

Committee: Community & Leisure
Date: 6 January 2004
Agenda Item No: 4
Title: Best Value Review of Day Centres – Final Report & Implementation Plan
Author: Sarah McLagan (01799) 510560

Summary

- 1 This report provides details of the recommendation of Scrutiny 1 Committee with regard to the Final Report and Improvement Plan resulting from the Best Value Review of Day Centres. It recommends that the Committee approve the final report and Improvement Plan.

Background

- 2 During 2003, Scrutiny 1 has received progress reports about the work that was undertaken to carry out a Best Value Review of the Councils Day Centres. At the meeting of Scrutiny 1 on 12 November 2003, the Committee considered the final report and Improvement Plan resulting from the Review.
- 3 The Committee supported the final report and made the following amendments to the Improvement Plan which have been incorporated into the Plan –
 - It was confirmed that the proposal to provide a new day centre at Vicarage Meads, Thaxted was not being pursued and it was agreed that this item be deleted from the proposed Improvement Plan.
 - It was agreed that, on the third page of the Improvement Plan, “Consider” be altered to “Pursue” the lowering of age limits for users of day centres, and that Corporate Plan theme “Supporting lifelong learning and better opportunities of young people” be inserted in the final column of the Plan.

The Chairman of the Committee asked that the dates, set in the Plan for projects, be reconsidered since some seemed far too long.

- 4 With reference to the point about the dates being reconsidered, the attached Improvement Plan has been amended. However, Officers have been mindful of the recent resignation of the Officer dealing with Day Centres.

5 The final report is appended, together with the amended Improvement Plan.

RECOMMENDED that approve be given to the Final Report and Improvement Plan resulting from the Best Value Review of Day Centres.

Background Papers: Best Value Review of Day Centres File

Committee: Community and Leisure Committee
Date: 6 January 2004
Agenda Item No: 5
Title: Thaxted Guildhall Amended Budget Arrangements
Author: David Demery (01799) 510520

Summary

- 1 This report recommends that the support funding to the Thaxted Guildhall upkeep is changed to an index linked grant provision of £4,500 pa.

Background

- 2 Thaxted Guildhall is owned by Essex County Council and leased to the District Council for 50 years at a peppercorn rent of £1 pa on full repairing and insuring terms from 1976.
- 3 There is an obligation to set up a Management Committee and this has been established through Thaxted Parish Council.
- 4 The District Council has discharged its responsibilities under the lease by providing grant support to the Management Committee and carrying out and funding the major planned maintenance such as repainting. This arrangement has worked reasonably well until recently as the Management Committee have been able to supplement the grant through raising funds through lettings. Officers have been advised that this is no longer sustainable because letting income has fallen with competition from other venues that have better access arrangements.
- 5 Representatives from the Management Committee have met with officers to discuss this problem and the following summarises the outcome of that discussion.
 - The legal obligation for repair and maintenance of the building is as set out in the Lease and rests with the District Council.
 - The status of the building – Grant 1 Listed – and the structure of the building - timber frame with plaster infill - adds to the running and maintenance costs.
 - The day-to-day costs, set out above, fall on the Management Committee with the exception of the repainting work which the Council assumes responsibility for.

- The Management Committees costs in relation to day-to-day maintenance are rising at a time when income is falling. This is exacerbated by the constant value of the grant provided by the Council.
- The uncertainty of grant funding, which has remained static for a number of years, makes forward planning difficult for the Management Committee.
- The amount of grant is insufficient to sustain the current position even in the short term.

Proposal

- 6 The Management Committee, in consultation with Thaxted Parish Council has very carefully reviewed its financial position and considered what prudent level of financial support would be necessary to allow the Management Committee to function effectively in the future.
- 7 The Parish Council has acknowledged its need to contribute financially to the running costs applicable to the obligations of the lease to reflect their use of the building for Parish Council purposes. It has agreed to make a payment equivalent to 50% of the total funding requirement.
- 8 The new funding arrangement proposed is set out below:

Total funding requirement required by the Management Committee to function effectively	= £9,000 pa index linked
£9,000 split 50/50 between the District Council and Parish Councils	= £4,500 pa index linked
Less the current grant provided by UDC	@ £1,750
Net extra cost to the District	= £2,750 pa index linked

