

CABINET

13 FEBRUARY 2007

COMMUNITY GRANTS – CAPITAL AWARDS 2007/08

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITIES

Contact Officer: Steve Lincoln Tel No: 01962 848110

RECENT REFERENCES:

WTF85 'Community Grants Revenue Awards 2007/08' 16 January 2007

CAB1201 'Community Grants – Capital Awards 2006/07' 7 February 2006

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report contains details of applications for capital grant aid in 2007/08 and recommends appropriate levels of support based on the policies and criteria currently in force and the availability of resources.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Cabinet:

- 1 Approves the carry forward of £15,000 of unspent capital grant from 2006/07 to 2007/08 to meet the financial commitments identified in this report.

That Cabinet, subject to approval by Council of the 2007/08 capital budget provision:

- 2 Approves the following capital grants for 2007/08, subject to compliance with the conditions of grant currently in force and any additional conditions specified in Appendix 1:

(i)	Alresford & District Community Association	£7,000
(ii)	Alresford Tennis Club	£20,000
(iii)	East Stratton Village Hall	£30,000
(iv)	Shedfield Reading Room	£3,000
(v)	South Wonston Village Hall	£5,000
(vi)	The Gratton Trust	£10,000

3 Approves the following capital grant for 2007/08 as an exception:

(i)	West Meon Community Shop Association	£20,000
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4 Expresses regret that it is unable to support the following application:

(i)	New Alresford Town Trust
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CABINET13 FEBRUARY 2007COMMUNITY GRANTS - CAPITAL AWARDS 2007/08REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITIESDETAIL:1 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present details of the community capital grant applications for 2007/08 and to recommend appropriate levels of support for each, as outlined in Appendix 1.
- 1.2 The original application forms and supporting documents are held in the Community Development Team in the Communities Directorate. In the interests of economy, additional copies have not been taken however any Member wishing to study the forms prior to the meeting should contact the Partnership and External Funding Officer who will make the appropriate arrangements.

2 Resources

- 2.1 Budget provision of £80,000 has been made in the Council's capital programme to support eligible applications for grant aid in 2007/08. This is a reduction of £20,000 from 2006/07 when a total of £100,000 was available for allocation.
- 2.2 There are three projects previously awarded a capital grant that have declined the grant offer in 2006/07, meaning that a sum totalling £23,025 will be unspent. It is requested that £15,000 of this unspent money is carried forward to 2007/08 for use in supporting new applications. The remaining £8,025 will remain unclaimed and will be removed from the grant budget. This means that a total of £95,000 is available for allocation.
- 2.3 In addition to this budget, a grants reserve is maintained. This is primarily to support emergency grant requests (both capital and revenue) that may arise during the course of the year. Taking into account all commitments being held in the reserve in the current year, the anticipated balance at 31 March 2007 is approximately £13,000.
- 2.4 Eight eligible applications for capital grant were received and the total amount of grant requested for 2007/08 was in excess of the budget at £115,000. This report recommends grant awards totalling £95,000 for 2007/08. This could be met due to the carry forward of £15,000 detailed above.
- 2.5 Two further applications were received which are significantly large in size that they cannot be managed within the capital grant budget. These are discussed in more detail later in this report.

3 Application Details

- 3.1 Details of all the applications received are shown in Appendix 1. Each project has been subject to a rigorous evaluation to assess the level of community benefit, compliance with the policies and criteria currently in force, the level of external funding already secured, and sustainability. The recommended grant levels reflect the results of these considerations.
- 3.2 Members are reminded that the maximum level of City Council grant aid available to each project is double the contribution from the local parish council or the Winchester Town Account. There is an exception where the tax base for the Parish is 150 or below, which does not apply to any of the applications received.
- 3.3 No requests for capital grant have been received from groups within the Town Forum area.
- 3.4 One application recommended for support does not meet all of the criteria for support – that from the West Meon Community Shop Association. The application does not meet the following criteria:
- (i) “Any organisation seeking support from the City Council for improvements to a community building will have to demonstrate that it provides a range of activities within its programme or booking policy to meet a wide spectrum of community need.”
 - (ii) “Where the applicant is a Parish based organisation (tax base of more than 150) – up to 50% of the total project cost can be granted, subject to the applicant raising 25% and the local Parish Council/Meeting contributing at least 25% from its own resources. Parish based groups and organisations should secure at least ‘in principle’ support from their local Parish Council/Meeting prior to submitting a request for grant aid.”
 - (iii) “Retrospective applications will not be considered – i.e. where a group or organisation has entered into any form of commitment in respect of the project prior to application.”
- 3.5 While the Community Shop in West Meon is not a building that provides community benefit through the availability of rooms for hire, it is clear that it is providing a vital service to the majority of residents in the area. In addition to the basic shop there is also a post office and future developments will include an information point, local heritage display and internet café.
- 3.6 The total cost of this project is in excess of £157,000, of which £133,000 has already been raised through grants, loans and sales of shares and debentures to local people. A one-off start up grant of £5,000 has been given from the LAGBI fund within the economic development budget, but there are no other Council funding schemes that could otherwise support this project so it is felt appropriate to offer a grant in this instance by making a special case for support. This recognises the immense contributions of both time and money made by local residents to enable the project to happen.
- 3.7 One application has not been recommended for support – that from New Alresford Town Trust. The application relates to the old Eel House and, whilst the works

proposed may be worthwhile and beneficial, they are not a key priority when assessed against the criteria applied to the capital grants scheme. In particular it does not meet the following criteria:

- (i) "The scheme does not deal with grants of a statutory nature such as renovation grants, historic building grants or environmental improvement grants, which have historically been administered by the Development Directorate. However it may be able to support specific elements of projects that fall outside the eligibility criteria for these schemes."
- (ii) "Any organisation seeking support from the City Council for improvements to a community building will have to demonstrate that it provides a range of activities within its programme or booking policy to meet a wide spectrum of community need."

4 Other Capital Projects for Consideration

- 4.1 Cabinet may recall from previous capital grant reports that there are a number of larger scale projects which will be seeking capital support from the City Council in the future.
- 4.2 The capital grant reports in each of the last three years have highlighted the needs of Bishops Waltham & Meon Valley Citizen's Advice Bureau, which requires new premises. This group now has the opportunity to secure a long term rent free lease (minimum of 25 years) in the proposed new Church Hall to be built in Free Street in Bishops Waltham. To secure this lease the Church has requested a contribution of £100,000 to the total building and development costs of £766,000. In view of this Bishops Waltham & Meon Valley Citizen's Advice Bureau is seeking a grant of £80,000 from Winchester City Council. It is anticipated that building works will commence in March 2008 and be completed by September 2008.
- 4.3 Another project that has been known to the Council for some time is the proposed move of Trinity Winchester from its premises at St Paul's Hill to a site at Durngate. The Council has already agreed to provide the land at Durngate at no cost and Trinity is now seeking a capital contribution of £100,000 towards the £1,954,142 estimated cost of the project. It is hoped that work can begin on the project in 2007 with completion in 2008.
- 4.4 No budget provision has currently been made for either of these projects. More detailed reports will be submitted to Cabinet for consideration in the coming months.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

5 CORPORATE STRATEGY (RELEVANCE TO):

- 5.1 All applications recommended for approval focus on facilities in rural areas. They fulfil Council priorities by:
 - a) promoting health and well-being through improving sport and leisure opportunities; and/or

