

Committee: Community & Leisure
Date: 4 March 2003
Agenda Item No: 4
Title: Community & Leisure Grant Schemes
Author: Sarah McLagan (01799) 510560

Summary

- 1 This report provides proposals for restructuring and criteria for the Community & Leisure Grant Schemes in light of the outcome of the Best Value Review of Leisure & Cultural Services and the effects of the recent budget saving process, comments received on the Schemes by Members and the desire to streamline health and social care grant schemes in cooperation with relevant partners. It recommends that the new Schemes be approved.

Background

- 2 There are currently four Grant Schemes under the remit of this Committee, as described in Table 1 below:-

Ad Hoc Grant Scheme	Community Project Grant Scheme (CPGS)	Voluntary Organisation Support Grant Scheme (VOSG) - 1 Year	Voluntary Organisation Support Grant Scheme (VOSG) - 3 Years
£5,000 Maximum amount awarded is £500 for equipment, community projects etc.	£40,000 (Capital Programme) Maximum amount awarded is £3,500 for development of community buildings, car parks, play areas, training essential equipment, etc.	£10,000 Maximum amount awarded is £1,000 for core/on-going costs for new or established services	£110,320 There is no upper or lower limit. Grants are for core/on-going costs for new or established services
Available to Non profit organisations, local charities, talented Individuals	Available to properly constituted voluntary organisations, Town & Parish Councils with population under 1000, Village Hall Committees, Community Associations, Play groups, recreation groups	Available to voluntary & community organisations	Available to voluntary & community organisations

Ad Hoc Grant Scheme	Community Project Grant Scheme (CPGS)	Voluntary Organisation Support Grant Scheme (VOSG) - 1 Year	Voluntary Organisation Support Grant Scheme (VOSG) - 3 Years
Determined on a monthly basis by the Head of Community & Leisure in consultation with the Chairman of Community & Leisure Committee	Determined on an annual basis by the Head of Community & Leisure in consultation with the Chairman of Community & Leisure Committee	District Grants Advisory Panel meets annually to make recommendations to Community & Leisure Committee. Grants resolved by the Community & Leisure Committee	District Grants Advisory Panel meets every three years to make recommendations to Community & Leisure Committee. Grants resolved by the Community & Leisure Committee

3 As a result of the Best Value Review of Leisure & Cultural Services it was agreed that although these schemes make a useful contribution to promoting leisure & cultural activity within the district, it would be simpler and more transparent to have a separate, specific scheme for grants to sports and arts. With regard to this conclusion, the main recommendations of the Review were as follows:

- (a) Remove grants for leisure & cultural purposes from the Schemes
- (b) Establish a new Leisure & Cultural Grants Scheme from 2003/04 using funding equivalent to the expenditure for leisure & cultural activities in the VOSG (1year) and Ad Hoc Grant Schemes. This equates to £5,000.
- (c) Unspent balances from the new scheme should not be carried forward into next year.
- (d) Clubs and organisations should look to Parish Councils for grants for capital expenditure or maintenance for premises or playing fields, thus enabling a reduction in the CP GS capital programme budget by £16,000 to £24,000.
- (e) Matching funding from the applicant should be a condition for the L&CGS.
- (f) Grants should not be made to individuals for equipment if such help is available from private charitable funds for supporting sport and the arts.

4 Members of Scrutiny 1 – Health & Housing received a report about existing Community & Leisure Grant Schemes in September 2002. They commented that organisations should be required to be consistent about their presentation of information such as financial details and that the criteria for the Schemes should be consistent. It was thought that the Schemes could be simplified and should be merged where possible. It was considered that Town and Parish Councils should be encouraged to fund local schemes from their precepts. It was also the view that the grants schemes needed to be flexible and allow grants to be carried over in certain circumstances.

