

Committee: Community

Agenda Item

Date: 6 September 2007

6

Title: CONTRIBUTION FUND SCHEME GRANT
& OTHER GRANT REQUESTS

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Item for decision

Summary

- 1 This report provides the Committee with details of applications for funding under the three year Contributions Fund Scheme and requests from the Thaxted Festival and the Dunmow Maltings Preservation Trust.

Recommendations

- 2 It recommends:
 - (a) that Members determine whether grant allocations for the Contributions Fund Scheme should be considered for the setting of draft budgets for 2008/09;
 - (b) that members determine whether funding the Thaxted Festival £3,500 per annum for the next three years should be included in the setting of the draft budgets
 - (c) that Members determine whether to fund the Dunmow Maltings £1.000 following their request for an annual grant contribution for three years towards its day-to-day running costs should be considered in the setting of the draft budgets.

Background Papers

- 3 Application forms received from organisations currently in receipt of funding and letters from the Thaxted Festival and Dunmow Maltings.

Impact

4

Communication/Consultation	All organisations are communicated with on a regular basis and utilise other funding streams that enable them to secure additional funding.
Community Safety	Not applicable
Equalities	All organisations funded have a robust

	equal opportunities policy and encourage people from all backgrounds to access the services which they provide
Finance	Contained within the main body of the report
Human Rights	Not applicable
Legal implications	All organisations funded are legally constituted bodies
Sustainability	All organisations contribute to ensuring that a sustainable quality of life is enjoyed by residents/visitors who access their respective services.
Ward-specific impacts	All
Workforce/Workplace	Not applicable

Situation

- 5 The Contributions Fund Scheme, previously named the Voluntary Organisation Support Grant (VOSG), is so named in recognition of the valuable contribution that the Council makes to fund the recipient organisations to provide services, which the Council might otherwise have to provide.
- 6 The following organisations have received an annual inflationary uplift contribution from the Contributions Fund Scheme for the past three years - Uttlesford Citizen's Advice Bureau (UCAB), Bishop's Stortford CAB (BSCAB), the Council for Voluntary Services, Uttlesford (CVSU) and the Uttlesford Volunteer Bureau (UVB). Smaller grants/subscriptions amounting to £7,680 are awarded to Rural Community Council Essex, Eastern Orchestral, Eastern Arts and Eastern Essex Sport – a further report will be brought to the next committee concerning these allocations.
- 7 In addition, Uttlesford Community Travel (UCT) has a three-year funding arrangement with the Council which is split between on-going revenue costs and a capital contribution towards the costs of replacement vehicles. The Environment & Transport Committee originally allocated the capital and revenue contribution but subsequently agreed for funds of £30,000 to be ring-fenced and transferred to the Community and Leisure Committee to allocate towards Community Transport revenue provision in the District and £12,000 per annum capital funding towards the provision of new community mini-buses – these funds are allocated from the Community Project Grant and these monies are ring-fenced for this purpose.

- 8 The appended table below illustrates the funds that have been allocated to each organisation (providing details of the grant awarded for this financial year) and the funding requests that are being sought for the next three years. The total amount in the existing budget is £129,100 (revenue funding) plus £12,000 (capital finding ring fenced for UCT).
- 9 All five organisations are seeking an increase to their previous contributions and this amounts to more than would have been allocated if inflation had been built into the previous contributions. The requests received amount to £177,920 (revenue funding) and £15,000 (capital funding) which, without growth, exceed the budget allocation by approximately £48,820 for revenue funding and £3,000 for capital funding. Each has applied for a further contribution for the next three-year period that this Scheme is to run – 2008 – 2011. All organisations have a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the Council as they receive funding of over £5k.
- 10 In making their application, the organisations indicated that they would welcome the opportunity to work more closely in partnership with the Council through a robust SLA that has been in operation for the past three years.. They have confirmed how useful and helpful it has been to have the security of a three-year funding arrangement. They have indicated, however, their concern that if future funding arrangements do not reflect the inflationary increase that has accrued over the three years, or that will accrue over the coming three years, they will find it difficult to manage their finances.
- 11 Organisations in receipt of a contribution under this Scheme will be required to enter into a further SLA with the Council for the next three-year period. The SLA will define the arrangements between the Council and the organisation and the purpose for which the grant is made. In addition, the outcomes that the Council will expect to see as a result of funding the organisation will be included in the Agreement. Officers will monitor the SLA during the year.
- 12 On an annual basis, the Funding and Strategic Partnership's Officer will meet with representatives of each these organisations to assess that the service arrangements that are being provided meet the agreed standard, review these, if necessary, provide an annual report to this Committee, and approve the payment for the next year.

