

Abingdon and North-East Area Committee



Report of Head of Community Services

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New Homes Bonus Grants 2018/19 – Round two

Recommendation

That the Abingdon and North-East Area Committee considers the three applications for New Homes Bonus grants and makes awards in line with the approved policy (2017).

Purpose of report

1. To give the committee the information needed to consider awarding 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

3. The council opened the NHB grant scheme for applications from 02 January 2019 to 28 January 2019.
4. The Abingdon and North-East area received three eligible grant applications requesting a total of £8,880 against a committee budget of £25,983. One application didn't meet the eligibility criteria as it was requesting funding for school equipment and the under the current policy we will not consider projects that usually fall to other statutory bodies to provide for example, projects to improve schools.
5. Officers have evaluated each application against the scoring criteria agreed in the policy and set out in pages 11-14 of this report. The suggested scores determine the level of funding, if any, to award each project. Appendix one outlines the officers' evaluations and

suggested scores for each application and appendix two the percentage of new homes in each parish needed to determine the score for the amount of new housing in the parish.

6. In line with the policy, the committee is asked to review the suggested scores, which will dictate whether to award a grant and if so the level of funding it can award the project.

Financial implications

7. In February 2018, the council set a 2018/19 NHB budget of £100,000. The Abingdon and North-East area committee was allocated 25.983 per cent of this (£25,983) to award in NHB grants in 2018/19. As per the agreed policy these grants can fund either revenue or capital projects. The committee did not grant any awards in the first round of funding as it agreed to fund the one application it received from its capital budget, therefore there is £25,983 available for this round.
8. Any budget remaining after this round of awards will be returned to the council's general reserves, as per the agreed policy.

Legal implications

9. The council's legal powers to award these grants are set out in section one of the Localism Act 2011 that gives a general power of competence for local authorities.
10. In May 2018, full council delegated authority to three area committees to determine NHB grant applications within the parameters of the policy.

Risks

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

Conclusion

12. That the committee considers the three eligible applications to the NHB grant scheme and makes awards in line with the approved policy.

Background papers

13. The council's NHB grant policy.

Appendix one- Abingdon and North East Area 2018-19 NHB grants (round two)

Officer evaluations

Ref no.	Organisation	Scheme	Scheme cost	Amount requested	% of cost requested	Suggested score	Suggested award
VNHB18-19\43	Be Free Young Carers	Client Management Software Replacement	£5,714	£900	15.75%	8	11.81% (capped to £675)
VNHB18-19\21	Oxfordshire Play Association	South Abingdon Saturdads	£9,966	£4,983	50.00%	7	37.50% (capped to £2,288) based on eligible costs of £6,102
VNHB18-19\39	Abingdon Squash and Racketball Club	New clubroom furniture	£5,995	£2,997	49.99%	7	37.50% (capped to £2,248)
Total							£8,880
Total suggested							£5,211
Budget							£25,983
Balance							£20,772

Be Free Young Carers	Ref	VNHB18-19\43
Client Management Software Replacement		

Total project cost	£5,714		
Amount requested	£900 from each of the area committees	Percentage of total cost requested from this committee:	15.75%
Organisation's contribution	£3,014	Organisation's latest bank balance	£47,313
Other funding	£ 1,800	Of which £1,800 is being requested from other Vale NHB Panels	
Including a parish/town council contribution of	£ 0		

Previous grants

VCG\689 Carers - Take a Break! Awarded £4,289
VCCG\1067 Replacement Website Awarded £378