- 5 In the autumn the Council Priorities were agreed and these included the objective to centralise its grants schemes in cooperation with partner organisations to simplify application processes and reduce administrative costs. It is considered that organisations providing health and social care services should be able to apply to one grant scheme, funded by partners such as Essex County Council, Social Services (ECC,SS) and the Uttlesford Primary Care Trust (UPCT).
- 6 By redefining the existing grant schemes and redistributing some funds to join with other sources of funding, e.g. the Uttlesford Community Partnership Fund, it would provide both the general public and local organisations with clarity as to what the Council is wishing to achieve through its grant schemes i.e. grants to support leisure & cultural projects, community orientated projects and Health and Social care services.
- 7 By adopting such an approach, applicants will be able to choose between a range of clearly defined grant schemes covering a number of disciplines. It is considered that application processes will be less onerous for organisations thereby enabling them to concentrate on their core activities and, in turn, bringing greater benefits to the community. In addition, there will be a small administrative saving, which is referred to in the Staffing report on this agenda.

Proposed new arrangements

- 8 Bearing in mind the various objectives set out in paragraphs 3 to 7 above, officers have developed proposals for the Community & Leisure Grant Schemes, by undertaking the following :
 - (a) Determining the parameters of the new and revised Schemes
 - (b) Determining the new budgets for the new and revised Schemes
 - (c) Determining the criteria for the new and revised Schemes, ensuring that application processes are as streamlined and efficient as possible.
- 9 The proposed Criteria for the new Leisure & Cultural Grant Scheme and Community Partnership Scheme and revised Community Project Grant Scheme are set out in the attached Appendix. Details of how these Schemes can be achieved and the arrangements to establish the Contributions Fund are set out in the paragraphs below.

Means by which the Proposals can be achieved

(a) Ad Hoc Grants Scheme

- 10 At the meeting of this Committee in January 2003, it was necessary to make budget savings to meet Committee targets for reductions in spending. It was agreed that the Ad Hoc Grant Scheme should be reduced by £3,000 from 2003/04. This reduction was to be cushioned by the under spend brought forward from earlier years. This, together with the transfer of funds from this scheme to the new Leisure & Cultural Grant Scheme, reduces the budget

available in this Scheme to £3,323 for 2003/04. As no provision is to be made in the base budget there after, the Scheme will cease from 2004/05.

(b) Community Project Grant Scheme

- 11 The Appendix denotes in *italics* the changes that have been made to this Scheme as a result of the Best Value Review and Members' comments. It is suggested that this Scheme should have an additional beneficiary in the form of Community Village Shops based in Uttlesford. Members will be aware that the existing scheme will cease in March of this year. However, it has been recognised that Village Shops and their associated development are considered to be community priorities.

(c) Voluntary Organisation Support Grant Scheme – 1 year

- 12 It is proposed that £6,000 of the VOSG Scheme is transferred to the Community Partnership Grant Scheme. This Scheme has been established by the Uttlesford Community Partnership, which consists of officer representatives for ECC SS, UPCT, Council for Voluntary Services, Uttlesford (CVSU) and UDC. It gives grants to voluntary and statutory organisations in the district that provide health and social care services. The Community Partnership has developed the criteria for this Scheme. Currently there is a budget of £38,000, which has been provided by ECC SS (£8,000) and UPCT (£30,000). The budget is held by the UPCT. The Community Partnership administer the Scheme and make recommendations to the Chairman of the UPCT who determines the grants.
- 13 Transfer of UDC funds from the VOSG to this Scheme would meet the Council's priority to centralise grant schemes to health and social care organisations. All of the organisations receiving grants from the VOSG Scheme are providing health and social care services and could apply to this Scheme. It is proposed that the Scheme will run for a trial period during 2003/04 and be reviewed in conjunction with the development of other proposals to centralise grant schemes (see VOSGS – 3 year – paragraph 16 below). In order to ensure there is Member involvement in the determination of the grants in this Scheme, it is proposed that the Chairmen of the UPCT and Community & Leisure Committee carry out this function jointly. The Chairman of UPCT has agreed to this approach.

