

Minutes



Listening Learning Leading

OF A MEETING OF THE

Community Investment Fund Panel

HELD AT 10.00AM ON 15 JUNE 2010

AT COUNCIL OFFICES, CROWMARSH GIFFORD

Present:

Ms J Bland, Mrs P Dawe, Mrs E Gillespie, Mrs A Midwinter, Mr A Rooke,
Mrs P Slatter

Apologies:

Mrs S Cooper, Mr J Nowell-Smith

Officers:

Mrs J Bolton, Mr E Nieburg, Mrs J Thompson, Mr T Warren

5. Bids for funding from the Community Investment Fund

The committee carefully considered the evidence they had before them for each application to the Community Investment Fund in turn. They considered all the written evidence the applicants had submitted in support of their bid, and the information gathered from the site visits and the presentations to the committee.

The committee debated the scores which should be awarded to each application under the published criteria for awarding funds from the Community Investment Fund.

The criteria are: achieving the council's corporate priorities; project viability; broadening the range; community participation; meeting local need; and community benefit.

The committee also considered any specific requirements or deadlines which the applicants were required to meet, and whether these affected the viability of each project.

The committee agreed a final score for each application based on the criteria as:

Ref no.	Organisation	Scheme	Grant request £	Scheme cost £	Total score
83	All Saints' PCC, Didcot	New youth and community hall	100,000	505,690	215
82	Thomley Hall Activity Centre	Refurbishment work to provide facilities for disabled teenagers	100,000	281,165	200
76	Didcot Town Council	Ladygrove skate park extension	27,000	72,500	195
75	Henley Baptist Church	'd-two' redevelopment of premises for community use	100,000	262,000	195
78	Great Milton Recreation Ground Mgt Committee	Refurbishment of pavilion	67,600	192,987	170
86	The Kenton Theatre, Henley	Acquisition of the freehold of the Kenton Theatre	100,000	342,553	145
81	Didcot Town Council	Refurbishment of Civic Hall	100,000	508,884	125
88	Didcot Muslim Society	Purchase of building for use as an Islamic Community Centre	35,950	178,000	80
80	AFC Henley	New pavilion	90,000	142,117	80
90	Nettlebed Sports Association	New pavilion	20,000	84,000	60
84	Henley Hockey Club	Refurbishment of clubhouse	35,250	50,000	35
	Total		775,800	2,677,889	-

The committee agreed that the cut-off for funding would be 150 points, and that applications scoring below this threshold would not be funded at all. The scores showed a clear gap between applications scoring 125 points or less or 150 points and above.

In the case of the Kenton Theatre, the committee initially awarded the application 155 points. They thoroughly debated the likelihood of the theatre raising the funds within the timescale set down by the freeholder, the minimal effect on the theatre's long-

term viability, and the larger effect on its future plans in detail before agreeing on a final score. A motion not to award the Kenton Theatre any funding was defeated on being put to the vote. However, it became clear during the debate that to award the theatre enough funding to make a significant contribution to the project would jeopardise the completion of the higher-scoring applications. In some cases awarding less than full funding to the higher-scoring applications would disproportionately burden a small community with raising a significant shortfall in funding to complete their project.

It was unclear whether the theatre could realistically raise the remaining funds to complete the freehold purchase within the very tight timescale imposed by the freeholder. After further debate about this, the committee agreed that their initial scoring had not fully taken into account concerns about the viability of the project and decided to reduce the overall score for the theatre's project by 10 points from 155 as originally proposed to 145 as shown in the table above. Consequently (notwithstanding the motion debated above) the committee resolved not to award any funding in order to make best use of the council's limited resources by ensuring that these were committed to projects which could be completed and which would give a clear additional benefit to the communities they served.

As agreed at the Cabinet meeting on 8 April 2010, £400,000 was available to distribute amongst the applications (minute 46 refers). The committee were conscious that the difference between the total sum requested and the available funding meant that a number of applicants would be very disappointed with the outcome.

