

Committee: Community and Leisure
Date: 28 October 2003
Agenda Item No: 4
Title: Community & Leisure Grant Schemes
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Summary

- 1 This report provides the Committee with details of various issues that need to be given consideration about some of its Grant Schemes. This includes applications for funding under the new three year Contributions Fund Scheme and a request from another organisation. It also includes other issues regarding funding to organisations within other Schemes. It recommends that Members determine its grant allocations for the Contributions Fund Scheme and makes decisions about the other issues.

Background

- 2 Over the past 12 months decisions have been taken to redefine the various Grant schemes that are allocated by the Community & Leisure Committee. This decision process included the consideration and agreement of actions resulting from the Best Value Review of Leisure & Cultural Services. These decisions instructed officers that:
 - Organisations should be required to be consistent about their presentation of information such as financial details
 - The Criteria for Schemes should be consistent and simplified allowing applicants to choose between a range of clearly defined grant schemes covering a number of disciplines. They would also provide applicants 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 & Social Care services.
 - Schemes should be merged where possible e.g. 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).
 - Town and Parish Councils should be encouraged to fund local schemes from their precepts
 - Schemes should be flexible and allow grants to be carried over in certain circumstances.
- 3 All of the above have been incorporated into the new grant structure, resulting in redefined Schemes with funds being redistributed. In conjunction with the Uttlesford Primary Care Trust (UPCT), Essex County Council's Social

Services Department (ECC,SS) and the Council for Voluntary Services, Uttlesford (CVSU) the Community Partnership Grant Scheme has been established with funding from each statutory organisation. On the assumption that Partners contribute the same amount, this fund will be in excess of £65,000. The Schemes and their grant allocations provided by Committee are summarised in the table below -

GRANT SCHEME	TOTAL BUDGET 2004/05*	MAXIMUM GRANT	TIMESCALE
Leisure & Cultural Grant Scheme	£8,500	£400	Monthly determination of Grants
Contributions Fund Scheme (Support)	£140,320 (including £30k ring-fenced for UCT)	No maximum	3 Year Grant
Contributions Fund Scheme (Subscriptions)	£7,000	Variable	Annual allocation
Community Partnership Grant Scheme	£27,100	Up to a maximum of £9,000 p.a.	3 Year Grants

* this budget assumes grants remain the same as in previous years

Contributions Fund Scheme Allocations 2004 – 2007

(a) Requests from Existing Recipients

- 4 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. This Scheme reaches the end of a three-year commitment to fund recipients in March 2004. It has a total budget of £84,720.
- 5 The following organisations have received a standstill contribution from the VOSG 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). Each has applied for a further contribution for the next three-year period that this Scheme is to run – 2004 – 2007. All except for the UVB has a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the Council as they receive funding of over £5k.
- 6 Uttlesford Community Travel (UCT) has a three-year variable funding arrangement (maximum of £30k) with the Council, which, under its current SLA, comes to an end in March 2004. The Environment & Transport Committee originally allocated this contribution. It agreed for the funds of

£30,000 to be ring-fenced and transferred to the Community and Leisure Committee to allocate towards Community Transport provision in the District.

- 7 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 £164,000 and, therefore, exceed the total budget allocation of £84,720.
- 8 The appended table provides details of the funding provided under the existing VOSG Scheme, the amount that the organisations would have received by the third year, had an inflationary uplift been included in the funding, the amount they are requesting for the next three financial years and the purpose for which they require the contribution for the next three years.
- 9 In making their application, the organisations indicated that they would welcome the opportunity to work more closely in partnership with the Council through a more robust SLA than currently adopted. 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. Partnering organisations allow for an annual inflationary uplift in the grants that they make.
- 10 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.
- 11 On an annual basis, Officers and the Chairman and Vice Chairman of this Committee 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, and approve the payment for the next year.

(b) Additional Requests Received

- 12 The ***Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE)*** undertakes developmental work throughout the District. It has just been announced that it will receive a Community Foundation Grant of £293,400 over the next three years for developmental work. However, the RCCE needs to continue with core development work throughout rural communities in Essex in order to help address issues ranging from village hall development to combating social exclusion. To this end, it is formally requesting a contribution for core funding of £2,000 p.a. for three years in order to reflect rural interests at both a county and regional level. A similar amount has been requested by RCCE from all rural authorities in Essex.