(d) Voluntary Organisation Support Grant Scheme – 3 years

- 14 This Scheme has a further year to run to reach the end of a three-year commitment to fund recipients and has a total budget of £110,320. It has long been considered that the Uttlesford & Bishop's Stortford CABs, the Council for Voluntary Services, Uttlesford and the Uttlesford Volunteer Bureau, which receive grants currently totalling £84,720 from the VOSGS (3 Year), should be dealt with separately from the grant making process.
- 15 Representations from these organisations indicate that they would welcome the opportunity to work more closely in partnership with the Council and this

could be achieved through a more robust Service Level Agreement (SLA) than currently adopted. These organisations have confirmed how useful and helpful it has been to have a more secure funding arrangement under the three-year scheme, but are concerned about future funding and whether there will be any increases to reflect inflation that has accrued over the three years. It is suggested, therefore, that the funding arrangements for these organisations could transfer into the Contributions Fund Scheme, detailed below in paragraphs 18 to 22.

- 16 If Members agree to this approach, £25,600 would remain in this Scheme's budget. Currently this sum is granted to organisations that provide a health or social care service and the Thaxted Festival. The latter will transfer to the Leisure & Cultural Grant Scheme in 2004/05. The remaining £21,100 could transfer from 2004/05 to the Community Partnership Grant Scheme to enable more funds to be available in a centralised Scheme.

(e) Leisure & Culture Grant Scheme

- 17 This new Scheme will provide grants to Leisure & Cultural clubs and organisations for projects and initiatives of a Leisure & Cultural nature which will benefit residents of Uttlesford. It has been established using funding equivalent to the expenditure for leisure & cultural activities in the VOSG (1 year) and Ad Hoc Grant Schemes. This equates to £4,000. With regard to the issue of whether grants for sports equipment for talented individuals can be obtained from other sources, Officers have contacted/knowledge of other private and national charitable providers of Grants. Generally, individuals or clubs are eligible for grant funding. One provider tends to restrict funding to clubs and individuals in Saffron Walden and the surrounding area. It is suggested that applicants should demonstrate that they have sought funding from other sources before applying to this Scheme and information is provided on the application form.

(f) Contributions Fund Scheme

- 18 It is proposed that this Scheme is established to deal with the contributions that are made by the Council where it subscribes or provides funds to an organisation in exchange for membership and/or services and where it is not appropriate for it to require them to provide matched funding. Organisations fitting this description that currently receive a contribution are the Rural Community Council of Essex, East of England Arts, Eastern Orchestra Board, the Uttlesford Community Sports Forum, Essex Sport and East Sports Board. These contributions total £7,010. In addition, it is proposed that the current contribution of £2,500 to the Uttlesford Volunteer Bureau is incorporated under this arrangement from 2004/05. The Head of Community and Leisure, in consultation with the Chairman of Community & Leisure Committee, would determine contributions to organisations on an annual basis. Any requests for an increase to the budget provision would be reported to the Community & Leisure Committee for a decision.

- 19 For organisations receiving contributions of over £5,000p.a. a SLA would be secured with each for a three-year period (as is currently the practice). The SLA would define the arrangements between the Council and the organisation. In addition, it is felt that officers and the Chairman and Vice Chairman of this Committee should meet with representatives of each these organisations on an annual basis to assess that the membership/service arrangements that are being provided meet the agreed standard, review these, if necessary, and approve the payment for the next year.
- 20 It is suggested that it would be appropriate for the organisations described in paragraph 14 above to be included in this Fund from 2004/05.
- 21 UCT has a three-year variable grant arrangement (maximum of £30k) with the Council, which, under its current SLA, has a further year to run. This grant is allocated from Environment & Transport Committee budgets. It is suggested that to maintain continuity with the approach described in paragraphs 14/15 above and to streamline the processes, this budget transfers to the Contribution Fund Scheme in 2004/05. The Chairman of Environment and Transport supports this approach.
- 22 The outstanding issue regarding this proposal is whether the four major organisations that would transfer to this Scheme should receive an inflationary increase to their contribution –
- (a) to reflect the previous three years with no increase for inflation and
 - (b) to reflect a year on year inflationary increase within the next three year agreement period.

