

Minutes

OF A MEETING OF THE

Community Grants Panel

HELD AT 10.00 AM ON TUESDAY 18 FEBRUARY 2020

MEETING ROOM 1, 135 EASTERN AVENUE, MILTON PARK, MILTON,
ABINGDON, OX14 4SB



Listening Learning Leading

Present

Councillors Sarah Gray (Chair), Lorraine Hillier (as substitute for Ian Snowdon), Lynn Lloyd, Axel Macdonald and Anne-Marie Simpson

Officers

Paul Bateman, Michael Flowers, Kimberly Hall, Heather Saunders, Shona Ware and Cheryl Reeves

9 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Kate Gregory, Jo Robb and Ian Snowden.

10 Minutes

RESOLVED: to approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2019 and agree that the chair signs them as such.

11 Declarations of interest

None.

12 Urgent business and chair's announcements

None.

13 Public participation

Speakers representing their application were present for nine out of nineteen applications. They spoke in support of their applications and had the opportunity to respond to questions from the panel. The speakers were the following:

John Cross	St. Mary's Church
Aubrey Doran	Henley Rugby Football Club
David Kerrigan	Didcot Baptist Church
Richard McQuillan	Fish Volunteer Centre
Robert Walmsley	Bix PCC
Mark Gray & Sarah Wilson	Cholsey Parish Council
Laura Bristow	Oxford City Athletics Club
Caroline Cann	Tetsworth Memorial Hall
Jonnie Bradshaw	Warborough Sports Pavillion Refurbishment Project

14 Capital grants

The panel considered the head of corporate services' report for each project, which detailed the applications, the scoring recommendations, and the subsequent final recommendations based upon the South Oxfordshire District Council Capital Grants Policy.

The panel agreed to consider the applications in the following order, firstly those with speakers registered to represent their application followed by all other applications which had no speakers present to support their application.

Cholsey Parish Council

There were two speakers present for the item. Mark Gray and Sarah Wilson spoke in support of the application and answered questions from the panel.

Councillors asked a question regarding how the proposed project would benefit carbon reduction strategies. The speakers explained that the building had existing high standards for carbon reduction and the new facilities would benefit from the existing measures.

A second question was asked on whether the project would benefit residents external to the parish. The speakers confirmed that residents from neighbouring parishes were already using the facilities and would continue to be welcomed at the site.

RESOLVED: To approve the officers' recommended scoring of 10 out of 12 points.

Tetsworth Memorial Hall

There was one speaker present for the item. Caroline Cann spoke in support of the application and answered questions from the panel.

Councillors asked what the current estimated savings in cost would be following the completion of the project. The speaker confirmed that there would be an estimated 50-65% savings through the replacement of old facilities.

A subsequent question was raised on whether any funding had been received from the parish council. The speaker confirmed that this remained in process and that the parish was currently waiting for any other applicants for funding.

Councillors consulted with the Energy Strategy and Projects Officer on whether the carbon reduction scoring could be increased as a result of the new information presented. The officer confirmed that taking into account the new information received from the speaker,

the carbon reduction scoring could be increased by one point to the maximum scoring of three.

A motion, proposed and seconded, was passed, to increase the carbon reduction scoring to three points.

RESOLVED: To increase the carbon reduction score to 3 points, the maximum scoring possible for the criteria, giving the application a total of 10 points out of 12. The project therefore became a high priority item.

St Mary's Church

There was one speaker present for the item. John Cross spoke in support of the application and answered questions from the panel.

The panel asked whether the applicant had applied to the Church of England for additional sources of finance. The speaker confirmed that an application for funding had been submitted to the Church of England.

A question was raised to officers on whether religious groups who provided services to the wider community were limited in scoring under the community benefit criteria. The officers confirmed that a site owned by a religious organisation was able to restrict access to people under the Equalities Act and therefore were limited to a maximum of two points out of a possible three under this criteria.

RESOLVED: To approve the officers' recommended scoring of 8 out of 12 points.

Didcot Baptist Church

There was one speaker present for the item. David Kerrigan spoke in support of the application and answered questions from the panel.

The council asked questions on funds that had been received for the project, and any additional funding that had recently been secured. The speaker confirmed that new funds had been either attained or agreed upon on paper with a new source of funding recently secured.

A question was raised to officers on whether new information on the environmental benefits of the project could warrant an increase in scoring for energy savings. The officers confirmed that an external energy audit would have been required for any such review of points.

