

AT A MEETING of the POLICY AND RESOURCES SELECT COMMITTEE SUB COMMITTEE of the COUNTY COUNCIL held at The Castle, Winchester on Wednesday, 2 March 2016.

PRESENT

Chairman:
a Councillor Elaine Still

Vice-Chairman
p Councillor Keith Evans

Councillors:

p Ray Bolton p Bruce Tennent
p Criss Connor a Sharyn Wheale
a Andy Moore

119. **BROADCASTING ANNOUNCEMENT**

The Chairman announced that the press and members of the public were permitted to film and broadcast the meeting. Those remaining at the meeting were consenting to being filmed and recorded, and to the possible use of those images and recording for broadcasting purposes.

120. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were tendered on behalf of Cllr Elaine Still due to a hospital appointment, therefore the meeting was Chaired by the Vice Chairman Cllr Keith Evans. Apologies were also received on behalf of Cllr Sharyn Wheale and Cllr Andy Moore.

121. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3 Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Personal interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 4 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

Cllr Keith Evans declared a personal interest that the Victory Hall was in his division and he was familiar with it. He chose to remain in the meeting, as he did not have a pecuniary interest, and this sub committee was not the decision maker for these grants.

122. **DEPUTATIONS**

No deputations were received at this meeting.

123. **COMMUNITY BUILDINGS CAPITAL GRANTS**

The Sub Committee received a report from the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services (see Item 4 in the Minute Book) regarding applications to the Community Buildings Capital Fund for over £25,000. It was noted that the Sub Committee had been established by the Policy & Resources Select Committee in order to consider the short listed applications to this grant fund, and to make recommendations to the Executive Member for Policy & Resources, who would take a decision on these grants in April 2016.

The grant scheme was for capital projects to improve venues in Hampshire such as community centres, village halls, and premises run by charitable and voluntary organisations which offer a full and varied open access community programme. Five projects had been shortlisted, and the Sub Committee received a presentation regarding each application, and had the opportunity to ask questions.

i) WINNALL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

The Sub Committee welcomed Ron Fenech, Stephen Light and James Everton representing the bid from the Winnall Community Association, who gave a presentation (see slides in Minute Book).

In summary, they explained:

- The Community Association run a community centre in Winnall, which while in Winchester is an area of high deprivation
- The centre is used for a range of activities for all age groups, including a breakfast club for children entitled to free school meals. Twenty five different groups use the centre at present, and it was hoped that with revamped facilities this could be increased to around forty
- The proposed improvements would include updating the ladies toilets, improving storage for the main hall, fixing damaged flooring, creating a café area, and improving external space including a children's play area

- An office space at the centre was currently used by Action for Children, however notice had been received that they would be vacating. It was planned to re-model the space and put in IT facilities for broader use

Following questions Members heard:

- A project manager had been brought in to manage the project, whose company had experience of running similar projects
- The figures used were currently estimates not firm quotes, however there was confidence they were reasonable. It would be possible to adapt the scheme if costs were significantly higher than anticipated, and 10% contingency had been built in
- The association receives income in the form of grants e.g. an annual contribution of £9,000 from the County Council, and income from room hire
- It was planned to undertake the works in July and August, as the use of the centre was lowest in that period due to the school holidays, so it would keep disruption to a minimum

ii) FRIENDS OF DROXFORD CHURCH

The Sub Committee welcomed John Symes, Reverend Tony Forrest and John Jack representing the bid from the Friends of Droxford Church, who gave a presentation (see slides in Minute Book).

In summary, they explained:

- That the project represented the largest community project in the locality for 180 years
- The church serves a small rural community, and the planned project involves conservation, heritage and expanding community use of the building
- The funds applied for in this bid would help leverage further funds from the Heritage Lottery Fund
- It was planned to convert some of the space into a community café run by volunteers
- Phoenix Futures, a residential drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre, was located nearby, and the proposed café provided an opportunity for those residents to volunteer at the café to help their rehabilitation and integration into the community
- The grant applied for would contribute 50% of the costs for an extension to the church, to provide toilets, a kitchen and a small office space

Following questions Members heard:

- That the community currently lacked a public place people could gather that wasn't a pub.
- A neighbouring village had established a community

café which had been successful, and were happy to share their model

- The Parish Council was working on re developing the parking available in the village
- A plan of the church was circulated including the planned extension, and it was indicated that the community café would be sited in the part labelled 'meeting room'

iii) BROUGHTON VILLAGE HALL

The Sub Committee welcomed Graham Cowley and Nick Jones representing the bid from Broughton Village Hall, who gave a presentation (see slides in Minute Book).