With regard to these points, officers will ask the four organisations in question to submit applications for contributions for the next three year period and bring a report to the October meeting of this Committee in order for it to determine the level of contribution for the next three year agreement period.

- 23 Table 2 sets out the budgets for the new and revised Schemes.

Table 2 – New & Revised Community & Leisure Grant Schemes and Budgets

Grant Scheme Budget	Ad-Hoc Grant Scheme	Community Project Grant Scheme (CPGS)	Voluntary Organisation Support Grant Scheme (VOSG) – 1 Year	Voluntary Organisation Support Grant Scheme (VOSG) – 3 Years	Leisure & Culture Grant Scheme (L&CGS)	Community Partnership Grant Scheme (CPtrnGS)	Contributions Fund Scheme (CFS)
	2003/04	2003/04	2003/04	2003/04	2003/04	2003/04	2003/04
Existing Budget	£5,000 + Roll Over	£40,000 (Capital Programme)	£10,000	£110,320	£0	£0	£5,010
New/Revised Budgets	£3,323	£24,000	£0	£110,320	£4,000	£6,000	£7,010
Sources	Reduced by £3k in budget making process. £2k to be transferred into L&CGS leaving £3,323 for 2003/04 only	£16K Capital saved as a result of BV Review	£6K to CPtrnGS £2K to Con. Fund, £2K to L&CGS		£2K from Ad-hoc GS, £2K from VOSG (1yr)	Total budget of £44,000 = £6k from VOSG (1yr) £38k from Partners	£2K from VOSG
				2004/05	2004/05	2004/05	2004/05
New/Revised Budgets	£0			Reduces to £0	Increases to £8,500	Increases to £27,100	Increases to £121,730
Adjustments				£4.5K to L&CGS, £84,720 to Con. Fund, £21,100 to CPSF	£4.5k from VOSG (3yrs)	£21,100 from VOSG (3 yrs) Total budget of £65,100	£30k from E&T, £84,720 from VOSGS

Conclusions

- 24 The above enables the Council to satisfy the outcome to the Best Value Review. In addition, it offers a dedicated scheme in partnership with ECC & UPCT to provide funding for health & social care. Most importantly it offers grant recipients a more streamlined and direct approach to grant funding.
- 25 The establishment of a more robust regime for funding falling into the Contributions Fund Scheme category enables the Council, via SLAs, to ensure that front line services provided by Uttlesford and Bishop's Stortford CABs, UCT, CVSU are maintained to their current high standards and help to satisfy increasing public expectation and demand.
- 26 In addition, it offers the organisation in receipt of a contribution both the ability to offer continuity of service provision and the opportunity to apply to alternative funding sources using the Council's contribution as match funding.
- 27 It is suggested that the above goes some way towards the expectations that are emanating from Central Government regarding the role of the Voluntary sector in local communities. It provides security to the organisations in question and confirms the Council's commitment to its support of these important service providers.

RECOMMENDED that the

- 1 New Leisure & Cultural Grant Scheme and Community Partnership Grant Scheme set out in the Appendix be approved
- 2 New arrangements for the Contributions Fund Scheme be approved and officers report to the October meeting of this Committee to provide details of the applications received from Uttlesford Citizen's Advice Bureau, Bishop's Stortford CAB, Council for Voluntary Services Uttlesford and Uttlesford Community Transport,
- 3 Redistribution of budgets for the Schemes, as set out in Table 2, be approved
- 4 Environment & Transport Committee be asked to confirm the transfer of the budget allocated to Community Transport to the Contributions Fund.