RESOLVED: To approve the officers' recommended scoring of 8 out of 12 points.

Oxford City Athletics Club

There was one speaker present for the item. Laura Bristow spoke in support of the application and answered questions from the panel.

A question was raised to officers on whether the application could be altered to reflect a change in the scope of the project. It was confirmed that the panel had to consider the application that had been submitted, and that any alterations in the scope of the project would require a new application to be submitted for funding.

RESOLVED: To approve the officers' recommended scoring of 8 out of 12 points.

Fish Volunteer Centre

There was one speaker present for the item. Richard McQuillan spoke in support of the application and answered questions from the panel.

The panel asked whether there was any difference in the size of the new building to be purchased in comparison to the current tenancy. The speaker confirmed that the buildings were the same size and that the proposed purchase would be for a new build which also provided increased environmental benefits.

A further question was raised on whether the new building would alter the services provided by the organisation. The speaker confirmed that there would be no change in services offered.

As a result of new information regarding sources of financing for the project, the panel asked officers whether the scoring for finance could be increased to the maximum of three points. The officers advised that this would be possible if the panel felt the applicant had satisfied the requirements necessary for a maximum score award.

A motion, proposed and seconded, was passed, to increase the finance scoring to three points.

RESOLVED: To increase the finance score to 3 points, the maximum scoring possible for the criteria, giving the application a total of 9 points out of 12.

Warborough Sports Pavilion

There was one speaker present for the item. Jonnie Bradshaw spoke in support of the application and answered questions from the panel.

The panel asked a question regarding the timber frame of the building and the condition it was currently in. The speaker explained that the poor condition of the frame was a result of a lack of maintenance over the years.

The organisation also provided additional information to support an increase in their community benefit score to 3 points, based on the wider community value the new pavilion would offer.

A motion, proposed and seconded, was passed, to increase the community benefit score to 3 points, the maximum possible score available.

RESOLVED: To increase the community benefit score to 3 points, the maximum scoring possible for the criteria, giving the application a total of 8 points out of 12.

Bix PCC

There was one speaker present for the item. Robert Walmsley spoke in support of the application and answered questions from the panel.

A question was asked on whether there would be a ramp at the main entrance for the proposed build. The speaker confirmed that there would be a permanent ramp installed as part of the project.

A motion, proposed and seconded, was passed, to increase the environmental score as a result of new information being provided.

RESOLVED: To increase the environmental score to 1 point out of a possible 3 giving the application a total of 7 points out of 12.

Henley Rugby Football Club

There was one speaker present for the item. Aubrey Doran spoke in support of the application and answered questions from the panel.

A question was raised to officers on whether scoring for environmental benefit took into account that residents would not be required to commute as far to access facilities. The officers confirmed this was not a part of the policy matrix and so the score could not be altered on this matter.

A further question was raised to the speaker on whether the applicant had secured over 50% of the funding. The speaker explained that while they had secured more funding, this was still below the 50% margin.

RESOLVED: To approve the officer's recommended scoring of 6 out of 12 points.

Following the completion of all applications with a speaker present, the panel agreed to adjourn the meeting for a five-minute rest break.

Berinsfield Parish Council

Councillors agreed that the project was a high priority item and were unanimous in support of the officer's recommendation.

RESOLVED: To approve the officer's recommended scoring of 10 out of 12 points.

Culham Parish Council

The panel asked officers whether any new information on the funding of the project had been provided by the applicant. Officers confirmed that no new information had been provided.

RESOLVED: To approve the officer's recommended scoring of 8 out of 12 points.

Brightwell cum Sotwell Parish Council

The panel agreed on the scoring recommendation provided.

RESOLVED: To approve the officer's recommended scoring of 8 out of 12 points.

Wheatley Parish Council

The panel asked whether there had been any update on Section 106 funding. It was confirmed that there had been no further update.

RESOLVED: To approve the officer's recommended scoring of 8 out of 12 points.

Sonning Common Parish Council

The panel queried whether conditions could be added to grants. They were informed that the panel could encourage actions to be taken.

RESOLVED: To approve the officer's recommended scoring of 6 out of 12 points.

Following the competition of this application, the panel agreed to continue beyond the meeting guillotine for a further thirty minutes.

Wallingford Methodist Church

The panel agreed with the recommended scoring but noted that had more information been provided by the applicant, a higher score might have resulted.

RESOLVED: To approve the officer's recommended scoring of 6 out of 12 points.

Goring Heath Parish Council

The panel agreed with the recommended scoring.

