

Minutes

OF A MEETING OF THE

Community Grants Panel

HELD AT 10.00 AM ON TUESDAY 4 OCTOBER 2016

135 EASTERN AVENUE, MILTON PARK, MILTON, ABINGDON, OX14 4SB

Present

David Dodds (Chairman)

Joan Bland (in place of Sue Lawson), Pat Dawe, Paul Harrison, Imran Lokhon, Richard Pullen, Anthony Nash and Alan Thompson

Apologies:

Stefan Gawrysiak, Sue Lawson and Jeannette Matelot tendered apologies.

Officers

Carole Cumming and Ron Schrieber

Also present:

Elizabeth Gillespie, Cabinet member for development management, building control and housing, and grants.

20 Declarations of interest

David Dodds declared an interest in the application from Thame Town Council as a member of Thame Town Council.

Richard Pullen declared a potential interest in the application from Warborough and Shillingford Cricket Club as one of the ward councillors.

21 Minutes

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2016 as a correct record and agree that the Chairman signs them as such.

22 Community grants - grant policy and procedure rules

The grant policy and procedure rules were noted.



Listening Learning Leading

23 Bids for funding for the community grants scheme and officer recommendations

The panel received a brief overview from the grants officer on each application and heard addresses from representatives of the applicants and answers to questions as summarised below.

Sandford Talking Shop – Equipment purchases for community shop and café

The grants officer outlined this proposal and reported that the organisation had raised the rest of the required funding.

Berrick and Roke Parish Council – Replacement cladding, windows and insulation for the village hall

Jonathan Parkinson, representing the parish council, spoke in support of the application. He reported that if the work did not proceed, there was a danger that the building might collapse. This was the second of a three-phase improvement plan for the hall and phase one had been completed successfully.

Thame Town Council – Rebuilding the town cricket club

Councillor David Dodds stepped down from the panel. Councillor Richard Pullen was nominated and appointed temporary Chairman for this item and for the scoring and award recommendation for this application.

The grants officer reported that the town council had requested a grant of £318,000. However, given the limited budget available, the officer recommendation was to cap the award at £250,000.

Matthew Swain, a representative of Thame Town Cricket Club, spoke in support of the application. Also present to answer councillors' questions, were Nigel Champken-Woods, David Dodds, Angus Lachlan and Cassie Pinnels, representing Thame Town Council.

Mr Swain reported that additional funding had been secured and that he was confident that the amount outstanding would be raised in the next six months. Sharing the facility with the local hockey and netball clubs would increase membership significantly.

Goring Heath Parish Charity – Replacement windows for the village hall

Peter Dragonetti, a representative of the parish charity, spoke in support of the application. He reported on the wide range of hall users who would benefit from the project.

St Catherine's Church, Towersey – Installation of a toilet, servery and flexible seating

Sue Civval, a representative of the church, spoke in support of the application. She reported that the church had now secured 45% of the funding. She also informed the panel that, currently, attendees needing the toilet and/or running water, needed to cross a road to visit the village hall.

Nettlebed Village Club – Replacement roof

Susan Worth, a representative of the club, spoke in support of the application. She reported that the organisation's bank balance had increased to the extent that they could contribute £65,000 to this project and that it had secured further pledges of funding from local benefactors. It would be carrying out further fundraising activities in the future.

Henley Rugby Football Club – Build two additional changing rooms

Chris Nixon, a representative of the club, spoke in support of the application. He reported that the project would provide separate changing rooms for women and children and would be available for use by the wider community for non-rugby sporting activities on-site.

He anticipated that all funding required would be secured by the end of the year but, as a fall back, the club had the option to take up a £100,000 loan from the Rugby Football Union (RFU).

The grants officer reported that any award should be subject to the Council resolving the legal issues officers had identified with the organisation's corporate structure. However, officers were confident that they had identified a solution.

Wheatley Parish Council – Noticeboards and public seating

Gareth Morris, a representative of the parish council, spoke in support of the application. He reported on the parish council's current finances and their other financial commitments.

Cuddesdon Parochial Church Council – Church bell restoration

Keith Hawley, a representative of the parochial church council, spoke in support of the application. He reported that the bells had been unsafe to ring for the last fifteen years and that, whilst they could be rung occasionally, this project would bring them back into full use. He also read out one of a number of expressions of support from local residents.

Warborough and Shillingford Cricket Club – build a new practice net facility

Councillor Richard Pullen stepped down from the panel.

Jonnie Bradshaw, a representative of the club, spoke in support of the application. Also present to answer councillors' questions was David Duncan, a representative of Warborough and Shillingford Parish Council.

Mr Bradshaw reported that the project would provide an entirely new practice facility for the club and would also be used by the village school. He confirmed that the club could fully fund its planned contribution and had established a sinking fund to cover the cost of future maintenance.

24 Panel review scores

The panel considered the applications, taking into account the report of the grants officer on each application, the presentations from the registered public speakers and site photographs/videos.

David Dodds stepped down from the panel and took no part in the scoring of the application from Thame Town Council.

Richard Pullen stepped down from the panel and took no part in the scoring of the application from Warborough and Shillingford Cricket Club.

Using the scoring matrix set out in the policy, the grant officer's provisional scores and any additional information received at the meeting, the panel awarded scores for each application.

After discussion, the panel adopted the grants officer's recommended scores for all applications except for the following:

St Catherine's Church, Towersey – Installation of a toilet servery and flexible seating

Increase the finance score from 6 to 11 as the applicants had confirmed that they had secured additional funding since they made their application.

