	48.36%
Organisation's contribution	£6,681	Organisation's latest bank balance	£216,236

Previous grants

2016/17 capital grants - £1,000 towards recreation ground car park improvements.

Scoring

<p>New facilities or activities The project will provide a new facility for the community however, as the project is on a relatively small scale their score is limited to two points.</p>	Score	2/3
<p>Community benefit The whole community can freely access and use the trim trail equipment allowing them to receive full marks in this section.</p>	Score	3/3
<p>Funding the project The parish council is funding the balance of the cost (51.16 per cent) from their own reserves. They have not approached any other funding sources towards the costs.</p> <p>While their bank balance is high, over £203,000 is ringfenced for their village hall project. This leaves £13,236 to cover their contribution and any other future expenditure.</p> <p>Officers are confident they do require external funding to see the project take place.</p>	Score	3/3
<p>Consultation They refer to their neighbourhood plan in their consultation response, however upon reading the document there is no specific reference to the trim trail. Officers are therefore unsure how much demand there is for the facilities in the community.</p> <p>Project completion within timeframe Their start and end dates in February 2018 are within the guidelines of the scheme.</p> <p>Financial and project management plans The parish council will fund the maintenance of the equipment going forward and intend applying for an Awards for All grant towards the eventual replacement/upgrade costs.</p>		
OFFICER COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS	Total score	8/9
Officers recommend a grant condition that they must have a satisfactory safety inspection carried out before the final grant payment is released.	Suggested grant	48.36% of the total cost, capped to £6,257

Applicant responses

Details of the project	Blewbury Trim Trail is a professionally sourced set of multi-activity fitness equipment designed for all ages and abilities. It will be positioned close to other recreational facilities on Council owned land and by its nature be expandable if funds become available. It will fill a gap in the village's amenities which are needed as team sports decline in favour of individual exercise.
Financial statement from the organisation	As stated above the PC will be contributing £6681. The accounts of the PC show large amounts of reserves which might indicate that other funds would be available. Unfortunately the majority of our reserves, (£160000) are ring-fenced for the Village Hall Refurbishment project. There is nothing available from the precept which is likely to break even for PC expenses the Post Code 'Lottery' makes it impossible for Blewbury to raise money via the National Lottery
Statement about town/parish support	
Community benefit	
Who will benefit from your project?	Local football and youth football teams as part of their general fitness training Existing fitness groups and local runners hopefully to be expanded further into the community Attracting older people, like myself, over 55s who recognise the health benefits of limited exercise in later life.
How did you identify a need in the community for your project or service?	In completing our neighbourhood plan we assessed more what we have in the village than what is needed. However it was apparent that there was a degree of complacency as to the future of sports. Repeated requests to aid us in providing access to the sustrans cycle routes for the massive increase in cyclists have fallen on deaf ears but we did identify the possibility of a fitness trail for runners and others
What sustainable and/or energy saving measures does your project include or offer?	Although not in reality 100% sustainable, Blewbury is committed in principle to the use of natural materials. The equipment comes as either wood or metal and we favour wood. Maintenance is higher in cost but we have experience of this.
Consultation	
What consultation have you carried out with the community or professional advisors?	There has been no formal consultation but in a village of our size it has been easy to assess the need by word of mouth. I have heard of no adverse comments. The Parish Council wholeheartedly supports the project.
New facilities/Activities	
What extra facilities (or equipment) will the project provide?	The project will create a new facility, a suite of exercise equipment, adjacent to but independent of other activity equipment (an adventure playground) mainly aimed at the younger end of the market and a croquet lawn of national standard.
What new activities will take place because of this project?	With the demise of team sports, a demand for more individual fitness related equipment has been identified. Blewbury has a high percentage of fitness conscious people of all ages and the facilities for them are inadequate. A particular section of the community to benefit is the over 55s who are targeted in initiatives by the County Council and national government.

