

Minutes



Listening Learning Leading

OF A MEETING OF THE

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FUND PANEL

HELD AT 10.00AM ON 26 MAY 2009

AT COUNCIL OFFICES, CROWMARSH GIFFORD

Present:

Ms J Bland, Capt J Flood, Ms E Gillespie, Mr M Leonard , Mr N Odd, Mr A Rooke,
Mrs P Slatter, Mrs M Turner

Apologies:

Mrs S Cooper, Mr P Cross, Mr J Nowell-Smith

Officers:

Mrs J Bolton, Mr E Nieburg, Mrs J Thompson

1. Election of Chairman

RESOLVED

To elect Mrs E Gillespie as Chairman of the Panel for the ensuing year.

2. Appointment of Vice-Chairman

RESOLVED

To elect Mrs J Bland as Vice-Chairman of the Panel for the ensuing year.

The meeting closed at 10.05 pm

Chairman

Date

Minutes



FROM SITE VISTS BY THE

Listening Learning Leading

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FUND PANEL

HELD ON 26 MAY 2009

Present:

Ms J Bland, Capt J Flood, Ms E Gillespie, Mr M Leonard , Mr N Odd, Mr A Rooke, Mrs P Slatter, Mrs M Turner

Officers:

Mrs J Bolton, Mr E Nieburg

The committee visited four sites on 26 May. At two of these, the applicants made formal presentations about their projects. These were filmed and the minutes taken from the video.

3. Great Milton Recreation Ground Management Committee – Pavilion revitalisation project.

Mr Richard Enser (the architect), Mr Richard Pearce (the quantity surveyor), Mr Andrew Noble and Ms Emma Wragge gave a presentation about the project and answered questions from the committee.

The pavilion and recreation ground are at the heart of the village and support a wide range of uses and user groups. The village is the central point for the ward and provides the main recreation facilities for surrounding villages. Users included Little Owls day nursery; the school; cricket and football clubs and a Saturday junior sports club; the Parish Council; and a variety of annual and one-off village events.

The other main community building in the village was less central. An older, larger building with no open space, it was suitable for different activities and complemented rather than competed with the pavilion.

The management committee was a registered charity and membership was drawn from all the regular users. Consultation had been carried out mainly through the user groups and at parish council meetings.

The building required refurbishment, extension and upgrading to continue to provide adequate facilities and to expand its use. The internal layout was no longer adequate as users had to share the space, the building was prone to vandalism, expensive to repair and run, and did not comply as well as it might with the Disability

Discrimination Act's requirements. Plans included a new kitchen, a dedicated area for the nursery, upgrading the changing rooms to Football Foundation standards, and re-roofing with less breakable roof materials. This would increase the range of potential users and increase the range of options for existing groups.

The project had been shortlisted for an Early Years grant of £40,000. If this and the full funding requested from WREN and South Oxfordshire District Council was available, then the shortfall would be manageably small. If funding were not available, there were elements of the project which could be removed or postponed to allow the main refurbishment to proceed.

4. Oxfordshire Association for the Blind – Real Resource Centre, Oxford

Mr Colin Cure (Director) and Mr David Warr (the Architect) gave a presentation about the project and answered questions from the committee.

The Association has a remit to support visually impaired people across the county. In South Oxfordshire it supports 700 out of an estimated 2000 visually impaired people, as well as their families and carers. County-wide it supports 3000 people. The resource centre provides training courses for visually impaired people; awareness courses for councils and businesses; and a range of resources, advice and samples of equipment.

There were fourteen clubs for visually impaired people across the county, with three in South Oxfordshire. In collaboration with Age Concern, a satellite office operated part-time in Banbury and one was planned for Didcot. These did not have dedicated facilities.

The existing facilities in the two separate buildings are too cramped to provide an expanded service. The extensions would provide a modern energy-efficient building, large meeting room, and a more flexible multi-use space. There would be better facilities for storing a larger range of equipment for people to test. An extended resource centre would significantly enhance people's lives by providing better choices, better training and a better quality of service.

Discussions with Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council about funding were at an early stage. Both councils provide revenue grants or contracts. There was no regular support from the national association. The proposal could be split into sections (eg building and furnishings) and funded separately. The Association was keen to proceed quickly and hoped to start the project by the end of 2009 and complete it in time for their 2010 AGM.

Chairman

Date

Minutes



Listening Learning Leading

FROM SITE VISITS BY THE

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FUND PANEL

HELD ON 28 MAY 2009

Present:

Ms J Bland, Capt J Flood, Ms E Gillespie, Mr M Leonard , Mr N Odd, Mr A Rooke, Mrs P Slatter, Mrs M Turner

Officers:

Mrs J Bolton, Mr E Nieburg

The committee visited five sites on 28 May. At four of these, the applicants made formal presentations about their projects. These were filmed and the minutes taken from the video.