- 9 With regard to the essential work to repaint the building, this work is carried out every 5 years. Therefore, officers will provide Members with details of the requirement to fund this work in the budget making process prior to the year that the work is to be carried out. Such funds would be made available from Reserves. For information, the building was last repainted in 2001/02 at a cost of £5,000. The next repaint is required in 2006/07.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1 The funding arrangements for the day-to-day costs associated with Thaxted Guildhall and payable to the Thaxted Guildhall Management Committee is by way of an index linked grant.
- 2 The budget for the grant to the Thaxted Guildhall Management Committee from 2004/05 be £4,500, index linked.

- 3 The cost of repainting the Thaxted Guildhall is funded from Reserves within the year applicable to the repainting cycle.

Background Papers: Thaxted Parish Council Minutes & Management Committee Accounts

Committee: Community & Leisure Committee
Date: 6 January 2004
Agenda Item No: 6
Title: Thaxted Festival Grant Request - Supplementary Information
Author: Sarah McLagan (01799) 510560

Summary

- 1 This report provides details about the Thaxted Festival Foundation to enable the Committee to decide whether to support it with a grant.

Background

- 2 At the last meeting of the Committee consideration was given to whether the Thaxted Festival Foundation should continue to receive a grant. The Foundation has received a grant of £4,500 for a number of years from a previous scheme that was deleted under the new arrangements. This grant allocation is to transfer into the Leisure & Cultural Grant Scheme for which a maximum of £400 can be applied for (see report on Agenda re proposal to increase to a maximum of £500).
- 3 The funding was used to support the conditions of the grant that were set out in the Service Level Agreement held with the Foundation. These conditions sought to meet 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.

Consideration of Request for Grant

- 4 At the last meeting Members were provided with some options for making a grant to the Foundation, as follows –
 - Consider ring fencing a sum specifically for this organisation within the Leisure and Culture Grant Scheme from April 2004 for three years.
 - Guarantee an annual grant up to the maximum grant available from the Leisure & Cultural Grant Scheme
 - Advise the Foundation that it can apply to the Leisure & Cultural Grant Scheme in the normal way and that no other funding is available.

- 5 Before making a decision, Members requested further information about the number of people attending at the Festival, the cost of tickets to attendees, income & expenditure, an indication of how the Council's grant supports the Festival etc. This information is appended.

Commentary on Appended Information

- 6 Attached at Appendices 1 and 2 is a detailed breakdown of the actual budget for the 2003 Festival and a proposed budget for the 2004 Festival. The 2004 Festival is already booked and the Foundation is already committed to artist's fees of £52,500. The budget for 2004 does not include an allowance for the Council providing a grant. It can be seen that it is predicted that the Foundation will make a loss of £8,765 in 2004. The Thaxted Festival Foundation has confirmed that "the loss of grant support will inevitably mean that money will have to be saved in the conditions specified as part of the grant" – see paragraph 2 above.
- 7 Further to the reference in the Budget report to the Contributions Fund Scheme (Subscriptions) the Council subscribes to the Eastern Orchestral Board - £2,500 – and this, together with a further grant is paid to the Foundation. Members need to be aware that if this subscription is deleted during the debate on the Budget, this will further impact on the ability of the Foundation to provide the Thaxted Festival.

Young Musician of the Year

- 8 With regard to the Young Musicians of the Year Festival, at the last meeting Members agreed to the Thaxted Festival Foundation managing the Festival of Young Musicians from 2005 for three years and to the Council providing a grant of £1,000pa. It also agreed to underwrite the additional funding requirement of £1,000pa. For 2004, the Council would run the event, with limited help from the Foundation.
- 9 Further discussion with the Artistic Director/Administrator of the Thaxted Festival Committee has confirmed that its view is

"To abandon support for

- The education and social objectives of the festival
- A highly regarded local festival which brings tourism and trade to Thaxted, in favour of a single event of this kind which benefits far fewer children, reveals priorities with which myself and my colleagues have little sympathy.

