

Wantage Area Committee



Report of Head of Community Services

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Capital and New Homes Bonus (NHB) Grants 2017/18 – Round One

Recommendation

That the Wantage area committee considers the two applications for NHB grants and makes awards in line with the approved policy (2017).

Purpose of report

1. To give the committee the information needed to award NHB 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

1. We opened the NHB and Capital grant schemes from 25 April to 6 June 2018.
2. The Wantage area received two eligible NHB grant applications requesting a total of £30,262 against a budget of £54,585.
3. The Wantage area received one capital grant application, but it did not meet the eligibility criteria, so was not able to come forward for consideration.
4. Officers have evaluated the applications using the scoring matrix in the agreed NHB policy. See appendix one for the NHB grant evaluations and appendix two for each parish's percentage of the Wantage area's total new housing.

5. In line with the policy, officers have suggested scores and awards for the projects for the committee to consider. The committee's final scores will dictate the level of funding the committee can award.

Financial implications

6. In February 2018, the council set the 2018/19 NHB grant budget at £100,000. As per the policy, the Wantage area was allocated 54.585 per cent of the available budget (£54,585) to award in NHB grants during 2018/19. As per the agreed policy these grants can fund either revenue or capital projects. If the committee has more than £5,000 budget remaining after this round of applications we will open for a second round later in the year.
7. At the same meeting, the council set a 2018/19 Capital grant budget of £100,000. The Wantage area committee was allocated 29.291 per cent of this (£29,291) to award in capital grants in 2018/19. As it did not receive any eligible applications this budget will remain available for a second round later in the year.

Legal implications

8. The council's legal powers to award these grants are contained in Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 that gives a general power of competence for local authorities.
9. In May 2018, full council delegated authority to three area committees to determine NHB and Capital grant applications within the parameters of each scheme's policy.

Risks

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

Conclusion

11. That the committee awards NHB grants to the two applications in line with the relevant approved policy.

Background papers

NHB grant policy.

Appendix One - Vale NHB 2017-18 - officer evaluation report - Scoring summary

SCORING SUMMARY

Ref no.	Organisation	Scheme	Total project cost	Amount requested	% of cost requested	Suggested score	Suggested award (% of total cost) % of total
VNHB18-196	Grove Parish Church	Install toilets in the main church hall	£36,278	£9,990	27.54%	8	Up to 20.65% capped to £7,492
VNHB18-194	Steventon Sports & Social Club	Install a disabled toilet and refurbishment of the bar/clubroom	£54,249	£20,272	37.37%	6	Up to 28.03%, capped to £15,204
			Total requested	£30,262			Total suggested
							Budget
							Balance
							£22,696
							£54,585
							£31,889

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.
9-12 points	High priority	Award full amount requested - budget permitting
5-8 points	Medium priority	Award between 50 and 75 per cent of the amount requested, depending on their score - budget permitting
0-4 points	Low priority	No funding

New homes score

Points	Percentage of area's total new homes in the parish the project takes place in
0	Less than 1 % of growth
1	1-10 % of growth
2	11-50 % of growth
3	51 or more % of growth

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 organisation 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.

Grove Parish Church	Ref	VNHB18-19\6
Install toilets in the main church hall		

Total project cost	£36,278		
Amount requested	£9,990	Percentage of total cost requested:	27.54%
Organisation's contribution	£24,288	Organisation's latest bank balance	£170,098
Other funding	£2,000	£1,500 secured from The Rank Foundation £500 requested for the parish council	

Previous grants

Capital 15/116: £20,000 Church Hall Window Replacement

NHB 15/16: £18,000 Church Hall Insulation, Lighting, AV equip

NHB 17/18: £33,955 Church Hall Storage Room and side hall extension

Scoring

New Homes in parish(es) Grove Parish received 18.4 per cent of the area's total housing growth therefore allowing them to receive two points.	Score	2/3
New facilities or activities There is currently no accessible toilet in the main church hall (although we understand there are facilities elsewhere on site). As this project will improve the existing facilities on a relatively small scale and the new toilets will not enable new activities as a result, officers suggest a score of two points, in recognition that it will improve facilities for disabled users.	Score	2/3
Community benefit The main hall is used by a range of user groups from U3A, brownies and congregation events, like baptisms. They are all likely to prefer having toilet facilities in the hall, rather than using the ones elsewhere on the site. As any user could benefit from these toilets officers suggest three points.	Score	3/3
Funding the project The organisation is contributing £24,288 of their £170,098 reserves (bank balance at time of application). They listed some financial commitments and ringfenced funds but it appears they could contribute more if necessary. They have secured £1,500 of their £2,000 external funding already and may secure the remaining £500 by the time the committee meet. As they have secured most of their other funding they would usually score two points, however as per the policy officers have deducted one point as it appears they could contribute more themselves. If they have secured the other funding and can give more clarity on the limitations on their contribution at the meeting this score could be revised.	Score	1/3
Consultation They surveyed current users for their thoughts on the improvement plans, including the toilets.		

Internal Consultations

Equalities officer – I support this application, but it's not clear if the accessible toilet will meet British standards (especially the length), which we'd expect it to. Studies show that right-hand transfer to the toilet is preferred over left-hand transfer, which is currently shown in their drawings so I'd recommend amending this if possible.

