

Community Project Grant

East Area Panel, item 4

Committee: Area Panels

Agenda Item

Date: 5 September 2006

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Title: Community Project Grant

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Item for decision

Summary

This report provides Members with details of applications received from organisations requesting grant funding from the Community Project Grant.

Recommendations

It recommends that Members of Area Panels determine an appropriate level of funding from the applications received.

Background Papers

Application Papers

Impact

Communication/Consultation	Town and Parish Councils are consulted with on an annual basis
Community Safety	Not applicable
Equalities	Certain projects enable hard to reach groups to access services at a localised level
Finance	Financial implications are set out within the body of the report
Human Rights	Not applicable
Legal implications	Not applicable
Ward-specific impacts	All
Workforce/Workplace	None

Situation

1. At the meeting of the Community and Leisure Committee on 7 September 2004, Members requested that the Grant Review Task Group meet with Town and Parish Council Clerks from the four main settlements to explore ways of

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- improving the fairness of the grant schemes and to discuss general grant funding.
- 2 It was considered that Town and Parish Councils are well established, statutory, elected bodies – the closest tier of government to the people and therefore well placed to be aware of parishioner needs in relation to facilities and services. In addition, they undertake economically many functions, thereby providing added value, which would otherwise have to be provided by the Council. By working in closer partnership, it is considered that even more could be achieved.
 - 3 There was a concern that because Town/Parish Councils for the urban parishes have larger budgets that there is an expectation that they should receive no grant funding from the Council. In addition, there was a concern that urban parishes also have to provide many more services, and therefore, have a higher level of Council Tax to raise than those of a predominantly rural parish.
 - 4 With regard to added value, it was agreed that residents of rural parishes enjoy the facilities and services provided in the “hub” parishes but do not contribute to the costs – which enables their Council Tax to generally remain at much lower levels.
 - 5 The Task Group recommended that the Community and Leisure Committee recommend to the Resources Committee that the existing Community Project Grant Scheme budget of £24,000 capital funding be increased by £16,000 (ring fenced for the four main settlements) and that all Parish Councils in the District be eligible to apply for funding irrespective of their population size. Subsequent to this decision being made, the Community Committee agreed that any decisions relating to Community Project Grant allocation should be made by the area panels.
 - 6 To this end, the Panels have been allocated the following resources:-
 - (a) East Area Panel - £4,000 ring-fenced for Great Dunmow, £4,000 ring-fenced for Thaxted and £6,666 split among the remaining settlements.
 - (b) South West Area Panel - £4,000 ring-fenced for Stansted Mountfitchet , £6,666 split among the remaining settlements.
 - (c) North Area Panel - £4,000 ring-fenced for Saffron Walden , £6,666 split among the remaining settlements .
 - (d) £4,000 be retained internally for District wide promotions, e.g., signage etc.
 - 7 The Community Project Grant Scheme is open to any properly constituted voluntary organisation or similar body in the Uttlesford District such as Village Hall Committees, Community Shops, Town and Parish Councils, Community Associations, play and recreation clubs and groups.

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- 8 With regard to community facilities, applications may be considered more favourably where a realistic sum is charged for commercial lettings. Applications from churches/religious authorities, schools, sports and arts groups **are not** eligible.
- 9 Applications from organisations in receipt of a grant from the Community Project grant schemes in the last two years will be considered but will be given a lower priority than applications from organisations not having benefitted during the last two years.

Which projects are eligible?

- 10 Grants will be considered towards expenditure incurred in the provision of any of the following:
- development of land for recreational purposes, including environmental improvements.
 - buildings/facilities that are available for community use e.g. village halls, community centres, public conveniences etc.
 - car parks and access roads to car parks directly associated with a community use building.
 - children's play areas, including equipment and safety surfacing.
 - improvements, refurbishment or extension to any of the facilities outlined above.
 - essential equipment that contributes significantly to the aims and objectives of the project.
 - training or a one-off staffing cost that contributes significantly to the development of the project or increases benefits to the community. (Wages and salaries cannot be paid).

How much can be applied for?

- 11 The minimum grant available is £100 and the maximum is £3,500
- 12 The appendix attached to this report sets out details of grant applications received along with officers' comments in relation to eligibility for funding.

Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
All projects must be completed after 1st April 2006 and before the 9th March 2007	Not all applicants are always able to complete on time	Low	A progress report will be made to the relevant area panel in March 2007

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