Harwell Village Hall	Ref	VCap17-18/54
Portable staging, backdrop & wing flats		

Total project cost	£6,623		
Amount requested	£3,300	Percentage of total cost requested:	49.83%
Organisation's contribution	£3,323	Organisation's latest bank balance	£85,997

Previous grants

2017/18 - £2,500 for soft landscaping

2014/15 - £15,000 NHB and £4,110 capital grant for the hall renovation and extension

Scoring

<p>New facilities or activities This project will provide new facilities at the recently refurbished village hall however, as the project is on a relatively small scale their score is limited to two points.</p>	Score	2/3
<p>Community benefit Anyone in the community can access the hall and either use the facilities or attend events that will make use of the stage, therefore officers recommend it receives full marks in this area.</p>	Score	3/3
<p>Funding the project They are funding the rest of the costs themselves and have the money available now. Their bank balances appear high, however they have requirements to hold at least £50,000 in designated funds (loan and development funds). They require much of their remaining £35,000 reserves to fund further improvements at the hall, such as installing stage lighting. Officers are therefore confident that they will require funding to help see this project through to completion.</p>	Score	3/3
<p>Consultation There is little reference to consultation with user groups on the project however, several performance groups use the hall and they want to provide them with better facilities.</p> <p>Project completion within timeframe The organisation has amended their start date to after 21 January 2018 to allow enough time to complete our grant acceptance paperwork before starting work.</p> <p>Financial and project management plans The hall will budget for and undertake all maintenance following installation.</p>		
OFFICER COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS	Total score	8/9
	Suggested grant	49.83% of the total cost, capped to £3,300

Applicant responses

Details of the project	We are trying to provide a platform, literally! for performance arts in our newly built village hall. A portable stage, backdrop and wing flats would enhance productions, especially our upcoming village Pantomime, which is being performed in January 2018. Although our hall boasts retractable seating we have no stage, wing flats or curtains to make more impact as characters and performers enter.
Financial statement from the organisation	We are obliged to keep £25000 in our account as part of our Charitable Loan agreement and a similar amount for development and professional costs. Utility bills, maintenance, repairs and service contracts, cleaning, insurance and administration plus our loan repayments leave us with a small operating surplus, £5691 at end of September. Our income from hire fees amounts to £16089 (April to September)
Statement about town/parish support	We hold a monthly film night and a variety of musical events during the year and we intend to use profits raised from these events to support our Performance Arts project. We have not approached our Parish Council to help with this project as they have helped us with the initial rebuilding and refurbishment project.
Community benefit	
Who will benefit from your project?	We have 32 user groups who hire one or our halls on a weekly or a monthly basis. These range from babies and under fours at Fun Club or Dippy Doo music, dance groups for toddlers to teens,(tap, ballet, modern and irish dancing), exercise classes -Pilates, Zumba, Boogie Beat, Bounce Fit, Go Active Gold, Yoga, Fitness, Karate, short mat bowls and general interest such as Gobo Youth Theatre,WI, Arts & Crafts, woodturners and History.
How did you identify a need in the community for your project or service?	We are currently practising for a village pantomime, Sleeping Beauty to be held in January 2018 and we are keen to provide our own stage lighting and lighting console. We have a Youth Theatre group who meet on Saturday mornings and several dance groups, led by Bernadine Soul, who are also keen to stage productions. On our events calendar there are tribute bands and acts who require stage spotlighting. This equipment would be well used.
What sustainable and/or energy saving measures does your project include or offer?	All the stage spotlights are LED. All new equipment is to the latest energy saving specification.
Consultation	
What consultation have you carried out with the community or professional advisors?	We have estimates for stage lighting and sound equipment from two specialist companies
New facilities/Activities	
What extra facilities (or equipment) will the project provide?	Our project concentrates on the Performing Arts and will provide portable theatre equipment for several groups who use the hall, such as our Youth Theatre who meet on a Saturday morning, musical events, village pantomime and future drama groups who have expressed an interest in hiring the hall. The hall boasts retractable seating and the addition of stage, backdrop and wing flats will definitely enhance our existing facilities.
What new activities will take place because of this project?	Our project will definitely allow us to increase capacity for our existing activities of a performance nature and will enhance these greatly. For instance, our local church is using the hall for the whole of October, while St. Matthews undergoes building works, a portable stage for the 'altar' or the orchestra would have been ideal. There are several amateur dramatic clubs in the area who are interested in our future plans.

