

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE NHB COMMUNITY GRANTS PANEL

1ST AUGUST 2019, AT 4.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors G. N. Denaro (Chairman), S. R. Colella, S. A. Hughes,
H. D. N. Rone-Clarke and S. A. Webb

Officers: Ms. J. Pickering and Ms. A. Scarce

1/19 **WELCOME**

Councillor Denaro chaired the Panel and welcomed all those present. Introductions were made and general housekeeping explained.

2/19 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor S. Colella declared an interest in respect of the application in relation to Haybridge High School as he had supported it. He also advised that he needed to leave the meeting at 5.15 pm and would therefore not be present for this item or a number of the Higher Bid items.

Councillor G. Denaro declared an interest in respect of the application in relation to Wythall Parish and Residents, purchase of a defibrillator at Wythall Railway Station. During the application being heard he took no part in the discussions and sat in the public gallery.

Councillor S. Hughes declared an interest in respect of the application for Bromsgrove Baptist Church, Youth and Community Hub as she had supported the application. During the application being heard she took no part in the discussions and sat in the public gallery.

3/19 **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The aim of this meeting was to give the Panel Members the opportunity to discuss the applications with the applicants and for applicants to respond to any questions which may arise from those discussions.

Officers explained that the Panel would hold a further meeting (in private) on Wednesday 7th August, to discuss the allocation of the funds available. The Panel would then prepare a report putting forward

its recommendations for consideration at Cabinet on 4th September. The final decision for allocation of funds would remain with the Cabinet.

Applicants would be contacted following the meeting on 7th August to advise them of the Panel's recommendations and again applicants will be contacted following the Cabinet meeting to advise them of the next steps in the process should they have been successful in securing a grant.

4/19

PRESENTATION TIMETABLE

Each application had been allocated a five minute slot and those in attendance were advised that they were welcome to go when they had responded to any questions in respect of their application.

5/19

SUMMARY OF APPLICATIONS £1,480 AND UNDER

3rd Bromsgrove Evergreen Scouts – Replacement of existing boiler

The Chairman explained that the Panel would not usually consider more than one application from the same organisation unless they were clearly for separate projects (this was detailed in the NHB Community Grants Scheme document) and therefore asked the representative from the 3rd Bromsgrove Evergreen Scouts whether he wished Members to decide which one, if any to take forward, or whether he had a preferred option. It was also noted that the number of applications received overall, far exceeded the funds available to the Panel for distribution.

In the circumstances the representative chose to put forward the application for the installation of new toilet facilities.

3rd Bromsgrove Evergreen Scouts – Installation of new toilet facilities

Members considered the application before them.

A representative from the 3rd Bromsgrove Evergreen Scouts attended the meeting. Arising from Members questions the following responses were made:

- It was confirmed that the land was owned by Bromsgrove District Council, with the building being entrusted to the Guides and Scouts in 1964, with the payment of a peppercorn rent.
- The lease was currently being renegotiated, although there had been some problems with moving this forward. (The Executive Director, Finance and Resources agreed to follow this up with the relevant officer.)
- The overall cost of the three projects and the breakdown for the individual areas. It was explained that if this work was done it would enable the other areas to be moved forward. Work had been done on a number of fund raising events and the reintroduction of gift aid which would go towards the works.

- The number of children on the waiting list – it was explained that this was done for the District as a whole and was no longer broken down into specific groups.

3rd Bromsgrove Evergreen Scouts – Replacement of existing boiler

See above.

Age UK – Men in Sheds

Jo Hughes a representative from Age UK attended the meeting and Members considered the application before them. Arising from questions the following points were noted:

- The aim was to make the project sustainable by growth and increase its availability. Currently it was available 10 am to 2 pm Monday to Thursday. The benefit of funding would be to expand this and to look at other opportunities.
- There was a demand for the service from woman, it was explained that often the partner had passed away and had carried out much of the practical side of things and women were now looking for ways of being able to take on this work themselves. The men who attended the group were keen to share their skills to enable this to move forward.
- There was also the opportunity for inter-generational work and the project could become a good community asset.
- Other funding streams that had been looked at included shed sponsorship, a small membership fee and the sale of a calendar.

Alvechurch Parish Council – Wiggin Memorial Playing Field Storage Unit

Andy Humphries and Tammy Williams from the Parish Council attended in support of this application.