5. Kidmore End Parish Council – new pavilion

Mr John Sheldon, Mr Charles Martin (Parish Council Chairman) and Mr Young (parish councillor) gave a presentation about the project and answered questions from the committee.

The village had a thriving cricket club and an expanding football club. 200 children were involved. The parish would like to expand the clubs and expand the use of the pavilion beyond these two users. The cricket club had achieved Clubmark status. A large scale under-11s competition involving ten local schools was run annually. A partnership with Chiltern Edge School was being developed. The local junior school used the club's facilities. During their seasons, the football club used the ground on Thursday and Sunday, the cricket club used it seven days a week.

The project met the key aims of the village and the standards of the relevant sporting bodies. It would provide a modern and safe facility for the junior teams who had nowhere else in the locality to train, and facilities for the thriving women's teams. The current building made it difficult to provide for users' needs. It would also provide the only large community space for the village. Everything should be incorporated into one building for security and aesthetics.

During the planning application process there had been a lot of consultation. Every house had received two leaflets about the project. All work was carried out by

volunteers. The clubs would not survive without a strong commitment from the community.

The cost was based on a broad estimate. Tenders would be submitted within the next two weeks and would hopefully be lower. Once the outcomes of this application and of discussions with English Cricket Board were known, Sport England and the Football Foundation would be approached. The cricket and football clubs were expecting to raise £50,000 and £25,000 respectively, and the parish council could commit £100,000. The precept had been nearly doubled without protest to provide for this project. Mr Madjeski had agreed to be the patron which would help establish links with businesses.

6. Henley River and Rowing Museum –New Thames gallery with river discovery centre

Mr Paul Mands (Chief Executive), Mr James Dibble (architect) and Romey Poston (fundraiser) gave a presentation about the project and answered questions from the committee.

The museum opened ten years ago and was a unique attraction in both the district and the country. The museum had 106,000 visitors each year, 30% returning within the year, drawn from all ages and abilities. 20,000 used the education centre, half on formal school trips. There were links with local schools and Henley College. Large numbers of members and visitors were drawn from South Oxfordshire and surrounding districts. The museum provided a major tourist attraction with associated benefits for Henley and the district.

This was an opportunity to develop new exhibits and improve the visitor experience, especially for the 16-34 year old age range. The river was a focal point for the community and this redevelopment would give a new emphasis on management, conservation and topical concerns. 'Greening' the existing building provided an opportunity to show how this could be achieved. The museum would be able to provide a relevant and interesting exhibition for the families, groups and individuals visiting. It used to give lectures and seminars, family learning events, and by community groups for meetings or events.

Revenue funding came from admission charges and sales, a major endowment fund, and ongoing benefactions. The museum broke even annually. Henley Town Council supported the museum by charging a very low rent for the land and car park, but did not have cash to support this project. Some funding sources could support temporary exhibition costs but not the permanent exhibition or gallery. Capital funding required separate fundraising. The Heritage Lottery fund and Grundons had been approached; other national grants and corporate donations would be sought. The scheme could be scaled down but a poorer scheme compromised the museum's commitment to excellence.

7. Henley Rowing Club – new gym facility

Mr Peter Nickless gave a presentation about the project and answered questions from the committee.

The club was founded in 1839, run by volunteers and funded by subscriptions. It was one of the country's top junior clubs, which generated more interest and increased membership. They had moved to the present premises in 1986 but the increase in membership to 320 placed pressure on boat storage, training space, and the drainage. The septic tank system was inadequate, liable to flooding, and costing £500 a month to empty. A nearby school was used for junior training for about 50 children. The female changing rooms were too small for the numbers of ladies rowing.

The new building would include more boat storage, junior training facilities, disabled access, spacious ladies' changing rooms, and a sewage treatment unit. The increased space would allow the club to let space to community groups. The Chairman was a professional project manager, and members included a building surveyor and builder who were contributing their expertise. The application was based on the lowest of the three tenders.

The membership growth had led to a large expenditure in 2008 on new boats and weights for training. The juniors trained on Saturdays, Sundays and evenings and 35-40 coaches were involved with the children.

Henley Town Council had offered an interest-free loan. Wokingham council did not offer grants. About £130,000 was available from a bequest from the Hobbs family and donations from members. The ground was owned by Henley Town Council and the club drew 70% of its membership from Henley and South Oxfordshire. Without the grant, the club would have to seek funds from elsewhere.

8. Henley Cricket Club – new pavilion

Mr David Winter and Mr Daniel Hall gave a presentation about the project and answered questions from the committee.