Officers Comments

- 13 The requests for funding from the Contributions Fund Scheme exceed the existing budget by over £50,000 – see appended table. The Committee has a number of options for determining how to allocate funds under this Scheme –
- I. The existing budget figure of £114,720p.a. (including £30,000 ring fenced for UCT) remains the maximum available and contributions are allocated to the organisations from this sum. Organisations would have to absorb the inflationary increases that they were hoping the Council would compensate them for. In addition, organisations would have their funding cut to accommodate a contribution to the new applicant, should Members agree to fund the RCCE.
 - II. Increase the budget to £125,650 p.a., including a grant to the RCCE, and provide each organisation with a stand-still contribution for the next three years which reflects the amount they would have received had inflation been met over the past three years.
 - III. Increase the budget to £135,550p.a., including a grant to the RCCE, and provide each organisation with a stand-still contribution for the next three years which reflects the amount they would have received had inflation been met over the past three years and the inflationary increase @ 3% p.a. that would be accrued over the next three years.
 - IV. Increase the budget to £164,000, including a grant to the RCCE, and accommodate the requests of the five organisations, as set out in the appendix.
 - V. The budget is increased to a level determined by Members and funds are allocated according to the Committees preference, including a grant to the RCCE.

Other Grant Considerations

- 14 The ***Thaxted Festival Foundation*** has received a grant of £4,500 for a number of years from a previous scheme that was deleted under the new arrangements. The grant allocation is to transfer into the Leisure & Cultural Grant Scheme for which a maximum of £400 can be applied for. The grant was used to support the Festival's social and educational objectives including lower ticket prices, concessions for the elderly, two school educational projects and free child tickets for some events and a concert for people with disabilities and special needs. In addition, in previous years, the Foundation has provided support for the Young Musician of the Year.
- 15 The Foundation has indicated that loss of support will inevitably mean that money will have to be saved in the above areas. In addition, a significant

reduction in the amount spent on artists will have to be made which will have a negative impact on the reputation of the Festival and could have a detrimental effect to Tourism in the district. Members could consider ring fencing a sum specifically for this organisation within the Leisure and Culture Grant Scheme from April 2004 for three years. The Foundation has been advised that the amount of Grant may not be as high as in previous years as the Council wishes to support other Leisure & Cultural organisations through the new Leisure & Cultural Grant Scheme.

- 16 With regard to the Festival of Young Musicians, the Foundation has indicated that it is willing to help promote and advertise the event in 2004 on the assumption that some financial recompense is agreed upon. For future years, it would be willing to manage the event but has advised that it would wish to pursue a different format, which provides local young musicians with the experience of a "master class" provided by the professional musicians. However, the Foundation has said that it is not possible for it to manage the Festival of Young Musicians without the essential core funding support detailed above.
- 17 Members could fund this proposal by making the budget allocation of £1,000 available to the Foundation for three years from 2004/05, plus any funds raised by the Member Task Group established to promote the event and secure additional funding/sponsorship. However, Members will need to agree to underwrite the event should the additional funding requirement of £1,000 not being met as the event will cost a minimum of £2,000 to host.
- 18 **Cruse Bereavement Care** initially applied to the Community Partnership Fund for a one-off grant of £750 for the current financial year and £7,000 over the next three financial years (£1,000, £3,000 & £3,000). Unfortunately, CVSU mislaid their application resulting in Cruse not being considered in this round.
- 19 Cruse is going to have to merge with the Cambridge branch in order to keep the organisation functioning as it is unable to source replacement Management Committee members. In line with its constitution, the current committee all have to stand down in November of this year.
- 20 Social Services have indicated that it would be able to provide £325 matched funding towards the costs for this financial year, leaving a deficit of £425. Members could consider making up the deficit by allocating funds to this amount from the Ad Hoc Grants budget which is to cease at the end of this financial year. The Partnership will consider its three year application in the normal manner.

RECOMMENDED that the Committee

- 1 Determine the budget allocation for the Contributions Grant Fund and the applications for funding be determined
- 2 Confirm whether a grant is to be ring-fenced from the Leisure & Cultural Grant Scheme for the Thaxted Festival Foundation and determine the level of three year grant to be made to the organisation

- 3 Confirm whether it wishes the Thaxted Festival Foundation to manage the Festival of Young Musicians from 2005 for three years and provide a grant of £1,000 p.a. to enable this provision and underwrite the additional funding requirement of £1,000
- 4 The Head of Community & Leisure, in consultation with the Chairman of this Committee, allocate an Ad Hoc Grant of £425 to Cruse Bereavement Care.