Sustainability Officer – I recommend low energy LED lighting, automatic lighting controls (e.g. absence detection) and water saving measures like low water WCs and sensor or push taps. Sensor taps are also suitable for disabled WCs and can avoid wasted water when lever taps are inadvertently left running.

Project completion within timeframe

The start date in September is just after the minimum timeframe for this round.

Financial and project management plans

They have supplied an overarching project plan for all the works at the church, not a detailed plan specifically for the new toilet block. Financial details are included in the project plan.

OFFICER RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS		Total score	8/12
A condition that they must consider the equality and sustainability feedback and implement any suggestions where possible.		Suggested grant	20.65% of the total cost (75% of request), capped to £7,492

Applicant responses

Details of the project	Provision of two extra toilets, including an accessible toilet as we currently have none despite wide community use and a number of disabled users. The new toilets to be accessed from the church hall itself, improving safety for children, as they will not need to leave the hall - the current toilets are situated off the church entrance hall.
Financial statement from the organisation	All the money in the TSB account is restricted to GROW - the children and families charity currently operating under our financial 'umbrella'. We have set aside for other commitments £10,000 contingency £8,000 restricted to local mission £13,000 for church fire exit £18,000 overdue repairs to Sanctuary - which will be moved to hall fund instead if there is a deficit there. £52,000 due for parish share by December 2018 Ongoing staff and maintenance costs
Statement about town/parish support	Yes, we have applied and await grant decision which is expected at the end of June 2018
Community benefit	
Who will benefit from your project?	Two guides groups, one brownie group, University of 3rd age main meeting, 2 badminton groups, 2 toddler groups, GroW families groups, youth group all of whom meet weekly/most weeks in term times, Church members who meet at least weekly, ad hoc events such as funerals, baptisms, parties, community meetings. All of these groups have the potential to have disabled members who would benefit from accessible toilet facilities
How did you identify a need in the community for your project or service?	We consulted widely in the church, and in particular requested input from wheelchair users. It is very clear that our current toilets are not sufficient. We also asked all our groups what they wanted from the planned upgrade to our facilities prior to starting in 2016

What sustainable and/or energy saving measures does your project include or offer?	The project will be installed with roof lights to maximise natural lighting. In addition all building regulations will be adhered to. The toilet block will be between the end of the church hall and the church itself, and will therefore provide insulation to both (as they will to it).
Consultation	
What consultation have you carried out with the community or professional advisors?	We have had an architects opinion on the project initially, and then have used an architectural technician for the later drawings. In addition we have a qualified civil engineer, an electrician and a plumber on our planning committee.
New facilities/Activities	
What extra facilities (or equipment) will the project provide?	This will provide an accessible toilet, which we do not have despite already having wheelchair users and others with mobility issues regularly using our facilities. The premises are otherwise disabled friendly, and it is the one very significant unmet area of need hindering our plans to provide welcoming and fully accessible facilities to the residents of Grove.
What new activities will take place because of this project?	It will allow people with significant mobility problems much easier access to toilet facilities. The current ones are too small and restrictive, and do not have the space to allow affected people the dignity of managing their personal needs on their own without help.

Steventon Sports & Social Club	Ref	VNHB18-19\4
Install a disabled toilet and refurbishment on the bar/clubroom		

Total project cost	£54,249		
Amount requested	£20,272	Percentage of total cost requested:	37.37%
Organisation's contribution	£0	Organisation's latest bank balance	£19,832
Other funding	£33,977	£33,977 S106 contributions requested – decision pending	

Previous grants

Vale Capital Pre-14/15: £3,997 refurbishment of changing rooms and re-wiring

Scoring

New Homes in parish(es) Steventon saw 7.6 % of the Wantage area's total additional housing therefore allowing them to receive one point.	Score	1/3
New facilities or activities This project will improve existing facilities by installing a disabled toilet with baby changing facilities and refurbishing the bar and club room. As this project will improve the existing facilities and activities (especially those for disabled users) rather than create/allow new ones officers suggest they receive two points.	Score	2/3
Community benefit Whilst predominantly used by sports clubs and social members other groups can (and do) use the space, like DAMASCAS youth group. As the space is booked/accessed by non-members for more than just sports use officers suggest it receives three points.	Score	3/3
Funding the project The organisation is not planning to contribute from their £19,832 reserves (bank balances at the time of application). After reviewing their response around their other commitments, they may be able to afford a contribution, but could not fund the whole project. They have applied for all the remaining costs from S106 contributions, and are waiting for a decision. This would usually allow officers to recommend a score of one point, but as per the policy officers have deducted one point as it appears they could contribute towards the project. If they secure the other funding and can give more clarity around why they cannot contribute at the meeting this score could be revised.	Score	0/3
Consultation Responses to the Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire (Final neighbourhood plan pending publication) recommended improving the pavilion, but don't mention these works specifically.		

Internal Consultations:

Legal team – according to their constitution, if the organisation were wound-up all surplus funds/assets would be distributed between their individual members. This means private individuals could financially benefit from our grant, as it would make the property more valuable.