Scoring

New facilities or activities The project will enable the applicants to continue to register and record interactions with young carers. As it will not enable any new activities to take place the score has been limited to one point.	Score	1/3
Community benefit The primary beneficiaries for this project are both the staff/volunteers at the organisation and the young carers that access their services. This allows them to score two points in this area.	Score	2/3
Funding the project The organisation has applied for £900 from each of the area committees towards this project and will fund the remaining costs themselves. As the organisation has identified but not secured all of the other funding for the project they are able to score a maximum of two points in this area. It is unlikely that they would be able to fund more of the project given their on-going commitments.	Score	2/3
New Homes in parish(es) The organisation operates throughout the district and is therefore able to score maximum points in this area.	Score	3/3
Consultation The applicant has consulted their current software provider and Swindon Carers Centre, which currently uses the software they are looking to purchase. No other evidence of consultation was provided. Project completion within timeframe The project is relatively short term, and will fit within the requirements of the scheme. Financial and project management plans The applicant has provided a basic project plan, which involves introducing the new software approximately two months before their current provider stops supporting their existing software. The organisation is completely dependant on grant support/donations to meet all its ongoing costs, and nearly stopped operating earlier this year when it was unable to secure enough funding to continue running its core business. If the organisation is not successful in its applications for funding to the other area committees it may not be able to afford the project.		
OFFICER COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS	Total score	8/12
	Suggested grant	11.81% of the total cost, capped to £675

Applicant responses

Details of the project	<p>Purchase of laptop and specialist GDPR compliant client management software to record all client personal contact details and interactions.</p> <p>Our current provider of this software is closing the business and will not be supporting the software after July 2019.</p> <p>New supplier has been sourced to provide suitable secure software, used in other advice settings. The project provides for usage licence, migration of existing records, set up and staff training.</p>
Financial statement from the organisation	<p>Monthly expenditure:</p> <p>Office rental: £680.26</p> <p>Office services (WiFi, phones, cleaning): £55.00</p> <p>Staffing costs: £7,300.00</p> <p>Staff supervision: £100</p> <p>Mobiles: £38.10</p> <p>Expected Income:</p> <p>£9,798.50 South Oxfordshire District Council - 2019/20 Stage payment of four year funding</p> <p>£1,000.00 Henley Town Council - Annual payment of three year funding</p> <p>All income is achieved from applications to trusts and organisations and donations. We therefore cannot be certain in advance that any or all applications will result in funding being awarded.</p>
Statement about town/parish support	<p>Be Free Young Carers approaches all parish councils in the Vale area annually for a general donation towards its work. To date, in 2018/19, parish and town councils in the Vale have donated a total of £15,850. These donations fund our core costs and activities with young carers. A proportion of this funding will go towards the cost of this software.</p>
Community benefit	
Who will benefit from your project?	<p>The items requested will help support our work with young carers across the Vale of White Horse. They will allow us to continue recording confidentially our contacts with young carers from all parishes in the Vale, enable us to better track the impact of our work and promote our activities more efficiently to young carers registered with us via mail shots.</p>
How did you identify a need in the community for your project or service?	<p>The project relates to the replacement of software the support for which will be discontinued later this year. We have consulted with our current and preferred supplier have been demonstrated the proposed software to all staff who support the application. There is an absolute operational need for replacement. The replacement software and laptop will enable better statistical analysis of our client group.</p>
What sustainable and/or energy saving measures does your project include or offer?	<p>The laptop will be more energy efficient than older machines currently in use.</p>
Consultation	
What consultation have you carried out with the community or professional advisors?	<p>Laptop supplier was asked to put forward the most energy efficient suitable machine for the purpose. Please see quotation for details.</p>
New facilities/Activities	
What extra facilities (or equipment) will the project provide?	<p>The funding requested will replace existing software that will be unsupported later this year. The software chosen as replacement is like for like in its operation and will enable Be Free YC to continue to register and record its interactions with young carers. It will improve Be Free YC's ability to report on its work and impact and be more efficient in promoting activities to young carers via mail shots.</p>
What new activities will take place because of this project?	<p>The new software will enable existing client registrations and records to continue as they are currently. It will also be capable of analysing in greater detail the impact of our work, improve our reporting and more easily set up mail outs to young carers and others. It is cloud based software so will enable secure flexible working.</p>