Background Papers: Applications from Organisations; Letters from Cruse Bereavement; Thaxted Festival Foundation; Rural Community Council of Essex; BV Review Recommendations

APPENDIX

Name of Organisation	Previous Grant Allocation from VOSG Scheme	Grant at Year 3 if Inflation @ 3% p.a. applied to existing Grant	Grant at Year 3 if Inflation @ 3% p.a. applied to existing Grant, plus inflation for next 3 years	Contribution requested for 2004 - 2007	Purpose of Contribution for 2004 – 2007
Uttlesford Citizen Advice Bureau	£60,000 *	£65,500	£71,000	Year 1 £75,100 Year 2 £78,800 Year 3 £82,400	<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 looking at additional outreach offices as well as our existing opening hours and access methods • 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
Bishop's Stortford & District Citizens Advice Bureau Ltd	£9,000	£9,800	£10,700	£11,900	<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

Uttlesford Volunteer Bureau	£2,500	£2,700	£3,000	£5,000	<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
Council for Voluntary Service, Uttlesford	£13,220	£14,500	£15,850	£29,990	<p>With combined funding from Essex County Council, Uttlesford Primary Care Trust and the Council, CVSU will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the capacity of the CVS to meet the increasing demands being made upon it by statutory agencies and local voluntary and community groups • Lead the development of a proposal for a Voluntary Sector Centre in Uttlesford, thus maximising the ability of groups to network and share resources and expertise • 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 Community Plan - Shaping the Future of Uttlesford, the Best Value Performance Plan and the Quality of Life Initiative • 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. • Encourage CVSU membership and use of our services through marketing and public relations work.

Uttlesford Community Travel	01/02 £30,000 02/03 £27,500 03/04 £28,000	£32,800 £30,050 £30,600	£32,800	£40,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Towards cost of operation, increases in maintenance charges, repairs and fuel. • Maintaining modest fare levels to customers
Rural Community Council of Essex	N/A	N/A	£2,200	£2,000	Core Funding for development work in rural communities from village hall development to combating social exclusion
TOTALS	£ 84,720 + £ 30,000** £114,720	£123,650	£135,550	£164,000	

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

** "Ring Fenced" for UCT

To: Community and Leisure Committee – 28 October 2003

Agenda Item No: 5

Title: Policy Priorities and Budgets 2004/05

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Summary

- 1 This report outlines the Committee's initial draft General Fund revised estimates of direct costs and income for 2003/04 and estimates for next year, 2004/05, prepared on the basis of existing approved levels of service. Also included in the report and in Appendix 2 is information regarding the Budget Review Items identified at the previous meeting of this Committee. Information in this report, together with any issues raised by this Committee will be included in the overall General Fund budget strategy report which will be submitted to the Resources Committee on 20 November.

Background

- 2 At its previous meeting on 2 September, this Committee was informed of the Council's difficult financial position for 2004/05 and also the Council's decision in July 2003, to set an indicative budget target equating to a 7.5% Council Tax increase. Since that meeting, the Government have indicated a possible cap on Council Tax increases which makes close scrutiny of the Budget Review Items already identified even more important.
- 3 The Resources Committee on 18 September asked for Budget Review Items to be considered regarding their contribution to the Quality of Life Plan, legal or contractual necessity, delivery of increased efficiency or support from customers or the public generally, and to be accompanied by a rigorous risk analysis. The Resources Committee gave particular emphasis to a robust approach to increasing income from fees and charges.
- 4 The intention is that the Resources Committee on 20 November will recommend to Council Committee cash limits and Committees will then be required to finalise their budgets and Service Plans in the January Committee cycle.

Revised 2003/04 Budgets

- 5 The process of revising budgets undertaken in this cycle takes the place of more routine budgetary control reports, with the summarised position being:

	£	£	£
BASE ESTIMATE 2003/2004			1,547,813
<u>Less</u> Internal Charges			<u>362,730</u>
BASE DIRECT COSTS			1,185,083
Transferred from Environment and Transport Committee:- Bridge End Gardens Project Manager (part year)			34,110
Adjusted Base Direct Costs			1,219,193
Use of Earmarked Reserves:-			
<u>Plus</u> Youth Initiatives residual reserve use		7,320	
Other Variations:-			
<u>Less</u> Staffing Costs (net)	-1,100		
<u>Less</u> Other (net)	<u>-773</u>	<u>-1,873</u>	
Total Variation from Adjusted Base			5,447
Revised Estimate 2003/2004 – Direct Costs			1,224,640

Notes on the key variations:

1. The use of earmarked reserves relates to the final payment made to the Essex Association of Boys' Clubs towards the "Kayaking for All" project.