In order to mitigate this risk any grant should be conditional on them amending this clause, so the surplus funds are distributed to one or more local not-for-profit organisations rather than individuals.

Equalities Officer – I’m supportive of the inclusion of the accessible toilet provided it meets British Standards BS8300-2 2018. I would also suggest installing grab rails in one of the male and female cubicles and making sure these doors open outwards.

If the changing areas and showers will not be wheelchair accessible as part of these works they should include this in a future project.

There’s no mention of a portable/permanent ramp (and associated hand rails) leading to the entrance, which appears necessary for the location. If this is not included I strongly recommend it’s a priority for a future project.

Sustainability Officer – I support the LED lighting but also encourage automatic lighting controls (e.g. absence detection). I also recommend low water WCs and sensor or push taps to avoid wasted water.

Project completion within timeframe

Their expected start date in November is the earliest possible and will depend on our grant agreement being complete and the S106 funding being release to them in time.

Financial and project management plans

They have an overarching project plan but it does not specifically cover these parts of the project.

OFFICER COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS	Total score	6/12
<p>A condition that work cannot start until the council’s grant agreement is complete and they have fully secured all the funding needed for the whole project.</p> <p>A recommendation they implement any suggestions from the equality and sustainability officers where physically possible.</p> <p>A condition that they amend clause 36 of their constitution (dissolution clause) so that any surplus funds in the event the club folds are distributed to one of more local not-for-profit organisations, rather than individual members.</p> <p>A condition that if awarded more than £15,000 the council will have access to up to 30 hours free use per year for a minimum of 5 years.</p>	Suggested grant	28.03% of the total cost, capped to £15,204

Applicant responses

Details of the project	The current facilities are some 25 years old and in need of upgrading to modern standards. Toilets in the changing room will be renovated to become a disabled toilet and baby change facility with access from the club room and toilets for the changing rooms. The bar and club room will be refurbished with new windows and doors, window shutters and new furniture and fittings.
Financial statement from the organisation	SSSC have already committed £6041 to pay for Architect and appropriate planning permissions. SSSC has on going maintenance costs for the mower and has £500 for start up of a new boys or girls football team. SSSC has reserves of £6000 that we want to build up to realise Phase 2.
Statement about town/parish support	Yes the Parish Council fully support the refurbishment project.
Community benefit	
Who will benefit from your project?	DAMASCUS project Football club Cricket club Royal British Legion (Have their meetings in club and functions) Traditional pub games (darts, crib, aunt sally) Bingo (well supported by elderly people who enjoy social contact) Children's birthday parties Bereavements (After funeral wake) Village fun days organised by Steventon Sports & Social Club New village activity groups
How did you identify a need in the community for your project or service?	SSSC and the big green are an integral part of the Steventon Neighbourhood Plan (NP). SSSC supports teams for Cricket, Football, Aunt Sally and other traditional pub games. Fun days and Corporate events are held on the green and make full use of the SSSC facilities. Written comments in the NP Questionnaire fully supported SSSC and recommended enhancements to the club pavilion. The Character Assessment Report concluded "SSSC is in need of updating".
What sustainable and/or energy saving measures does your project include or offer?	All current lighting utilises LED's.
Consultation	
What consultation have you carried out with the community or professional advisors?	None apart from LAPD architects.
New facilities/Activities	
What extra facilities (or equipment) will the project provide?	The new layout will provide: Installation of a disabled toilet with associated access. Internal design to create more light, and space to cater for more sport/social usage.
What new activities will take place because of this project?	Football club (initiatives for youth and women teams to be formed) Cricket club (initiatives for youth and women teams to be formed) Royal British Legion (Have their meetings and functions in the club) Traditional pub games (darts, crib, aunt sally) Bingo (well supported by elderly people who enjoy social contact) Children's birthday parties Bereavements (funeral wakes) Village fun days organised by Steventon Sports & Social Club DAMASCUS youth initiative New village activity groups

Appendix two – percentage of the area’s total new homes falling in each parish

Parish/town	2016 total occupied homes	2017 total occupied homes	Total parish increase in year	Percentage of area's total increase
Ardington and Lockinge	220	220	0	0.00%
Blewbury	782	781	-1	-0.20%
Childrey	224	223	-1	-0.20%
Chilton	646	647	1	0.20%
Dentchworth	80	80	0	0.00%
East Challow	399	399	0	0.00%
East Hanney	397	417	20	4.00%
East Hendred	521	536	15	3.00%
Grove	3,144	3,236	92	18.40%
Harwell	1,252	1,523	271	54.20%
Kingston Lisle	107	111	4	0.80%
Letcombe Bassett	76	77	1	0.20%
Letcombe Regis	380	382	2	0.40%
Milton	496	498	2	0.40%
Sparsholt	138	138	0	0.00%
Steventon	752	790	38	7.60%
Upton	176	175	-1	-0.20%
Wantage	5,189	5,236	47	9.40%
West Challow	88	88	0	0.00%
West Hanney	236	246	10	2.00%
West Hendred	149	149	0	0.00%
Total	15,452	15,952	500	