Background Papers: Grant Criteria/Application Forms, Best Value Review
Action Plan

CRITERIA FOR APPLICATIONS from 2003/04:

Appendix 1

N.B. Details in *Italics* denote where changes that have been incorporated to the existing Community Project Grant Scheme as a result of the Best Value Review and Members comments

<u>PARAMETERS</u>	LEISURE & CULTURAL GRANT SCHEME £4,000 (£8,500 from 2004/05)	COMMUNITY PROJECT GRANT SCHEME £24,000	COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP GRANT SCHEME £6K from UDC/£44,000 in pot (From 2004/05 £27,100 from UDC/£65,100 in pot)
WHAT IS THE GRANT FOR?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leisure & Cultural projects/initiatives which benefit residents of Uttlesford ▪ Equipment, training, coaches for Leisure and Cultural activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of land for playing field or recreation purposes, including environmental improvements ▪ Buildings/facilities for community use e.g. village halls, community centres, public conveniences ▪ Car parks & access roads directly associated with community use buildings ▪ Children's play areas, including equipment & safety surfacing ▪ Improvements, refurbishment or development of the extension to any facilities above ▪ Essential equipment that contributes significantly to the aims & objectives of the project ▪ Training or one-off staffing costs that contribute to the project or increase the benefit to the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Projects/initiatives which complement the broad range of areas outlined in the Uttlesford PCT Health Improvement and Modernisation Programme ▪ Capital and Revenue Costs will be permitted
WHAT IS THE GRANT NOT FOR?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Capital expenditure or maintenance for premises or playing fields ▪ Clubs/organisations serving only their local immediate community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Sports pavilion & changing room maintenance/ refurbishment/ development</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Non related Health and Social Care type activities
WHO CAN APPLY?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Talented Individuals ▪ Sports & Arts/Cultural Clubs ▪ Local Branches of National Sports and Arts Bodies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Properly constituted voluntary organisations ▪ <i>Town & Parish Council's with populations of under 1000</i> ▪ Village Hall Committees ▪ Community Associations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Constituted organisations working for the benefits of the residents of Uttlesford

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Play Groups ▪ Recreation Groups ▪ <i>Community Shops</i> 	
WHO CANNOT APPLY?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Town & Parish Councils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Church & Religious groups and Schools ▪ <i>Sports & Arts Clubs/groups</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Church and religious groups
AMOUNT OF GRANT AVAILABLE?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Up to £400 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Up to £3,500 ▪ Recipients in receipt of CPSG in last 2 years are a lower priority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Up to £3,000 ▪ Recipients can apply for 3 year Index Linked funding
MATCHED FUNDING REQUIRED?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 100% (this can include donations in kind) ▪ Individuals must demonstrate that they have applied to other funds if applying for equipment ▪ Any publicity to include recognition of UDC grant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More that £1,000 grant = 50% ▪ Less than £1,000 grant = 25% ▪ Any publicity to include recognition of UDC grant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encouraged but not essential
DETERMINATION OF GRANT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Head of Community & Leisure in consultation with the Chairman of Community & Leisure Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Head of Community & Leisure in consultation with the Chairman of Community & Leisure Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Uttlesford Community Partnership make recommendations to the Chairman of the PCT (who reports directly to the Secretary of State)
FREQUENCY OF DETERMINATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monthly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Annually
MONITORING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Confirmation that agreed projects/initiatives have been implemented 		

Committee: COMMUNITY & LEISURE
Date: 4 MARCH 2003
Agenda Item No: 5
Title: COMMUNITY PROJECT GRANT – REQUEST FOR EXTENSION TO GRANT PERIOD
Author: Sue Hayden (01799) 510563

Summary

- 1 This report asks Members to agree to extend the Community Project Grant period for Saffron Walden Town Library Society into 2003.