Draft Budgets 2004/05

- 6 The detailed budgets have been prepared at estimated outturn prices and therefore they include provision for agreed future pay awards and other price increases. Prior to any further growth or savings proposals being approved by the Council, the detailed figures have been prepared at the existing approved levels of service. The summarised position for this Committee is as follows:

	£	£	£
BASE DIRECT COSTS			1,185,083
Transferred from Environment and Transport Committee:- Bridge End Gardens Project Manager (full year)			40,920
Community Transport Grant			30,000

Adjusted Base Direct Costs 1,256,003

Previously Projected Items:-

<u>Plus</u>	Arts tapered funding	2,920	
<u>Less</u>	One off use of earmarked reserve	<u>-3,323</u>	-403

Inflation:-

<u>Plus</u>	2004 Pay Award	19,010	
<u>Plus</u>	Other	<u>16,010</u>	35,020

Other Variations:-

<u>Plus</u>	Staffing – Annual Increments	4,120	
<u>Less</u>	Staffing – Other (net)	-480	
<u>Less</u>	Other (net)	<u>-1,510</u>	2,130

Total Variation from Adjusted Base 36,747

Draft Estimate 2004/05 – Direct Costs 1,292,750

- 7 Apart from inflation, also included are amounts to cover other unavoidable variations such as those arising from contractual commitments, any projections for 2003-2004 identified last year, and variations in the planned property maintenance programme. Excluded are any items related to service changes, which would require specific Committee approval.
- 8 Officers have examined the very limited number of fees and charges for this Committee and have concluded that, following the review undertaken in the last budget cycle, no further changes are currently justified, other than those connected with the Budget Review Items outlined in paragraph 9 below.

Budget Review Items

- 9 This Committee's meeting on 2 September recommended eleven Budget Review Items for further investigation. These Items had previously been identified during the joint Chairman / officer Budget Review meetings held in August. Details of these items are summarised as follows with further information in Appendix 2 if relevant:

Item	Estimated Cost pa	Proposed Action
1	Community and Leisure Management - Additional Resources	£33,000 Implement
2	Leisure and Administration - Introduction of a Leisure Card	No cost – unless maximum take-up exceeded Implement

3	Leisure and Administration - Additional Administrative Support	-	Be part of first point of contact review
4	Community Information Centres - Provision of CIC's	£15,000 up to £45,000	Further review
5	Museum - Free Admission	£7,000	Do not implement unless compensating savings possible
6	Tourist Information Centre - Sunday Opening	£1,300	Implement
7	Grants and Contributions	To be confirmed	Separate report on this agenda
8	Bridge End Gardens - Income Generation	No budgetary effect 2004/5 as Spring 2005 completion	Carry forward concept to next budget cycle
9	Emergency Planning - Effects of Civil Contingencies Bill	Not known	Await further details following Queen's Speech
10	Community Safety - Crime and Disorder Survey	£18,000 (one off expenditure)	Fund from Reserves
	- CCTV Maintenance Contract	£6,500	Implement
	- Partnership Income	£20,000	No action possible
11	Drug Awareness - Partnership Income	£10,000	Accept as unrealistic
Further item identified by Officers:-			
12	Birchanger TIC - Grant	£5,000	Implement
Estimated Total of Costed Items		£115,800 to £145,800	

Other Issues

- 10 The work being undertaken on the Quality of Life Plan and the Budget Prioritisation exercise continues, and any financial implications or direct service effects will be submitted to this Committee in the budget and Service Plan report presented at your next meeting.

- 11 The corporate review regarding the First Point of Contact (previously described as the Access to Services Review) also continues, including the review of administrative functions within the Council. Any impact on the work or budget of this Committee will again be reported at your next meeting.

RECOMMENDED that this Committee

- 1 Approves and comments as appropriate on the revised 2003/04 budget and draft 2004/05 budget.
- 2 Submits the revised 2003/04 budget and draft 2004/05 budget to the Resources Committee for comments.
- 3 Gives officers further guidance on the Budget Review Items.
- 4 Instructs officer to prepare, in the light of guidance issued by the Resources Committee on 20 November, Service Plans and draft budget proposals for consideration at the next meeting of this Committee on 6 January.

Background Papers: Base Budget Working Papers and Budget Review Item working papers.