Arising from questions the following responses were noted by the Panel:

- As part of the Alvechurch Neighbourhood Plan the Parish Council had a Sports and Recreation Strategy.
- Improvements to the playing fields had been identified (Hopwood had been fortunate enough to received funds last year which had made a huge difference).
- The availability of storage for groups who used the field, for example there was a number of well supported football teams, who needed somewhere to store goal posts.
- By providing storage facilities more groups could potentially make use of the playing field.
- Planning permission was not required for the storage unit and the Parish Council would fund the balance.

The Lounge, Alvechurch – Mental Health Awareness for new come and talk sessions

Rachael Bestwick attended on behalf of the Lounge and provided background information as to the role of the Lounge in the village and the variety of activities it provided for all age groups. Details of other funding streams were also provided.

Members considered the applications and discussed the following in more detail:

- Whether any of the funds would be used towards any capital projects – it was confirmed that it would be used purely to deliver this service, which it was anticipated would last for 4-6 months.
- Whether the number of people accessing the service was increasing. Around 15 people per session on average, although this was dependent on the time of year. There was often a boost in numbers in September when schools returned after the summer break.
- It was noted that within the accounts provided, that employee numbers had gone down but there was an increase in costs. It was explained that this was reflected in the activities provided and there was not so many volunteers and it was therefore more reliant on paid staff.

Finstall Village – Tarmac area outside main entrance hall

A representative from the Village Hall responded to questions from Members and confirmed the following:

- The balance of the cost would be found from the Village Hall reserves.
- It was confirmed that it was not currently suitable for access by those with a disability and the work would rectify this and also include a designated parking space for them.

Romsley Parish Council – Romsley Marl Hole Community Park

John Shaw, from the Parish Council attended in support of the application.

The following areas were addressed during discussions with Members of the Panel:

- The site had in the past been a target for fly tipping but was in fact labelled as a nature reserve park.
- The Parish Council had formulated a three year plan with a further five year plan to cover maintenance and up keep of the park. This included a full break down of the costs.
- The fly tipping would be cleared and fencing erected in the first instance.

- The ownership of the site had been checked with the Council's Legal Team and it was established that the park was what was known as common land.
- The Parish Council would use reserves and monies from events such as the Romstock Festival to go towards the work.
- Whether this would stop the fly tipping from re-occurring. The Council had helped the volunteers to clear the site and it was hoped that this would help to solve the problem.
- The potential for residents from further afield visiting and benefitting from the park.
- Car parking availability – there was limited parking and it was hoped that visitors would be encouraged to walk or cycle to the park.
- Further details in respect of the park were available on the website.

South Bromsgrove High School – Keep our school litter free

The Chair of Governors attended to put forward the application. It was noted that funds from the NHB Community Grants Scheme had funded an electronic scoreboard for the 3G pitch previously.

The Panel raised a number of questions with the applicant, including the following:

- Who currently cleaned up the pitch and surrounding area and what happened over a weekend period. It was confirmed that as it was a BAM PFI School, BAM would do this, but they did not always. If this happened then the head of Sports often did it on a Monday morning.
- Members questioned whether it had ever been left in such a state that it was not useable by the next booking. The Chairman of Governors was not aware of this happening.
- The cost of the bins and installation fee.

Wythall Parish and Residents – Defibrillator at Wythall Train Station

Margaret Dempsey, presented the application on behalf of the Parish Council and residents.

It was explained that this had come about following the tragic death of someone at the station, whose life could have been saved if there had been a defibrillator available. The station was being used more and more and was unmanned. It was confirmed that the Parish Council would maintain the defibrillator and permission had been given to locate it at the station.

Rubery Festival

The Chairman explained to Tony Maslen, the representative from the Rubery Festival that the Panel could only consider one application at any one time from an organisation and it appeared that these were three applications for the same project. It was also noted that when these applications had been presented to the Panel in 2018/19 the Panel had requested that consideration be given to looking at alternative funding streams in order to make these events sustainable going forward.

It was explained that the Rubery Got Talent was a separate event, the winners of which were then given the opportunity to perform at the Festival itself. The Volunteers Night Out was not just for the volunteers at the Rubery Festival but from other voluntary organisations throughout Rubery.

Mr Maslen suggested that if he had to pick one then it would be the Rubery Festival application.

Rubery Festival Committee – Volunteers Night Out

See above.

Rubery Got Talent

See above.

The Challenge Stroke Group – Day trip to Boars at Gloucester Canals

Tony Maslen attended to present this application and explained to Members that due to the funds from the Scheme last year a group of people who were not able to usually go out, had been taken to the Safari Park. This provided respite to the carers. He tried to raise other funds throughout the year to make this as sustainable as possible.