Challows Royal British Legion	Ref	VCap17-18/50
Replacement flat roof		

Total project cost	£10,070		
Amount requested	£5,000	Percentage of total cost requested:	49.65%
Organisation's contribution	£5,070	Organisation's latest bank balance	£1,860

Previous grants

None

Scoring

New facilities or activities The project will improve the building by replacing existing, leaking (flat) roof, allowing the building to remain in use.	Score	2/3
Community benefit There are a wide range of groups using the building ranging from bingo, fitness classes, snooker etc.	Score	3/3
Funding the project While they intend paying for the rest of the cost not covered by this grant themselves (50.35 per cent), they do not currently have sufficient funds to cover this level of contribution. If they can confirm (and provide evidence to officers) that they now have all of their contribution this score could be increased.	Score	2/3
Consultation The need to replace the roof does not lend itself to public consultation. The organisation states the club may have to close if the work is not completed, however there is no supporting evidence of health and safety reports etc to support this.		
Project completion within timeframe Their start date in February 2018 works with the limits of our scheme, but will depend on the organisation raising their financial contribution within the next 12 months.		
Financial and project management plans The club will maintain the roof going forward. Officers recommend they consider a designated fund within their accounts towards building works to have some reserves for future projects.		
OFFICER COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS	Total score	7/9
	Suggested grant	49.65% of the total cost, capped to £5,000

Applicant responses

Details of the project	The roof over the main entertainment hall is leaking and is in desperate need of being replaced. The room is of vital use as it allows the committee generate funds by way of hiring out for parties/gatherings. Although there's a vast expanse of roofing needing replacing, the committee are concentrating on the main hall initially.
Financial statement from the organisation	<p>There shouldn't be any ongoing requirements once the repair on the roof has been carried out.</p> <p>We have limited funds, which just about covers outgoings including rent to the Landlord.</p> <p>If this repair isn't completed then the club may have to close due to:</p> <p>Income from use of the hall will reduce affecting income and/or Health & Safety reasons due to the unsafe roof.</p>
Statement about town/parish support	<p>We did apply to East Challow Parish Council for some S106 money a while ago but this hasn't progressed as development hasn't started.</p> <p>Due to the roof deteriorating quicker than expected, the need to have it repaired is now getting to a crisis point.</p>
Community benefit	
Who will benefit from your project?	<p>Clubs/groups such as Darts, Snooker, Business Club Members, Fitness Classes use this club. We also do regular club dances, annual Remembrance Sunday lunch and children's boxing day disco.</p> <p>As the local village pub has closed down and has now been converted into a home, the need for this club is even more important.</p> <p>There's further development going to happen in the nearby vicinity so a local social hub is a positive for the area.</p>
How did you identify a need in the community for your project or service?	<p>This club was built by local residents over 50 years ago and is a vital community building. It is a social hub for many residents in the Vale area. It's showing its age and although there's many other refurbishment concerns, the need to keep a good solid roof over our heads is key.</p> <p>If the roof isn't repaired, we'd have to close for health and safety reasons and this would be a major disappointment.</p>
What sustainable and/or energy saving measures does your project include or offer?	Once the roof is repaired, which will in itself will save heating costs, the committee would like to explore the possibility of replacing the lighting to something more energy efficient.
Consultation	
What consultation have you carried out with the community or professional advisors?	<p>The need for the repair is urgent. The leaking is getting more regular and the water damage more evident. There's a number of health & safety concerns, especially after every rainfall.</p> <p>I can supply photographs of the water damage.</p>
New facilities/Activities	
What extra facilities (or equipment) will the project provide?	<p>Although there's no scope for any new/extra facilities, the improved roof will allow us to be safe in the knowledge that we can offer good safe facilities to groups/users.</p> <p>Once the roof is done, the committee can then deal with replacing the kitchen, which needs updating. It'll be more beneficial to promote the hall with better kitchen facilities.</p>
What new activities will take place because of this project?	<p>This club and its main hall are well used by a number of groups. Activities such as bingo, fitness classes and general celebrations are enjoyed by many residents. Legion Members and other visitors not only come from the Wantage area but other local villages.</p> <p>The committee tries to ensure that there's a variety of things going on for several different age groups.</p>