In summary, they explained:

- Nineteen groups use the village hall and it is also hired for private and business use
- A local benefactor has donated a historical archive of the village and a contribution of £100,000 to make provision to house the archive at the village hall
- The planned project would include a new community room which could display the archive material and provide flexibility for further hiring space. It was also planned to make other updates to the building including heating, insulation, lighting, storage etc.
- There was potential that the project would receive a contribution as a result of a local solar farm development. If this contribution was higher than budgeted for in the current plans, it would be possible to extend the project to develop the kitchen and extend the main hall space

Following questions Members heard:

- That funding towards the project had been agreed from Test Valley Borough Council, the Parish Council, and the local benefactor. A 10% contingency had been allowed for in the financial planning
- That the Broughton Village Hall did not compete with the Stockbridge equivalent, as the two venues offered different facilities
- A resident of the village owned a company which manages projects and had offered to manage the project on a voluntary basis

iv) WARSASH VICTORY HALL

The Sub Committee welcomed David Bevis, Garry Hlavaty and Derrick McNeil representing the bid from Warsash Victory Hall, who gave a presentation (see slides in Minute Book).

In summary, they explained:

- The Victory Hall was forty years old and had not had any significant spending on its upkeep during that time
- The building was used by 1500 people each week
- A structural survey undertaken in 2014 highlighted the need for a range of improvements to the fabric of the building. The planned project would encompass all the identified needs including replacing the roof. This would enable continued use of the building by the local community
- An application had been made for a contribution to the project from Fareham Borough Council

Following questions Members heard:

- The most urgent aspect was replacing the roof, and if this became more costly than anticipated, other parts of the project could wait
- If the works could be undertaken in August, it would have minimal impact on hall users
- A company had been brought in to manage the project and funds allocated for this
- A copy of a video about the Hall was left for Members to consider

v) ROWNER COMMUNITY TRUST

The Sub Committee welcomed Iain Lucas and Dr Jenny Allinson representing the bid from the Rowner Community Trust, who provided a short video on the Trust and the planned capital project.

In summary, they explained:

- Regeneration work in the area meant that it would make more sense to change the orientation of the entrance to the Nimrod Community Centre. This would facilitate improvements to the reception area, and mean the room previously used as the Trust office could become a meeting room and accessible IT suite

Following questions Members heard:

- That the agreement made for the regeneration of the area meant that each property included a covenant requiring each property owner to pay an annual fee to the Rowner Community Trust (£75 for a one bedroom, £150 for a two bedroom, £200 for a three bedroom). This income was managed by the Trust, and used to maintain the environment in the area to avoid it degenerating.
- Part of the use of the Nimrod Centre was for a 'one stop shop' to assist residents with issues involving public sector agencies e.g. health or employment,

with links to NHS services and the local job centre plus

- The Centre was also used for private bookings and training
- The area was a known area of multiple deprivation
- A project was underway to support the wellbeing of residents, which involved asking people what their ambitions for their wellbeing were and how they could be supported to achieve those aims. The success of this project could be measured via a before and after wellbeing score, and time saved in other NHS settings

CONCLUSIONS

The Chairman thanked each of the applicants for their presentations, and informed them that the final decision lay with the Executive Member for Policy and Resources, who was due to take a decision regarding these grants on 22 April 2016, giving consideration to the recommendations of this Sub Committee.

Having heard from each of the shortlisted applicants, the Sub Committee discussed what they had heard, and came to the following conclusions regarding each project:

RESOLVED:

To report to the Executive Member for Policy and Resources:

Rowner Community Trust (funding request: £140,958)
– clear evidence of community benefit from the building in a deprived area

Recommendation: That the application be supported and a grant of £141,000 be awarded

Winnall Community Association (funding request: £131,752)
- demonstrated community benefit in a deprived area, and the involvement of a project manager gave confidence in the delivery of the scheme

Recommendation: That the application be supported and a grant of £132,000 be awarded

Broughton Village Hall (funding request: £150,000)
– demonstrated the building was well used and well managed and the project will provide community benefit

Recommendation: That the application be supported and a grant of £150,000 be awarded

Warsash Victory Hall (funding request: £147,725)
– demonstrated the building was well used and the roof works are clearly needed to maintain that use

Recommendation: That the application be supported and a grant of £148,000 be awarded

Friends of Droxford Church (funding request: £150,000)
– Members were concerned that the application related to a church and therefore not a purely community facility. It was also noted that the community café element needed to be accessed via part of the main church space, and therefore could not be used if a service was taking place. Members therefore concluded to recommend a lower amount than requested, with the expectation that the remaining costs be sought elsewhere.

Recommendation: that the application be partially supported, and a grant of £75,000 be awarded, with a requirement that the community café and facilities available be marketed to the wider community, to ensure the County Council is funding a project that provides general community use.

Recommendation: That the remaining funds in this budget be rolled forwards for similar purposes in future years, so that the County Council might continue to support the ongoing usage of community assets like village halls.

Chairman, 21 April 2016