Oxfordshire Play Association	Ref	VNHB18-19\21
South Abingdon Saturdads		

Total project cost	£9,966		
Eligible project costs	£6,102		
Amount requested	£4,983	Percentage of total cost requested:	50.00%
Amended request on %	£3,051		
Organisation's contribution	£883	Organisation's latest bank balance	£123,448
Other funding	£4,983	Of which £4,983 is secured in grants from:	Rotary Club of Abingdon Vesper
Including a parish/town council contribution of	£ 0		

Previous grants

FE17-18\51 Dalton Barracks Play Day £500

FE17-18\44 Faringdon Play Day £500

F16-17\43 South Abingdon Play Day £500

Scoring

New facilities or activities The project is for one-off revenue funding to offer a new free play scheme for male parents/carers and their children that hasn't been available since the South Abingdon Children's Centre closed in 2015. As it will provide a new activity for the community it can score 2 points in this area, however as it's funding for a year it may not be available at the end of the 12 month period.	Score	2/3
Community benefit As the primary beneficiaries for this project will be a single interest group - parents/carers this score has been limited to one point.	Score	1/3
Funding the project All of the other funding for this project is now in place which would normally allow them to score 3 points in this area, however officers have limited their score to 2 points as the grant offer letter from Rotary Club of Abingdon Vesper says they would be happy to underwrite the remaining costs for the project. Therefore in line with the scoring criteria 1 point has been deducted as they appear to be able to fund the project without support from this scheme.	Score	2/3
New Homes in parish(es) Abingdon has seen 28.99% of the additional homes in the committees area, allowing them to receive two points.	Score	2/3
Consultation The applicant consulted the South Abingdon Childrens Centre (prior to its closure) and with Action For Children who had previously run a similar project up until 2015.		
VOWHDC Equalities Officer Comment: In line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 below Oxfordshire Play Association would need to be able to justify that they are providing Saturdads as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim and that condition b (below) or similar reasoning is relevant. They would also need to ensure that they treat a transsexual service user according to the gender role in which they present. The Equality Act 2010 code of practice for services states the following relating to single sex services: 13.54 The Act provides that the prohibition of sex discrimination does not apply where services are provided exclusively to one sex, as long as to do so is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim, and at least one of the conditions set out below applies (please see relevant condition): b) Where the service is also provided jointly for both sexes, an additional service exclusively for one sex will be lawful if the joint provision would not be sufficiently effective. Example: A new fathers' support group is provided by a health authority as there is insufficient attendance by men at the new parents' support group.		
Project completion within timeframe		

The project will run for 12 months, 26 sessions running every other week.

Financial and project management plans

They have attached a basic project management plan, and have secured funding for the first year of the project however it is not clear from these plans how or if they would fund future years. The organisation has a significant bank balance of £123,448 however most of this is reserved for current commitments.

OFFICER COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS	Total score	7/12
	Suggested grant	37.50% of the total cost, capped to £2,288 (based on eligible costs of £6,102)