Background

- 2 At a Community & Leisure Committee meeting held on 28 May 2002, Members agreed to the recommendation made by the District Grants Advisory Panel to allocate £3,500 to the Saffron Walden Town Library Society.
- 3 The grant was made in respect of the Saffron Walden Town Library Society's project for extensive improvements to the Town Library facility by providing compact shelving, upgrading the study room and cataloguing the core collections. The project is estimated to cost in the region of £100,000 and £76,000 has been identified by the Library to date, with a number of grant applications still outstanding.
- 4 Saffron Walden Town Library Society has commissioned the building construction work to start in May 2003, and a letter has been received from Frank Easton, Project Co-ordinator, on behalf of the Saffron Walden Town Library Society requesting that their grant be held over until such time as the work commences.
- 5 Saffron Walden Town Library Society say that the Community Project Grant of £3,500 is extremely important to their plans but if Members were not minded to grant its request it would put the grant towards furniture identified for the scheme. However, this would cause the Society considerable logistical problems with regard to storing the furniture.
- 6 Members are aware that applicants are informed when they apply for a grant that should a project not be completed by 7 March 2003 then, except in the case of lottery applications, the grant provision will be lost. However, as this project is set to proceed, albeit not within the time restraints, Members may wish to support this request.

RECOMMENDED that the Grant of £3,500 for the Saffron Walden Town Library be held over until September 2003

Committee: COMMUNITY & LEISURE
Date: 4 MARCH 2003
Agenda Item No: 6
Title: YOUNG MUSICIAN OF THE YEAR FESTIVAL
Author: GAYNOR BRADLEY (01799) 510348

Summary

- 1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members that it will not be possible to hold the above event in 2003. It recommends that the funding earmarked for this event be utilised to support arts based initiatives for young people in the district.

Background

- 2 Officers in Community and Leisure have organised the above Festival for the last 5 years. The Festival was funded from the Youth Initiatives' Working Group budget under the crime and disorder legislation. The Best Value Review concluded that the event did not comply with the spirit of the crime and disorder legislation in generally deterring young people from crime. It was decided that as the event was primarily an arts initiative the funding should be transferred to the Arts Development budget.
- 3 However, the Festival has been expensive to produce in terms of administration and procurement of goods and services e.g. employment of music teachers and adjudicators, hiring facilities, furniture and equipment and catering. During the past three years officers have gradually reduced the costs of producing the event and yet still maintained standards previously set. Last year, in a further effort to reduce costs, negotiations were held with the Thaxted Festival Committee to enable the event to become part of the Festival. This resulted in the Council and the Thaxted Festival sharing the costs associated with the event.
- 4 It was anticipated that for 2003 the same arrangements would apply but, under the Budget reduction exercise, the budget earmarked for the Young Musicians' Festival was reduced from £4,000 to £1,000. This decision was taken at the Community & Leisure Committee on 7 January 2003. Unfortunately, it was necessary to decide whether the event was to be included in the 2003 Thaxted Festival programme by the end of January in order to publish the brochure. Thaxted Festival Committee considered whether or not the Young Musicians' event could be provided for a lower

contribution of £1,000. The Committee advised that this would not be possible as the format would need to be reviewed and there was not enough time to do so in terms of programming and publicity timescales. Given the need to comply with the Thaxted Festival timetable there was also insufficient time to explore other funding opportunities.

- 5 If the Young Musician's Festival were to be produced solely by the District Council then the costs would certainly be higher than last year. Additionally, whilst sponsorship could be investigated, there is a need to plan such an event well in advance in order to make the necessary bookings. Without guaranteed funding it would be inappropriate to commit the Council to pay for an event for which sufficient external sponsorship might not be raised. It should also be noted that achieving external funding towards the Young Musicians' Festival could prove quite difficult because the Festival is only attractive to a minority of young people. Therefore, the objectives do not satisfy some of the funding criteria such as social inclusion and deprivation indicators.
- 6 It is, therefore, proposed not to hold the Young Musician's Festival in 2003 and that the £1,000 transferred to the Arts Development budget be utilised to support other arts development initiatives including another musical project for young people (Rockshop) being held at the end of April. For information, Rockshop is a joint initiative with Braintree District Council and officers have already secured a sum of external funding to contribute towards the cost of delivering this project. This initiative is designed to appeal to a wide range of young people from all areas of both districts. By working jointly with Braintree District Council it has been possible to satisfy demographic and deprivation external funding criteria.