The cricket club had grown from a village club to a club with 150 juniors, five senior teams, and an estimated 1000 people using the facilities each year. The club also coached in nine local schools. About 80% of members came from Henley and South Oxfordshire. It was managed by four volunteer trustees.

The new building would aim for level 5 sustainability measures, including rainwater harvesting and a borehole for water, and would be a showcase for environmentally sound public buildings. It would enable the club to run county and women's matches, and to run three day as well as one day matches. Junior membership could be increased. Involvement with the Transforming Henley project allowed the club to publicise itself to younger people, and new facilities would make it an attractive option. 400 people surveyed had all indicated support for the project.

The ground and new pavilion was an ideal site for the food festival, literary festival, and other Henley events. Various arts, social, fitness and commercial groups had expressed interest in renting the pavilion once completed. Low cost meeting rooms were in short supply and the new facility could be well used. It had safe pedestrian access and adequate car parking. One allotment was a permanent car park, in return for allowing allotment holders to use the kitchen and toilets, there were 35 spaces, parking along the southern boundary, and at the nearby pub. The new building could be used and open all year rather than just May to September as at present.

The ground was purchased in 2005 and there was a £140,000 balance on the loan from Henley Town Council towards the cost. This should be paid back by 2016. The club ran four major fund-raising events a year and could not realistically raise more money. Income was spent on maintenance, grass cutting, and hiring grounds for the 3rd and 4th teams. The application was based on the lowest of four tenders. The England Cricket Board would confirm their decision on a £120,000 grant application in mid-September. Wokingham council did not give grants. If funds were not in place, the basic building could be provided and the bar and kitchen fitted out later.

Chairman

Date

Minutes



Listening Learning Leading

FROM SITE VISITS BY THE

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FUND PANEL

HELD ON 1 JUNE 2009

Present:

Ms J Bland, Capt J Flood, Ms E Gillespie, Mr M Leonard , Mr N Odd, Mr A Rooke, Mrs P Slatter, Mrs M Turner

Officers:

Mrs J Bolton, Mr E Nieburg

The committee visited six sites on 1 June. At two of these, the applicants made formal presentations about their projects. These were filmed and the minutes taken from the video.

9. Moulsoford Parish Council – new pavilion

Miles Powell, Project Manager gave a presentation about the project and answered questions from the committee.

The village had no other facilities and the pavilion provided a focal point and hub for community activities. A village survey in 2007 had shown that 98 per cent supported a replacement pavilion and 60 per cent (about 60 households) were willing to donate to the project. The pavilion was already well used by village groups and by outside organisations, as well as by residents of both Moulsoford and surrounding villages, but bookings had to be turned down because the floor was not suitable for exercise or dance classes. After the survey, some of suggested new activities had been started – for example, film nights had been successful.

Consultation had been carried out with 23 other village halls to see what had worked well, best practice, pitfalls to avoid, and how to raise funds for the refurbishment and ongoing costs. User groups had also been asked what they needed from the pavilion and their suggestions incorporated into the final plans. The new facilities would allow the range of activities and services to expand and generate additional bookings.

The project's profile had been raised through fundraising activities, in the village newsletter, and on the village website. Pledges of £7000 had been received to date from residents. More could be done to raise further pledges from the village.

Storage space would be needed for the toddler group which met in the pavilion. The cricket club had about 15 members plus about 20 irregular seasonal players. Cholsey United football club would like to use the pitch from September if there were changing rooms.

If the grant was not forthcoming, the fundraising would continue and grant applications made to other organisations. Low-interest loans to cover a shortfall might be considered. There was a need to get the project going before the building became unusable.

10. Didcot Methodist Church – Redevelopment Project

Michael Howlett, Chair of the Redevelopment Committee, gave a presentation about the project and answered questions from the committee.

The project was to create a suite of rooms for community use and for non-commercial events. Innovative new heating methods were not suitable for the building, so high-quality insulation would be used to improve the efficiency of the gas heating. Smaller rooms gave more flexibility for new and existing users.

Various groups used the hall or had looked at using the hall, including existing Scout and Girls' Brigade groups, lunch club, and Oxfordshire County Council. Occasional activities included or may include summer clubs for children, refreshments during the street fair and Cornerstone's recruitment day. The central location provided an ideal opportunity to create a central community facility for Didcot for both regular and casual users. The church's policy meant the building would be an alcohol-free venue, providing a calmer influence in the town centre.

As part of the regeneration scheme included town centre housing, pressure on existing facilities would increase. Consultation had elicited about ten letters of support. The hall would meet local needs as any group could hire the rooms. The building would be cheaper to run but should generate the same or more income.

If funding was not forthcoming, the church would continue to raise funds to add to the £147,000 they had raised from church sources, and would complete the project in a longer time-scale.

Chairman

Date