Applicant responses

Details of the project	<p>The South Abingdon Saturdays project will offer FREE, fortnightly sessions from 10am until Midday on a Saturday morning at Preston Road Community Centre and within its first year will deliver 26 sessions.</p> <p>The project will be staffed by 2 OPA Playworkers who will offer fun and positive Play opportunities within a Safe and Supportive environment at the heart of the South Abingdon Community.</p> <p>The sessions will increase Childrens opportunities to Play whilst promoting Positive Activities and Behaviours, Increased Levels of Physical Activity and Healthy Lifestyles.</p> <p>Session Themes will include Den Making, Sports Tasters, Parachute Games, Risky Play and Creative Arts</p>
Financial statement from the organisation	<p>£21,000 is allocated as Unrestricted, Designated Funds</p> <p>The remaining balance is Restricted Funding for current and future project work.</p>
Statement about town/parish support	<p>Abingdon Town Council have already awarded OPA funding for alternative projects in this financial year</p> <p>We will be approaching them for continuation funding in future years</p>
Community benefit	
Who will benefit from your project?	<p>The project will benefit male parents / carers and their Children.</p> <p>The project will be based at Preston Road Community Centre and as such we expect the majority of Service users to be from the Caldecott Ward in South Abingdon.</p> <p>However there will not be an exclusion for those outside of the area. We will record the postcode of Service users to record where our beneficiaries live which will inform future delivery..</p>
How did you identify a need in the community for your project or service?	<p>The Saturdays project delivered by South Abingdon Childrens Centre was considered an important service before it closed down and we have previously discussed the positive project outcomes with Action For Children who delivered the service previously up until 2015</p> <p>As the only area in Oxfordshire appearing in the bottom 20% of areas when using the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (Outside Oxford City and Banbury) this project will help the local Community in a positive way</p>
What sustainable and/or energy saving measures does your project include or offer?	<p>Our project will promote Upcycling and Recycling as part of its planned session activities</p>
Consultation	
What consultation have you carried out with the community or professional advisors?	<p>We spoke to Action For Children before South Abingdon Childrens Centre closed down and they stressed how important positive engagement with male parents / carers was in the local area.</p> <p>We have also consulted with The Abingdon Vineyard Church who deliver other projects and services from Preston Road Community Centre and they advise that this project would be very beneficial with other services attended almost exclusively by female parents / carers</p>
New facilities/Activities	
What extra facilities (or equipment) will the project provide?	<p>This project will provide the only Free, Open Access provision in South Abingdon for Male Parent and Carers and their Children.</p> <p>No such activity like this has been offered since South Abingdon Childrens Centre closed in 2015 and is not a project currently offered by Abingdon Carousel or any other local provider.</p> <p>There is clear Research and Evidence available that shows the benefit to Children & Young People of a positive male role model</p>
What new activities will take place because of this project?	<p>This project will be a new addition to our portfolio of projects and will allow us to expand our capacity and our delivery within South Abingdon.</p> <p>The project will be a new addition to the services currently available in the South Abingdon area and will be offered FREE of charge to Service Users to ensure an Inclusion for ALL.</p> <p>There will be NO restrictions on attendance other than being a male parent / carer</p>

Abingdon Squash and Racketball Club	Ref	VNHB18-19\39
New clubroom furniture		

Total project cost	£5,995		
Amount requested	£2,997	Percentage of total cost requested:	49.99%
Organisation's contribution	£2,998	Organisation's latest bank balance	£20,000
Other funding	£0		
Including a parish/town council contribution of	£ 0		

Previous grants

None

Scoring

New facilities or activities The project will improve the existing facilities at the club on a relatively small scale instead of enabling new activities to take place so this limits the score to one point.	Score	1/3
Community benefit The project will benefit a single sport/group (members of the club), which limits the score to one point.	Score	1/3
Funding the project The club is contributing the rest of the funds from their reserves, and do not appear to be able to contribute more towards this project. As they have all the other funding in place they can receive three points in this area.	Score	3/3
New Homes in parish(es) Abingdon has seen 28.99% of the additional homes in the committee's area, allowing them to receive two points.	Score	2/3
Consultation They have letters of support from their Landlord (Abingdon and Witney College) and England Squash and our active communities team supports this application.		
VOWHDC Participation Officer Comment: I can confirm that "Squash" is a recognised Sport England activity and this particular organisation is named in our Leisure Study as a squash provider (Leisure and Sports facility Study 2013 – 2031 November 2014.). Paragraph 618 of our study sets out our support for organisations other than ourselves to provide these facilities to meet demand. We also note the response from Squash England in support for this project. We would therefore support this grant application on the basis that this money will contribute to the facility and viability of the club.		
VOWHDC Equalities Officer Comment: I support this application. The furniture chosen provides a good range of seating with and without arms and different heights.		
Project completion within timeframe Their planned purchase dates in May 2019 work within the timings for this scheme.		
Financial and project management plans The club has recently completed an extension to their building which has taken up a large amount of their reserves, which means the club is not in a position to fund this work without some grant support.		
OFFICER COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS	Total score	7/12
	Suggested grant	37.50% of the total cost, capped to £2,248