RESOLVED: To approve the officer's recommended scoring of 6 out of 12 points.

Whitchurch-on-Thames Parish Council

The panel agreed with the recommended scoring.

RESOLVED: To approve the officer's recommended scoring of 6 out of 12 points.

Sacred Heart Preschool

The panel agreed with the recommended scoring.

RESOLVED: To approve the officer's recommended scoring of 6 out of 12 points.

Following the completion of the first session, the panel resolved to have a break before the beginning of the second half of the session.

The panel agreed in line with the policy, that those applications which were a high priority as a result of scoring should receive 100% of the funding requested.

The panel considered three possible avenues to allocate funding to the medium priority projects which were provided by officers.

- a.) To provide all medium priority applications with 32.5% of their requested amounts.
- b.) Continue with the original recommendations to not award funding to three of the applications due to the significant amount of funding they still had to secure and provide the remaining medium priority applicants with 49% of the requested funds.
- c.) Award funding proportionate to the scoring given by the panel.

Following discussion between councillors, the panel agreed to undertake a proportionate funding allocation based upon the total score the applicant had received. In addition, councillors reviewed all medium projects again to look at any they had concerns about, in line with the policy. This resulted in a further five projects not being recommended for funding. Panel then reallocated the £213,414 proportionately to the remaining medium priority projects.

The funding was as follows:

RESOLVED: To award the following high priority items with 100% of the funds requested:

Organisation	Scheme	Grant awarded
Cholsey Parish Council	Purpose built Happy Hub accommodation	100% of the funds requested, capped to a total of £50,000
Berinsfield Parish Council	Provision of outdoor gymnastics equipment	100% of the funds requested, capped to a total of £10,000
Tetsworth Memorial Hall	Alterations and refurbishment including kitchen, heating, car park, insulation, storage, and audio	100% of the funds requested capped to a total of £46,586

RESOLVED: To award the following medium priority item which scored 9/12 points with 75% of the funds requested:

Organisation	Scheme	Grant awarded
Fish Volunteer Centre	Purchase of premises (ex-police station)	75% of the funds requested, capped to a total of £52,500

RESOLVED: To award the following medium priority items which scored 8/12 points with 72% of the funds requested:

Organisation	Scheme	Grant awarded
Brightwell cum Sotwell Parish Council	Resurfacing of tennis courts and instillation of new tennis practise wall	72% of the funds requested, capped to a total of £7242
Didcot Baptist Church	Didcot Baptist Church Community Hub	72% of the funds requested, capped to a total of £54,000
Wheatley Parish Council	Improvements to Farm Close Road Recreation Ground	72% of the funds requested, capped to a total of £7200

RESOLVED: To award the following medium priority items which scored 7/12 points with 67% of the funds requested:

Organisation	Scheme	Grant awarded
Bix PCC	St James' Community Hub and extension for toilet and kitchen	67% of the funds requested, capped to a total of £50,250

RESOLVED: To award the following medium priority items which scored 6/12 points with 62% of the funds requested:

Organisation	Scheme	Grant awarded
Wallingford Methodist Church	Replacement of boilers and upgrade of heating system	62% of the funds requested, capped to a total of £1240
Sacred Heart Preschool	Restore charity preschool	62% of the funds

	to facilitate cultural integration activities in the community	requested, capped to a total of £3099
Henley Rugby Football Club	Dry Leas Sports Ground – Community Training Facility Upgrade	62% of the funds requested, capped to a total of £37,200

The following applications were unsuccessful in receiving any funding as the Panel had concerns over the financial viability of the projects and applicants were encouraged to apply again in the next round of funding when more money had been secured.

Organisation	Scheme
Culham Parish Council	Culham Playground
St Mary’s Church	Laurence Hall Cholsey replacement building
Oxford City Athletics Club	Upgrade of Horspath Athletics Track to become a Multi Sports Facility
Warborough Parish Council	Warborough Sports Pavilion Refurbishment Project
Goring Heath Parish Charity	Improving access to Goring Heath Village Hall
Berrick Salome Parish Council	Village Hall and car park improvements
Whitchurch-on-Thames Parish Council	Village Green Pavilion Replacement

The following application was unsuccessful in receiving any funding as the Panel believed it had sufficient unrestricted reserves to fund the project themselves.

Organisation	Scheme
Sonning Common Parish Council	Churchill Crescent Play Area Resurfacing

The meeting closed at 2.47 pm

Chairman

Date