13 The Options

The Committee has a range of options that it may wish to consider:

- a. Cease funding the Contribution Fund Scheme
- b. Provide funding solely for the next financial year with a built in review for future funding in September 2008
- c. Provide funding for the next three years at the same level as is currently being received
- d. Consider increasing the levels of funding as requested by the organisations

- e. Provide funding at the current levels received but with an inflationary uplift over the next three years.

Other Requests Received

14 *Thaxted Music Festival* –

The Festival is an annual event that is considered to attract audiences from Essex and beyond. Thaxted is not the ideal venue for a festival as it is a relatively small community, is unable to attract many local sponsors and relies on the local church as its main venue for hosting concerts. The Festival has been in receipt of a grant from the Council for the past three years - £2,500 (05/06), £3,000(06/07) and ££3,080 (07/08).

- 15 The Festival has only remained financially viable due to the fact that it is staffed by volunteers and has received financial support from the Council, Essex County Council, the Eastern Orchestral Board and the Eastern Arts Council.
- 16 It is recognised that the Festival is an economic asset to the local community and beyond as it both promotes culture and tourism and has associated economic spin-offs for the local community.
- 17 The Council could elect to provide no grant at all but it is considered that this could have a detrimental effect on the long term viability of the Festival and the associated economic spin-offs. In addition, the Council has been recognised in the past as being one of the major sponsors and its contribution has been well advertised in all the promotional literature connected with the Festival.
- 18 It is generally considered that the Festival provides an economic and cultural focus of international re-known for the district. Comments from Festival attendees suggest that there is a consensus that the Festival should continue and encourage new artists into the musical arena.

19 *Great Dunmow Maltings Preservation Trust*

The Council entered into an agreement with the Trust following the restoration of the Malting and allocated £1,000 towards the day-to-day running costs of the building - this grant has been match-funded by the Great Dunmow Town Council. The agreement came to an end in the financial year 2006/07.

- 20 The Malting is a building of high architectural interest that is open to the public and, is as such, an important local focal point for tourists visiting the District. The building dates from around 1580 and is considered completely unique as being the only surviving floor malting in the Country in such good condition.
- 21 The Trust charges admission fees and raises funds from room hire to local community organisations. It is run on an entirely voluntary basis apart from one part-time cleaner and it also acts as a Visitor Information Point for tourists during its opening hours.

- 22 The funding requested would be allocated towards the restricted fund account and can, therefore, only be used for major repairs and on-going maintenance of the building and its fabric.

Risk Analysis

23

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Failure to continue to grant fund organisations in receipt of the <u>Contributions Fund Scheme</u> will have a direct impact on service and how to access provision for Uttlesford residents	High	High	The organisations would have to try and secure funding from alternative sources

Name of Organisation	Grant Allocation 2007-08	Grant at Year 3 if Inflation @ 3% p.a. applied to existing Grant, plus inflation for next 3 years	Amount Requested	Purpose of Contribution for 2008 – 2011
Uttlesford Citizen Advice Bureau	£67,550	Yr 1 69,567 Yr 2 71,650 Yr 3 73,800	Yr 1 £75,000 Yr 2 76,875 Yr 3 78,800	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the CAB service throughout Uttlesford District primarily from offices in Saffron Walden, Gt Dunmow and Thaxted • Develop the CAB service by improving access to services by looking to extend hours as well as service delivery methods, including the introduction of self-help kiosks • Ensure ongoing training of volunteer and paid staff, in technical matters, interviewing skills, equal opportunities and other local services • Train new volunteers to the required level of competence to ensure sufficient team members to meet demands • Maintain and improve the standard of service so ensuring continual achievement of quality standards set by National Association and Community Legal Services