Applicant responses

Details of the project	We are reaching the end of a substantial extension project to our non-profit taking Community Amateur Sports Club. The extension has cost in excess of £165k and half of this has been generated through loans from our members which the club plans to pay back over the next 5-10 years. We are now running out of funds for the project and we are looking for funding help in order to re-furnish and modernise our new clubroom. There are a few things that need doing, but we have decided clubroom furniture is the priority and what we just about afford.
Financial statement from the organisation	There are no issues with contributing £2,998 from club funds for the project. This expenditure was approved at the January 2019 club committee meeting. The club is well established (over 45 years) and has sound financial management. We have a commitment to repay the loans to our members and help with this project will assist us in honouring this commitment.
Statement about town/parish support	No. We have been involved in a previous application for the Capital Grants scheme which was deferred. Since the Capital Grants scheme is no longer open, we look to apply for help from the New Homes Bonus scheme.
Community benefit	
Who will benefit from your project?	We host many Oxfordshire Squash Rackets Association events at Abingdon as we are one of the leading clubs in Southern England. All age groups from under 9 to over 55 are catered for. We employ a professional coach who organises coaching sessions for the local schools and we have a thriving junior section with over 60 active members. All of the participants who attend the club and our members will benefit from the project.
How did you identify a need in the community for your project or service?	We have letters of support for our project from the VoWH Council, England Squash the sports national governing body and our landlords the Abingdon & Witney College.
What sustainable and/or energy saving measures does your project include or offer?	We have installed a new modern central heating boiler as part of the project which should help improve efficiency. We have also fitted energy efficient LED lighting throughout the building extension.
Consultation	
What consultation have you carried out with the community or professional advisors?	No consultation with professionals has taken place, all aspects of the project have been discussed and minuted at internal development committee meetings. There are other things needed to enable us to fully complete the extension but we do not have the funds available at the moment. We have prioritised on the clubroom furniture as this will provide the biggest benefit to those people who use the facility.
New facilities/Activities	
What extra facilities (or equipment) will the project provide?	New modern furniture to complement our new clubroom. This will have a positive impact and provide a huge improvement to the club. All members and visitors will benefit from this improvement and prospective new members will be encouraged to join the club. We have up to 20 people sitting down for a post match meal following team matches two or three times a week the new furniture will provide a more enjoyable environment.
What new activities will take place because of this project?	With a completed clubroom we would be in a position to advertise for social events to be held at the club. We let our members hire the clubroom for free, we only ask that they pay for any catering and bar staff wages for any event. At present the clubroom has the old furniture which is desperately in need of replacement and so not really suitable for a function.

SCORING AND AWARD MATRICES

OVERALL 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 as requested, up to 50 per cent of the total cost (budget permitting) unless there are other reasons identified to limit the grant
5-8 points	Medium priority	Only award if there is budget available after the high priorities have been decided. Medium priorities can only receive up to 75% of the requested amount.
0-4 points	Low priority	No funding awarded

Scoring for New 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.

Scoring for 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.

Scoring for Funding the project

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 or 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) 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.</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

Scoring for New homes in parish

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

Appendix two – percentage of the area's total new homes by parish

Parish/town	2016 total occupied homes	2017 total occupied homes	Total parish increase in year	Percentage of area's total increase
Abingdon	14,680	14,749	69	28.99%
Appleford	141	140	-1	-0.42%
Cumnor	2,720	2,728	8	3.36%
Drayton	990	1,017	27	11.34%
Kennington	1,761	1,765	4	1.68%
Marcham	765	803	38	15.97%
North Hinksey	2,196	2,236	40	16.81%
Radley	1,009	1,012	3	1.26%
South Hinksey	176	175	-1	-0.42%
St Helen Without	846	846	0	0.00%
Sunningwell	378	378	0	0.00%
Sutton Courtenay	1,127	1,176	49	20.59%
Wootton	1,186	1,188	2	0.84%
Wytham	70	70	0	0.00%
	28,045	28,283	238	100.00%