The committee agreed that projects should be fully funded where possible. Projects were more likely to be completed if the full grant amount sought was allocated, even if this meant funding fewer projects overall. Awards would be made taking account of the funds available and the total score of each project.

In making their awards and setting conditions, the committee considered the funding shortfall, the difference a grant would make, and the likelihood of the project attracting the remaining funding and starting within the one-year period of the award.

The committee agreed to fund the two highest-scoring applications fully.

There was a long and detailed discussion about different options for funding the remaining applications. Options included funding each application 80 per cent, 75 per cent, or a percentage proportional to the score. For each option, the committee discussed the effect that the lower award had on each project's viability and hence on each organisation's ability to provide facilities in its community.

Recommended awards

The committee agreed to recommend that Cabinet make awards to five organisations from the Community Investment Fund, with conditions, as set out below:

All Saints Parochial Church Council, Didcot

To award the application from All Saints Parochial Church Council 19.77 per cent of the £505,690 estimated eligible scheme costs, up to a maximum of £100,000, towards the construction of a new youth and community hall

with additional conditions:

- evidence of title to the land
- a legal charge/restriction to be applied if applicable
- to provide a cash flow forecast of running costs for the new hall prior to commencement
- to allow the council 35 hours of free use during the Easter and summer school holiday periods to run courses for young people
- to consider an access audit by accredited access auditors, registered with the National Register of Access Consultants
- to review the grant after one year if the project has not started

Thomley Hall

To award the application from Thomley Hall 35.57 per cent of the £281,165 estimated eligible scheme costs, up to a maximum of £100,000, towards the cost of refurbishment work to provide facilities for disabled teenagers

with additional conditions:

- to consider an access audit by accredited access auditors, registered with the National Register of Access Consultants
- a publicity campaign to advertise the new facilities to residents of South Oxfordshire within six months of completion
- a voluntary sector forum for relevant organisations to be held within six months of completion
- evidence of title to the property (registered leasehold title)
- to review the grant after one year if the project has not started.

The committee asked that officers impose a charge on this property if this were possible.

Didcot Town Council

To award the application from Didcot Town Council 37.24 per cent of the £72,500 estimated eligible scheme costs, up to a maximum of £27,000, towards the extension of the Ladygrove skate park

with additional conditions as follows:

- an annual open day be held including a mini competition attended by a skate coach to provide beginners sessions
- to review the grant after one year if the project has not started

Henley Baptist Church

To award the application from Henley Baptist Church 38.17 per cent of the £262,000 estimated eligible scheme costs, up to a maximum of £100,000, towards the redevelopment of the premises for community use in partnership with Nomad (a charity working with children, young people and families)

with additional conditions as follows:

- evidence of title to the property
- a legal charge to be applied
- to consider an access audit by accredited access auditors, registered with the National Register of Access Consultants
- to review the grant after one year if the project has not started

Great Milton Recreation Ground Management Committee

To award the application from Great Milton Recreation Ground Management Committee 35.03 per cent of the £192,987 estimated eligible scheme costs, up to a maximum of £67,600, towards the refurbishment project of Great Milton pavilion

With additional conditions as follows:

- evidence of title to the property
- a legal charge/restriction to be applied as appropriate
- to consider an access audit by accredited access auditors, registered with the National Register of Access Consultants
- the final design of the internal layout to be approved by the Grants Manager before commencement
- to review the grant after one year if the project has not started

The committee agreed to recommend Cabinet not to award any grant from the Community Investment Fund towards the applications made by:

- Kenton Theatre, Henley on Thames
- AFC Henley Football Club
- Didcot Town Council for the Civic Hall
- Nettlebed Sports Association for a new pavilion
- Henley Hockey Club
- Didcot Muslim Society

The committee agreed to recommend Cabinet to return the remaining £5,400 to the under £15,000 grant scheme for 2010/11.

6. Minutes, 2 June 2010 and 8 June 2010

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the meetings of 2 June and 8 June 2010 as a correct record and agree that the Chairman sign these.

The meeting ended at 1.40 pm

Chairman

Date