

# Cabinet Report

Report of Head of Community Services, Donna Pentelow

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Wards affected: Benson and Crowmarsh, Goring, Haseley Brook, Cholsey, Woodcote and Sonning Common

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To: CABINET

Date: 31 January 2019

## 2018/19 Capital grant award decisions (round 2)

### Recommendations

That Cabinet considers the recommendations of the Community Grants Panel at its meeting on 21 January 2019:

- 1) To award a total of £117,590 in capital grants to the seven organisations listed in paragraph 1 of this report, including any specified non-standard conditions
- 2) To transfer £117,590 from the remaining £145,779 provisional 2018/19 capital grant budget to the approved 2018/19 capital grant budget (cost centre A308) to fund these grants.

### Purpose of Report

1. To consider the Grant Panel's recommendations for the applications received during the second round of Capital Grants in 2018/19 as follows:

Organisation & project	% total cost awarded	Max grant £	Non-standard conditions (if applicable)	Amendments to officers' recommendations
Warborough Parish Council - Play area relocation and new outdoor gym.	25.00%	£25,000	That a satisfactory play inspection is carried out before the final grant payment is released	Officers revised their 'facilities' and 'finance' scores following additional information provided by the applicant. The panel agreed with the officers' revised scores and a further condition.

Goring Village Hall - improvements to the hall stage area (lighting, sounds, curtains etc)	<b>33.78%</b>	£9,999	None	There were no revisions to the officers' suggested scores at the meeting. The panel agreed with the officers' suggested scores.
Little Milton Village Shop Ltd - Flooring improvements and a patio area	<b>50.00%</b>	£2,820	That they will work with the council's Economic Development team and/or CFO's community business advisor to develop a new business plan before the final grant payment is made	Officers revised their 'finance' score after the applicant provided more information. The panel agreed with the officers' revised score and a further condition. The panel also increased the 'facilities' score beyond the officers' suggested scores.
Woodcote Village Hall - Lighting/electrical improvements and projector for the main hall	<b>49.61%</b>	£6,200	None	Officers revised their 'facilities' and 'finance' scores following additional information provided by the applicant. The panel agreed with the officers' revised scores.
South Moreton Community Benefit Society - Renovations to the community owned pub to bring it back into use	<b>50.00%</b>	£50,315	None	Officers revised their 'community benefit' score following additional information provided by the applicant, the panel agreed with these revised scores.
Sonning Common Parish Council - Village hall flat roof replacement and insulation	<b>37.50%</b>	£13,444	None	There were no revisions to the officers' suggested scores at the meeting. The panel agreed with the officers suggested scores.
Woodcote Parish Council - Pathway running from new zebra crossing to the school across the recreation ground	<b>50.00%</b>	£9,812	None	Officers revised their 'finance' score after the applicant provided more information. The panel agreed with this revised score but also recommended increasing the 'Facilities' and 'community benefit' scores beyond the officers' suggested scores.  Officers asked the panel to consider if this project was necessary as there is a county footpath running between the same sites already.  The panel discussed this issue, but still wished to recommend that Cabinet awards the full amount requested, against the officer recommendation of £7,359.

## Corporate Objectives

2. 'To Build Thriving Communities'.

## Background

3. The grants panel met on 21 January 2019 to consider the second round of grant applications. They used the officers' evaluations, information from speakers and the scoring criteria in the agreed policy to review the applications and officer's scores before making their recommendations (including any non-standard conditions).
4. Funds will need to be moved from the provisional budget to the approved budget for 2018/19 (cost centre A308) to pay any grants awarded. This transfer will join the funds already transferred from provisional to approved budgets after the first round of grant awards in July/August 2018.

## Options

5. Cabinet could decide to change the award decisions from those recommended by the grants panel, if they feel alterations are appropriate and in line with the Capital Grants policy.

## Financial Implications

6. The provisional budget for Capital Grants in 2018/19 was £789,000. There was also an opening balance of £60,886 in the 2018/19 capital grant budget (made up from underspends in previous years) giving a total capital grant budget of £849,886 for 2018/19.
7. £704,107 was awarded during the first round of funding. £643,221 was transferred from the provisional to approved budgets, joining the existing £60,886 opening balance to give a new budget figure of £704,107 to cover those grants. This left £145,779 in the provisional budget for the rest of 2018/19. This is the final round of capital grants in 2018/19 and the £117,590 being transferred from the provisional budget to the approved budget will leave an underspend of £28,189 in the provisional capital grant budget for 2018/19.

## Legal Implications

8. The council is using its general powers under Chapter 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to offer capital grant funding.
9. In order to minimise legal risk to the council in funding these projects, all grants over £10,000 will require the applicants to sign and accept formal Terms and Conditions before any funding is paid.
10. Applications awarded under £10,000 will complete and return an acceptance form confirming they will comply with all conditions on the grant before any funding is paid.
11. Officers have reviewed the criteria for State Aid in relation to the application from South Moreton Community Benefit Society (see flowchart in background papers) and believe that it does not apply.

## Risks

12. There is reputational risk to the council that it funds a project that fails. This risk is relatively low and is reduced by the monitoring process used to keep track of funded projects
13. There is financial risk to the council in releasing funds that are not then spent on the project funded. This risk is mitigated by releasing the grants in stages, with the mid-way and final both being released after review of invoices and a site visit.
14. There is a financial risk that more grant funds are released than the organisation needs for their project. This is mitigated by making the awards a percentage of the total project cost, capped to a maximum amount. The council then benefits from any underspends but will not pay more than the maximum amount agreed.

## Other implications

15. None

## Conclusion

16. The grants panel members were appointed to review grant applications and make decision recommendations and have done so using the agreed policy.
17. Cabinet is asked to consider the panel's recommendations, so the grants can be formally offered to the organisations.

## Background Papers

- Minutes from Grants Panel Meeting 21 January 2019
- Officer evaluation report from Grant Panel Meeting 21 January 2019
- Capital Grant policy
- State Aid assessment flowchart