The Panel was assured that the appropriate health and safety checks were in place for these trips and medical staff were available. The full cost was between £300-400.

Following presentation of the bids for under £1,480 Councillor Colella gave his apologies and left the meeting.

6/19

SUMMARY OF APPLICATIONS BETWEEN £1,481 AND £14,800

Avoncroft Cricket Club – Dual Lane Cricket net facilities

Paul Athey from the Cricket Club attended to present the application and respond to questions from the Panel.

It was explained that the junior section of the Club had been restarted some 5 years ago and had now increased to 120 5-14 years olds. This was largely due to developments in the Stoke Prior area, with the expectation that it would expand further in the future.

The Club currently struggled to offer quality training to the youngsters as the training facilities were some 20 years old and the nets had been taken out of use due to concerns around health and safety. In the last two years it was understood that Aston Fields Middle School was the only school which offered cricket, St John's Middle School had shown an interest in using the facilities and having coaching support. It was hoped that this would progress to other schools within the vicinity.

The Chairman explained that as the amount of funding requested by applicants far exceeded the available money, would a contribution be acceptable if the whole amount was not available. Mr Athey confirmed that this would be as applications were also being considered by Sports England and the Lottery, but that these would not be able to cover the whole project. There was also some flexibility within the proposed project and one bay could be installed rather than two if necessary.

Belbroughton Recreation Centre – Belbroughton playground redevelopment

Representatives from the Recreation Centre Committee attended to present the application. It was highlighted that they had been working on this project for a number of years and they were now in a position to proceed with the first phase of it. This included the removal of existing equipment, fencing and surfacing and laying a new surface for the whole area. Funding had been secured from a variety of other bodies including the parish council, but this was reliant upon match funding. It was hoped that the current developers would be able to assist with the demolition work and the timescale for this was September/October, so if the funding was not available then an alternative plan would need to be put in place for this first phase of the project.

Members discussed a number of other areas in more detail, including:

- What other facilities were available for young people – it was noted that there was a small skate ramp, a section for older children in the play area, which had been removed due to safety issues and therefore there was nothing suitable for children of 6 years and over.
- Members asked whether the young people meeting at the park helped local businesses – it was confirmed that it was likely that local shops would benefit from an increased footfall at the park and the Recreation Centre itself would also benefit, as currently there was not as many clubs as there could be using it and this would definitely help to bring more users to the Centre.

Bentley and Pauncefoot Parish Council – Refurbish and enhance the village playground

It was highlighted to the Panel that whilst this application had been included within the Higher Bids section, it was in fact for the lower amount of bid and should be considered as such by the Panel.

Barry Spence from the Parish Council attended to present this application. It was explained that the playground was in need of upgrading in order to make it more attractive to residents and visitors and to encourage them to take advantage of the rural environment. There were no local retail facilities which would benefit economically from an increase in use, but it would further encourage people of all age groups to meet and use the local facilities. It was confirmed that the playground was owned by the Village Hall Trust and was the only facility in the parish which was available for such things as weddings, so the enhanced playground would add to what was on offer. The upkeep of the playground would be the responsibility of the Village Hall Trust.

Bromsgrove Baptist Church – Bromsgrove Youth and Community Hub

Reverend Paul Lewis from the Baptist Church and Geoff Taylor Smith from the YMCA, one of the partners from the Youth and Community Hub, attended to respond to questions in respect of the application. It was confirmed that it had been running for 12 months and had far exceeded expectations. They were therefore keen to see ways of growing and developing the service further and were being guided by what the young people had said they would like to see, this included the service being available at weekends.

The project was already sustainable; this money would allow them to look at what additional support could be delivered.

Cofton Village Hall – new village hall for Cofton Hackett

John Slack and Shelagh O'Loughlin attended as representatives of the Cofton Village Hall Trust. It was explained that the hall had been built as part of a Section 106 agreement with the developers. The newly built hall was now ready to handover to the Trustees; however work still needed to be carried out in fitting it out. The Parish Council had contributed to the legal and infrastructure costs.