Conclusion

- 7 By utilising the £1,000 (in 2003) for young people's arts projects, generally, greater flexibility would be provided for new initiatives to encourage as many young people as possible to benefit from the arts. It would also still enable officers to continue to work with the Thaxted Festival Committee to develop a less costly project in 2004, if appropriate.

b that the budget of £1,000 earmarked for the Festival of Young Musicians in 2003 is utilised to support arts initiatives for young people in the district.

Background Papers: Best Value Review Final Report to Community & Leisure Committee on 7 January 2003
Minutes of the Community & Leisure Committee Meeting on 7 January 2003

Committee: Community and Leisure
Date: 4 March 2003
Agenda Item No: 7
Title: Day Centres Best Value Review 2003/04
Author: Sarah McLagan & Alex Stewart (01799) 510560/555

Summary

- 1 Appended to this agenda are the proposed Terms of Reference for the Day Centres Best Value Review for 2003/04 for approval.

Background

- 2 Officers have met with representatives of the Day Centre Management Committees and informed them of the processes involved when undertaking a Best Value Review.
- 3 The Management Committee representatives were presented with, and discussed the Draft Terms of Reference at the last Day Centre Forum. The representatives were keen to be involved in the process and it has been agreed that there should be one representative on the Member Reference Group per Day Centre.
- 4 In addition, they have suggested that Member Reference Group meetings are held at the Day Centres in order to demonstrate the wide-ranging activities and uses that the Day Centres are currently used for.

RECOMMENDED that the Terms of Reference for the Day Centres Best Value Review for 2003/04 be approved.

Background Papers: Minutes of Day Centre Forum Meetings

BEST VALUE REVIEW – TERMS OF REFERENCE

Day Centres

Scope

The review will consider whether the Day Centres

- Should continue to operate and, if so, in what format
- Meet customer expectations
- Can be more effectively and efficiently provided
- Be clear about the impact of the introduction of charges for all hirers
- Could have increased and varied usage to reflect Community needs.

The aim is to show what we are currently achieving and how we are going to improve in future.

The services

- The services and their costs will be briefly described
- The reason(s) why the current services are being provided will be explained
e.g. how they relate to strategic objectives, Council policies and priorities

Some fundamental general questions

- What is the Council wanting to achieve in future in relation to provision of Day Centre services?
- Does the Council have a statutory obligation to provide the services? Are there any other specific obligations, eg contracts?
- If not should the Council cease to provide the services and, if so, what is its impact?
- If the services are to be continued are there better alternative ways to deliver the services – in-house, outsourcing, partnership, sponsorship?

Some specific questions

- Are we working to the greatest effect, with others, to bring real benefits to the Uttlesford community in terms of its access to Day Centres?
- What is the prime focus of the Day Centre services eg. social care, health improvement
- Are we providing an important complementary role to other service providers, e.g. the voluntary sector, ECC (social services)?
- Should we increase our focus on those requiring greatest support, eg disadvantaged young persons, those 'isolated' within the villages?
- How can the Day Centres be developed with limited resources? Is there a better, more effective, way to run the Day Centres, eg external support - charitable trust?
- Are the Council's/Day Centre's charging policies appropriate?

How we will carry out the review

The answers to the **challenging** questions above will be assisted by

- **Comparing** where practical with service providers in similar areas recognised as market leaders – probing questions rather than attempted statistical comparisons
- **Consulting** with users, partners to supplement where necessary existing evidence
- **Competing** where appropriate with other providers

The Process

- The Member Reference Group will meet regularly with officers
- There will be a challenge event in April/May
- There will be notes on the review progress to members and staff
- There will be reports to Scrutiny Committee
- An improvement plan will go to Scrutiny Committee in November and the Policy Committee in January 2004.

Membership of Review Team

- Members Councillors x 3
- Day Centre Management Committee Representation from each Day Centre
- Officers Core team of Sarah McLagan, Alex Stewart, Others contributing: Sarah Grant
- Critical Friend TBA (part of core team)