We should be grateful if you would make members aware of this. "

- 10 The Committee also stress "the budget of £2,000 is not enough to run the same kind of event {with a celebrity presenter and relatively small numbers of paying audience} that the festival hosted in 2001."

- 11 The Committee has stated that it might be possible to consider an alternative event involving young people, but, “when facing deficits caused by the withdrawal of the grant, it could not contemplate assuming further financial risks.”

Conclusions

- 12 Clearly, the Festival will be affected if the Council choose to reduce or withdraw its grant. Paragraph 4 provides a number of options for funding the grant, should Members chose to do so.
- 13 With regard to the Young Musician of the Year event, officers believe that the event, in its original format, only benefited a minority of young people and did not achieve any arts development principles or meet any of the relevant objectives of the revised Leisure & Cultural Strategy. In addition, officers agree with the points raised by the Festival Committee in paragraph 13. In the past, the Council was only able to provide the Young Musician of Year event because the Foundation absorbed a number of the associated costs e.g. seating, lighting etc. Clearly, the Foundation is unwilling to be involved in the event.
- 14 Members kindly volunteered to support officers to provide the Young Musician of the Year event in 2004 and raise sponsorship. However, without the support of the Thaxted Festival Committee it is clear that we could not organise the Young Musician of the Year in its original format for only £2,000. Whilst it might be possible for Members to secure some sponsorship it is not possible to plan an event of this kind without the security of funding, in advance.
- 15 As an alternative, there is a demand from young people for music related projects to be run in various areas of the district. The projects would involve a greater number of young people and support a variety of music disciplines enabling the Council to work in partnership with other organisations to develop music projects involving a wider range of young people across the district.
- 16 The budget allocated for the Young Musician of the Year event - £2,000 in total - could be used to support the proposal in paragraph 15. The original Members that volunteered to support the Young Musician event could support officers in the planning and development of the music projects.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1 Members determine whether or not to award a grant to the Thaxted Festival Foundation and the basis/amount for the award.
- 2 The budget allocated for the Young Musician of the Year Festival be redirected into the Youth and Arts Development budget to support the development of music projects for young people, in accordance with the revised Leisure & Cultural Strategy.

Background Papers: Thaxted Festival Foundation Application Form

APPENDIX 1

THAXTED FESTIVAL YEAR 2003 BUDGET

The costs of tickets and overall income and expenditure were:

<i>Ticket Categories</i>	<i>Ticket Prices Variable range between:</i>	<i>Total Income from Tickets Sales</i>
Adults	£9.00 - £13.00	£40,171
Concessions: Senior Citizens Children	£7.00 - £10.00	

<i>Income & Expenditure</i>	
Total Income	84,508
Total Expenditure	84,612

For a detailed breakdown of the 2003 budget plus the proposed budget for 2004 please see Appendix 2.

Committee: Community and Leisure Committee

Date: 6 January 2004

Agenda Item: 9

Title: Performance Management System 2003/04

Author: Ian Orton (01799) 510 402

Summary

- 1 This report informs all Committees of the Council the progress with the introduction of a Performance Management System within Uttlesford. The report recommends the layout of the reporting mechanism and the process to resolve issues of under performance.
- 2 The report also recommends that performance monitoring be reported to Scrutiny Committees with Scrutiny Committees referring any issues to the appropriate Policy Committee.

Background

- 3 Corporate Management Team on the 11th July 2003 agreed the introduction of a Performance Management System and authorized the Performance Manager to meet with Service Heads to develop a robust range of Performance Indicators to measure both the corporate and service health of the authority. Once this process was completed a report outlining the range of performance measures was to go to all Committees of the Council seeking the views of Members on the robustness and reporting mechanism of the Performance Management system
- 4 A range of draft Performance Measures were developed with Heads of Service and a multi committee report did the rounds in September and October 2003. As a result of this exercise 68 Performance Measures were identified as forming the basis of the pilot performance management framework. Members asked for an additional performance indicator to measure homeliness and this have been added. In addition officers were asked to explore additional methods to measure access to services and customer care. The First Point of Contact Review Team is carrying out this exercise. Some concern was raised about a Traffic Lights Reporting Mechanism, as this would discriminate against people who are colour blind. To meet this concern colour coded Smiley Faces were added to the reporting mechanism.