Funding raising events continued and there had been several offers of match funding from employers of local residents and grants through employee schemes. To date £35k had been raised

Cofton Hackett Village Hall – Refurbishment of Kitchen and Toilet facilities

Jennifer Webb attended on behalf of the Cofton Hackett Village Hall Committee. She explained that the Village Hall had been built by local

residents and had undergone a full refurbishment in 2009, but this had not included the inside. The only income received was from the hire of the Hall and it had needed to make a number of improvements such as having CCTV fitted. Currently the committee had £5k in balances which would go towards the refurbishment of inside the Hall. It was important that this work was carried out in order for it to be more attractive to hirers and to encourage more community groups to use it. Saturdays and Sundays were set aside for parties and hirers were able to do their own catering.

Members raised the following questions:

- There were 2 village halls in Cofton and Members questions whether this was sustainable – it was confirmed that each Hall would have very different users and would meet different needs for residents, so there was no reason why they could not both exist.
- Members questioned why baby changing facilities were only being placed in the Ladies' Toilets and it was confirmed that this could also be included in the other toilets.

Friends of St John's Bromsgrove – Resurface Adam's Hill

Jo Slade attended on behalf of the Friends of St John's. It was explained that this had been looked at for some time and that some funding had already been secured. Worcestershire County Council had been contacted in respect of its inclusion within the project for cycle paths, but none of the path ways were wide enough. They had also contact the Land Registry in respect of who owned the land and it appeared that the land remained in the ownership of the Church. It was noted that this Council maintained the Churchyard. The path was well used and in need of urgent repair.

King's Norton Rugby Club – Freehold land purchase (Clifford's Field)

Roger Adams, Chairman and Simon Thompson, Treasurer attended on behalf of the King's Norton Rugby Club. Background information in respect of the history of the Rugby Club was provided. The Rugby Club had shown interest in purchasing the piece of land in question, which was essential to the future development of the Club. It had now come up for sale and a price had been agreed of £80K plus legal fees, these would be done by the parent of a player who worked for a legal firm in Birmingham. Funding raising events were on going and the Panel were provided with a "Fields of Dream" leaflet which had been prepared by another parent, so the only costs to the Club had been the printing. There was an increased number of junior players coming through and the Club had a membership of over 200. Other organisations also used the facilities for example Rugby League and American Football. The regional Hurling Club also used it. The Club were also keen to offer the chance for local schools to use the ground and West Health Primary School already used it for their Sports Day.

It was confirmed that the extra space would be dedicated for the use of children, as the current facilities were cramped and this extension would help it to grow.

It was confirmed that any contribution from the Grants Panel would help towards achieve the end goal, the option to buy the land had a further 8 months to run, but the funds needed to be raised within that period.

Primrose Hospice – provide complementary therapy and counselling services

Heather Coughlin, Family Support Team Leader from the Primrose Hospice attended to present the application. Ms Coughlin explained some of the work that was carried out with the families and patients and advised that she had 2 permanent members of staff with further support from over 35 volunteers. In respect of Counselling, Primrose was the first Hospice to be BACP accredited and was held in very high regard. It was a much needed positive service and in the last quarter had worked with over 200 people from both Redditch and Bromsgrove.

Members discussed a number of areas in more detail and asked whether this was an annual cost of the proposed services, it was confirmed that this was a contribution towards the cost. The Primrose Hospice relied entirely on voluntary contributions, fund raising and grants such as the New Homes Bonus Scheme. It was lucky enough to automatically receive 5 places in the London Marathon, which was often part of the journey for those families that they worked with.

St Michael's Stoke Prior Tower Fund – protecting the heritage through community engagement

Karen Deane attended on behalf of the St Michael's Stoke Prior Tower Fund. Background information was provided in respect of the history of the tower. They had received a National Lottery Heritage Fund for two thirds of the project cost, subject to raising the balance from local sources and national charities. If they did not achieve the required level by the end of 2019, then they would lose the national Lottery Heritage Funding offer. The award of a grant from this Panel would mean they had the amount needed to secure that funding.

Ms Deane provided Members with information in respect of the different uses and groups that could use the restored tower. Interest had been shown from Avoncroft Museum and partnership working was a good option. The John Corbett trail could be incorporated within it and local schools could use the facility. There were lots of ways in which it could be used to engage with the local community.

Haybridge High School – Replacement Minibus

Apologies had been received from the representative of the school who was unable to attend.

The Executive Director, Finance and Resources gave a brief overview of the application.

Members were concerned that the minibus would not be available outside of school hours and for other community groups' use and it was confirmed that within the full application this had been clarified and it would be made available for such use.

7/19

SCORING MATRIX TEMPLATE

Members would be considering the criteria within the Scoring Matrix when reaching their decision in respect of each application.

The meeting closed at 6.00 p.m.

Chairman