East Hendred Community Centre	Ref	VCap17-18/74
Snells Hall lighting upgrade		

Total project cost	£2,826		
Amount requested	£1,413	Percentage of total cost requested:	50.00%
Organisation's contribution	£1,413	Organisation's latest bank balance	£42,855

Previous grants

2011 - £2,500 towards toilet improvements at the hall.

Scoring

<p>New facilities or activities This project will improve the existing lighting at the hall, allowing them to receive a maximum of two points in this section.</p>	Score	2/3
<p>Community benefit The hall is available to the whole community to use for a wide range of uses, therefore officers have awarded the maximum score possible.</p>	Score	3/3
<p>Funding the project They will fund the other 50 per cent not covered by this grant, unless they can secure a parish council grant of £500 in the new financial year which would reduce their contribution to £913.</p> <p>They had over £42,000 in the bank when they applied, and confirmed known commitments of £14,000, leaving £28,000 in their reserves unallocated therefore, they may not need external funding to complete the project.</p> <p>Officer's would have suggested they receive three points, however the scoring matrix includes recommended deductions (of two points) if the organisation has enough funds to complete the project without any grants. If the organisation can give more information on their finances and other commitments at the meeting, this score could be amended.</p>	Score	1/3
<p>Consultation The management committee discussed what works to carry out. They have not had any professional consultations, like an energy audit to confirm this is the best solution for them.</p> <p>Project completion within timeframe Their start and end dates in August 2018 work well with the time limits of this scheme.</p> <p>Financial and project management plans The hall will budget for and arrange to maintain the lights once installed.</p>		
<p>OFFICER COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS Based on the score this is a medium priority and officers suggest a grant of 75 per cent of the amount requested.</p>	Total score	6/9
	Suggested grant	37.50% of the total cost, capped to £1,060

Applicant responses

Details of the project	Replacement of existing lighting with LED lighting.
Financial statement from the organisation	Projects for the next year include: Tree work: £2000 Painting of hall interior: £3000 Re-pointing of front of the hall: £2000 Re-surfacing of car park:£7000
Statement about town/parish support	We have not yet approached East Hendred Parish Council for support towards this project, because it will fall into the Council's 2018-2019 financial year. If our application to the Vale of White Horse DC is successful, we will apply for the maximum annual individual grant of £500 from EHPC, reducing our organisation's contribution to £913.
Community benefit	
Who will benefit from your project?	All users of the hall will benefit. This includes: Downs Golden Age (Club for senior citizens) Mother and Toddler Group Pre-school Scouting organisations (Scouts, Cubs, Beavers) Women's Institute Amateur Dramatic Group Pilates Classes
How did you identify a need in the community for your project or service?	The need to upgrade the lighting was recognised by the hall Management Committee, having received comments from various users. It was not felt that consultation was needed on this, which is a building management issue.
What sustainable and/or energy saving measures does your project include or offer?	The project replaces existing fluorescent lamps with LEDs, which will save energy. The current total power of the lamps to be replaced is 910 watts. The total wattage when replaced with LEDs will be 450 watts, a saving of 460 Watts
Consultation	
What consultation have you carried out with the community or professional advisors?	No impartial professionals were consulted on this project. Qualified electricians took part in the specification of lamps.
New facilities/Activities	
What extra facilities (or equipment) will the project provide?	The project will replace old lighting with newer, more efficient LED lighting. It will include dimmable lighting which will enhance the hall for dances and parties, which provide a significant part of hall income.
What new activities will take place because of this project?	Existing activities will be enhanced. No new activities will be enabled.