Name of Organisation	Grant Allocation 2007-08	Grant at Year 3 if Inflation @ 3% p.a. applied to existing Grant, plus inflation for next 3 years	Amount Requested	Purpose of Contribution for 2008 – 2011
Bishop's Stortford & District CAB Ltd	£9,790	Yr 1 10,084 Yr 2 10,387 Yr 3 10,699	Yr 1 10,100 Yr 2 10,403 Yr 3 10,715	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay day to day essential running costs including salaries e.g. grant funds a 2 day/week position for a debt advise and 1 day per week tutor to guide new volunteers through their 6 month training period • Offer advocacy & case management to clients • Provide advice and support from outlets and/or via service –wide telephone help line and advice system
Volunteer Centre Uttlesford	£5,330	Yr 1 5,496 Yr 2 5,661 Yr 3 5,831	Yr 1 15,000 Yr 2 15,000 Yr 3 15,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form part of the Bureau's core funding e.g. Salaries and general expenses, training costs for staff and volunteers through Voluntary Sector Training • Raising the profile of the Bureau throughout the district thus encouraging more volunteers and voluntary groups to use the service • Ensuring Uttlesford has a voice in the future development of its volunteering infrastructure service and can continue to offer support for its volunteers involving organisations and volunteers

Name of Organisation	Grant Allocation 2007-08	Grant at Year 3 if Inflation @ 3% p.a. applied to existing Grant, plus inflation for next 3 years	Amount Requested	Purpose of Contribution for 2008 – 2011
Council for Voluntary Service, Uttlesford	£14,760*	Yr 1 15,203 Yr 2 15,660 Yr 3 16,130	Yr 1 34,820 Yr 2 34,864 Yr 3 35,940	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With combined funding from Essex County Council, Uttlesford Primary Care Trust and the Council, CVSU will: • Develop the capacity of the CVS to meet the increasing demands being made upon it by statutory agencies and local voluntary and community groups • Develop a Voluntary Sector Forum which will provide an opportunity to enable the voice of the community to be heard. Contribute to the development of the Sustainable Community Plan • Continue servicing and developing the CVS website, to increase awareness of and access to information about CVSU's support services which are available to the community • Continue as lead on the implementation and development of the Uttlesford COMPACT between voluntary groups and statutory agencies • Develop business links and opportunities for sponsorship • Continue to develop our skills in leveraging in finance to the economy of Uttlesford by providing a range of support to voluntary groups to assist with funding

				applications. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage CVSU membership and use of our services through marketing and public relations work.
Uttlesford Community Travel	£31,670 £12,000**	Yr 1 32,713 12,360 Yr 2 33,694 12,731 Yr 3 34,705 13,113	Yr 1 £43,000 £15,000** Yr 2 £43,000 £15,000** Yr 3 43,000 15,000**	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Towards cost of operation, increases in maintenance charges, repairs and fuel. Maintaining modest fare levels to customers Increasing the numbers of trained volunteer drivers for the Hospital Car Scheme Increasing the numbers using the Hospital Link Service for Addenbrookes and other hospitals and rehab centres utilised by those living in the District

TOTALS	£129,100	Yr 1	Yr 1	<u>Budgetary Notes:</u> On the assumption that there is no growth in expenditure apart from the annual inflationary growth of approximately 3%; the amount of financial aid requested will exceed the available existing budget unless there is a growth in the budget of approximately £47,500.
	+	£133,063	£177,920	
	<u>£ 12,000**</u>	+	+	
	£141,100	<u>£12,360**</u>	<u>£15,000**</u>	
		£145,423	£192,920	
		Yr 2	Yr 2	
		£137,052	£180,142	
		+	+	
		<u>£12,731**</u>	<u>£15,000**</u>	
		£149,783	£195,142	
	Yr 3	Yr 3		
	£141,165	£183,455		
	+	+		
	<u>£13,113**</u>	<u>£15,000**</u>		
	£154,278	£198,455		

23 * Uttlesford CAB also receive £9,000 towards cost of office accommodation in Great Dunmow

24 ** "Ring Fenced" for UCT costs towards replacement vehicles (capital costs)