Nettlebed Village Club – Replacement roof

Increase the finance score from 3 to 8 as the applicants had confirmed that they had secured additional funding since they made their application.

Henley Rugby Football Club – Build two additional changing rooms

Increase the community benefit score from 8 to 10 as there were a number of non-rugby groups who could use the new changing rooms.

Increase the finance score from 8 to 10 as the club were confident that they could raise the remaining funding and had the option of a RFU loan if required.

Wheatley Parish Council – Noticeboards and public seating

Increase the finance score from 7 to 10 based on the additional information provided by the parish council.

Cuddesdon Parochial Church Council – Church bell restoration

Increase the new facilities score from 8 to 10 as the project will bring the bells back into full use.

Increase the community benefit score from 8 to 10 based on the evidence of local support for the project.

Warborough and Shillingford Cricket Club – build a new practice net facility

Increase the new facilities score from 7 to 11 as the nets will be a new facility for the cricket club.

Increase the community benefit score from 6 to 8 as the panel took the view that the project would have a significant impact on the wellbeing of a single group (cricket players).

Increase the finance score from 10 to 14 as the club had confirmed that it now had its contribution in full.

The final scores as agreed were:

Ref	Organisation	Project description	New facilities or activities (max 14)	Community benefit (max 14)	Funding the project (max 14)	Total (out of 42)
SCap 16/84	Sandford Talking Shop	Equipment purchases for community shop and café	10	14	14	38
SCap 16/93	Berrick and Roke Parish Council	Replacement cladding, windows and insulation for the village hall	10	14	14	38
SCap 16/102	Thame Town Council	Rebuilding the town cricket pavilion	12	12	8	32
SCap 16/105	Goring Heath Parish Charity	Replacement windows for the village hall	10	14	6	30
SCap 16/35	St Catherine's Church, Towersey	Installation of a toilet, servery and flexible seating	10	11	11	32
SCap 16/101	Nettlebed Village Club	Replacement roof	10	14	8	32
SCap 16/92	Henley Rugby Football Club	Building two additional changing rooms	10	10	10	30
SCap 16/103	Wheatley Parish Council	Noticeboards and public seating	7	11	10	28

SCap 16/116	Cuddesdon Parochial Church Council	Church bell restoration	10	10	10	30
SCap 16/97	Warborough and Shillingford Cricket Club	Build a new practice net facility	11	8	14	33

25 Award recommendations

The grants officer reported that, following the panel's agreed amendments to the scores, five of the six projects previously identified as medium priorities were now high priorities for funding. This was in addition to the four projects originally identified as high priorities, leaving one project as a medium priority.

The policy stated that medium priority projects would only be funded if there was budget remaining after all high priority projects were awarded the amounts requested, unless the panel decided that a high priority project should receive less than requested for a specific reason.

The amounts requested for all the high priority projects exceeded the available budget by over £125,000. Therefore, the panel could not recommend funding to the application scored as a medium priority.

As the amounts requested by high priority projects exceeded the available budget, the panel had to decide how to allocate the budget to these projects.

As Councillor Dodds had an interest in one of the applications under consideration, he left the meeting whilst the panel considered whether to allocate the budget proportionately to all the high priority projects or to allocate a specific sum to Thame Town Council's application first.

The panel agreed to recommend an award of £250,000 of the available budget to Thame Town Council, leaving £399,222 to distribute amongst the remaining eight high priority projects.

Councillor Dodds re-joined the meeting.

A member suggested awarding the eight applications 85.5 per cent of their requested amounts, which would allocate all but £8,047 of the available budget. Other percentages were considered with a view to allocating as much of the budget as possible. Eventually, 87 per cent was identified as an alternative option as this would leave just £1,184 of the budget allocated.

Following further discussion, it was moved and seconded to allocate 85.5 per cent of the requested amount to all eight remaining high priority projects and then redistribute the remaining £8,047 amongst them on a case-by-case basis, based on perceived need. On being put to the vote, the motion was lost.

It was then moved and seconded to allocate 87 per cent of the requested amount to all eight remaining high priority projects, leaving £1,184 of the budget unallocated for this financial year. On being put to the vote, the motion was carried.

RESOLVED: to recommend that the Cabinet member for development management, building control and housing, and grants make the following capital grant award decisions:

1. to award Sandford Talking Shop £10,991 towards equipment purchases for the community shop and café, as set out in its application.
2. to award Berrick and Roke Parish Council £10,018 towards replacement cladding, windows and insulation for the village hall, as set out in its application.
3. to award Thame Town Council £250,000 towards the rebuilding of the town cricket pavilion, as set out in its application.
4. to award Goring Heath Parish Council £3,743 towards the replacement of windows at the village hall, as set out in its application.
5. to award St Catherine's Church, Towersey £73,950 towards the installation of a toilet, servery and flexible seating, as set out in its application.
6. to award Nettlebed Village Club £112,883 towards a replacement roof, as set out in its application.
7. to award Henley Rugby Football Club £130,500 towards building two additional changing rooms, as set out in its application, subject to the grant being paid to Henley Rugby Club (Limited by Guarantee).
8. not to award a grant to Wheatley Parish Council towards noticeboards and public seating, as set out in its application.
9. to award Cuddesdon Parochial Church Council £30,450 towards church bell restoration, as set out in its application.
10. to award Warborough and Shillingford Cricket Club £25,504 towards building a new practice net facility, as set out in its application.

26 Allocation of remaining budget

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

The meeting closed at 1.35 pm

Chairman

Date