- 5 To keep the reporting process simple it is recommended that the following mechanism is introduced:

**Green for On Target to achieve agreed Performance Target –
Smiley Face**

**Amber for up to 10% slippage from agreed Performance Target –
Straight Face**

**Red for more than 10% from agreed Performance Target –
Glum Face**

- 6 Attached at Appendix A is a draft report for the Half Year with details of 03/04 performances delivered. The format of the reporting is:

Indicator Code – if it is a National Indicator or a Local Indicator

Basic Details of the Performance Measure

A 2002/03 Performance Outturn if the data exists

Target for 2003/04

Quarterly data for April to June and July to Sept 03

Daventry Benchmarking Group 2002/03 – 16 authorities broadly the same as Uttlesford DC. How Uttlesford was placed either Top/Medium/Lower in categories in 2002/03

Smiley Face/Straight or Glum Faces based on colour code –

Comments if required

The quarterly data will be reported to SMT and colleagues with Reds will outline a recovery package or a request to re-work the target. This information will be included in the quarterly reporting report to Scrutiny Committees. Scrutiny Committees will have the opportunity to refer comments on performance to the appropriate policy committee.

- 7 At the Half Year there were six Red Indicators out of 69. They are:

- Financial Penalties imposed by the Inland Revenue
- Percentage of debt outstanding at 90 days
- Average length of stay in Bed & Breakfast
- New tenants visits completed within 3 months
- Score against a checklist of environmental standards
- Percentage of valid planning applications determined within 5 weeks

These six indicators are all being re-examined to ensure that the data returns are accurate and that the performance targets are realistic. For example three of the indicators have a target of 100%, is this ambitious?

- 8 The Performance Management system will be piloted for the rest of 2003/04 with reports delivered to Scrutiny Committees in Jan/Feb and March 2004. The system will be fine tuned as required and the formal mechanism will commence from April 2004.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1 The comments of all Committees are sought on the Range of Performance Measures, Performance Targets and use of a Traffic Light System
- 2 Note that the Performance Review Data will be reported to Scrutiny Committee(s).
- 3 Note that any Red Indicator will have a Rescue Recovery Package from the relevant manager incorporated into the report.

Committee: Community & Leisure
Date: 6 January 2004
Agenda Item No: 10
Title: Leisure & Cultural Grant Scheme - Recommendation from Scrutiny 1
Author: Sarah McLagan (01799) 510560

Summary

- 1 This report asks the Committee to consider a recommendation from Scrutiny 1 that maximum Grant for the Leisure & Cultural Grant Scheme be raised to £500. It recommends the maximum grant be raised to this amount.

Background

- 2 At the meeting of Scrutiny 1 on 12 November, the Committee considered the policies associated with the Grants managed by the Community & Leisure Committee. Scrutiny 1 considered the maximum grant of £400 for the Leisure & Cultural Grant scheme to be inadequate and has made a recommendation to this Committee for it to be raised to £500.

Leisure & Cultural Grant Scheme

- 3 The Leisure & Cultural Grant Scheme was introduced on 1 April 2003 following the Best Value Review of Leisure & Cultural Services during 2002. The Scheme provides grants of up to a maximum of £400 to voluntary clubs that are seeking to provide leisure and/or cultural activities, initiatives or projects in the district. The grants are determined on a monthly basis by the Head of Community & Leisure Services in consultation with the Chairman of Community & Leisure.
- 4 There is a total of £4,000 in the budget for this grant. At the time of writing this report £1,475 has been allocated to various organisations. The total budget for this grant scheme is due to increase to £8,500 from 1 April 2004. However, the outcome of the discussion under the Budget item on this agenda about making a “ring-fenced” grant to the Thaxted Festival could reduce this amount.
- 5 Officers consider that there is sufficient budget within this scheme for the maximum grant awarded to be increased to £500.

RECOMMENDED that the maximum grant for the Leisure & Cultural Grant scheme be increased from £400 to £500 from 7 January 2004.

Background Papers: Best Value Review of Leisure & Cultural Services.
Leisure & Cultural Grant Scheme Application Form