

CABINET MEMBER WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE BIG SOCIETY FUND – 22 May 2012

BIG SOCIETY FUND – ALLOCATION OF WAVE 4 FUNDING: OUTSTANDING BIDS

Report by Assistant Chief Executive & Chief Finance Officer

Introduction

1. The purpose of this report is to enable the Cabinet Member with responsibility for the Big Society Fund to determine two bids received in the final fourth 'wave' of the 2011/12 Fund on which decisions are outstanding.

Background

2. At its meeting on 17 April 2012 Cabinet considered and determined bids received in wave 4. It delegated authority to determine two bids to the relevant Cabinet Member. These are Coffee Plus and Lunch Plus – Stadhampton and Henley Youth Centre - Thamesfield Youth Association.
3. The Stadhampton bid had been assessed as showing potential to align with the criteria of the Big Society Fund, pending further clarification and development which we has now been provided.
4. In addition, a revised bid for Henley Youth Centre - Thamesfield Youth Association has been re-submitted following a request for further clarification and development. It is included for decision to avoid unnecessary delay.
5. In order to be considered for funding, bidders must demonstrate that they meet the following criteria;
 - the project is innovative and creative
 - the project meets a recognised community need
 - the project has a sustainable business case
 - the local community is involved in the project.

Revised Wave 4 Bids to the Big Society Fund

6. Clarification has now been received on relevant aspects of both bids as requested. In relation to the Henley Youth Centre bid, the revised bid has clarified estimated numbers of beneficiaries. Costings for the

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project which had seemed high compared to other bids have been reviewed and significantly reduced, and further details have been provided.

7. Cabinet had asked for clarification in relation to the Stadhampton bid, as the scope of benefit appeared low compared to the size of the bid. This raised the question whether it represented good value for money. The revised bid shows that the project represents good value for money by enabling a number of separate community activities to be delivered, all of which qualify for support from the Big Society Fund:
 - Coffee Plus - a group for parents and young children;
 - Lunch Plus - a lunch club for older people;
 - I-Life - a youth club – an organised get-together for younger teenagers;
 - A film club – broadly, but not entirely, aimed at adults;
 - Coffee mornings and other social activities during the week and at weekends for the whole community.
8. Updated assessment forms have been completed for both bids, including project details, an assessment against fund criteria, views from service experts and local councillors. These forms are set out in Annex 1. Both bids are now considered to have strong potential to contribute to our Big Society vision and meet the fund criteria.

Financial and Staff Implications

9. £59,320 of the initial £600,000 fund for 2011/12 remains available for allocation. This is in addition to the £1m set aside for the fund for 2012/14 by Cabinet, with a further £140,000 specifically for community transport projects.
10. The total value of the two final bids to be determined in wave 4 is £62,556. If both bids receive funding, £996,764 of the unrestricted £1m Big Society Fund would remain. This is in addition to the £140,000 ring-fenced community transport funding.
11. There are no staff implications in these proposals.
12. A grant funding agreement will be in place for all successful projects which will set out financial requirements and monitoring arrangements.
13. For the Stadhampton bid, funding is recommended to be contingent on other funding required for the project being raised.

Legal Implications

14. The grant funding agreement outlined above will set out all legal requirements including health and safety and safeguarding policy requirements.

Equality and Inclusion implications

15. An equality impact assessment has been carried out on the Big Society Fund. Potential impacts on equality groups have been considered (the [impact assessment](#) was part of the paper to Cabinet in July 2011).
16. In line with the council's responsibilities for equality the grant funding agreement with successful bidders will set out requirements for equality policies to be in place.

Risk implications

17. There is a risk to the county council that projects are not sustainable and are not able to continue in the future due to a lack of resources. This would have an impact on the viability of a project in a community and may lead to further requests for funding from the county council. To mitigate this, the application form for the Fund requires a business case and on-going costs information.
18. It is proposed that funding will only be paid to bidders with a robust business case.

RECOMMENDATION

19. **The Cabinet Member with responsibility for the Big Society Fund is RECOMMENDED to approve both bids which meet the assessment criteria.**

Sue Scane
Assistant Chief Executive & Chief Finance Officer

Background papers:

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May 2012

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Annex 1 Bids that meet the assessment criteria

Henley - Goring Locality:

Revised bid: New beginning for young people in Henley

Section 1 – Project Overview

From the Website submission

Project Name: A new beginning for young people in Henley (Henley Youth Centre) – Thamesfield Youth Association.
Project Aims: To extend youth provision in Henley to a younger age group.
Amount bid for: £12,556 (total cost £17,556)
Project Location and Locality: Henley - Goring
Sponsoring Councillor: Cllr David Nimmo-Smith

Section 2 – BID Criteria Assessment

Qualitative assessment

<p>Community Benefits (meets identified need)</p> <p>The project is to start an additional weekly session for about 30 younger people not served by the existing two sessions. This will extend voluntary youth provision to vulnerable young people not otherwise catered for, taking account of the sometimes difficult transition between primary and secondary school and with a positive impact on crime and anti-social behaviour.</p>
<p>Innovation and Creativity</p> <p>Working with young people in the age range of 10-13 years is an entirely new departure for the centre. The project will use local expertise, such as Henley Youth Festival and Henley College, to improve the offer for young people.</p>
<p>Sustainable Business Case</p> <p>The session will be staffed by a part-time worker and six volunteers. Funding sought is for costs in year 1, including equipment to support activities for the younger age group. £5,000 match funding has been secured and £10,000 from the Town Council committed to continue the project in years 2 and 3.</p> <p>The group have a track record of successful fundraising from a range of sources, including local organisations, businesses and residents. The majority of on-going funding for the existing youth sessions is in place.</p>
<p>Community Involvement</p> <p>The group work closely with the local schools, police and others. Young people, former volunteers, local charities and the Town council have helped develop the bid. New volunteers will be recruited for this session.</p>

Section 3 – Service Officer View

Where applicable

<p>We have a long history of working with Thamesfield Youth Association at the Henley Youth Centre and the organisation has a solid track record in terms of delivery. Use of the youth centre for work with more vulnerable young people sounds an excellent initiative and would need to link closely with the Early Intervention Hub in Didcot to ensure sharing of expertise, complementary working and avoidance of duplication.</p>

Section 4 – Locality Review Group Assessment

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All members for the Henley and Goring locality are unanimous in their support for this bid.

Wallingford - Benson - Berinsfield

Revised bid: Building the Community, including Coffee Plus and Lunch Plus

Section 1 – Project Overview

From the Website submission

Project Name: Building the Community – Stadhampton with Chiselhampton Parochial Church Council
Project Main Aims: To help introduce a range of new activities in the village, including Coffee Plus and Lunch Plus, by adapting the church facility to serve as a community centre.
Amount bid for: £50,000.00 of £385,000 (of which £77,000 relates to provision of specific facilities)
Project Location and Locality: Wallingford - Benson - Berinsfield
Sponsoring Councillor: Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale

Section 2 – BID Criteria Assessment

Qualitative assessment

<p>Community Benefits (meets identified need)</p> <p>The project will benefit a community of 900 residents in this and neighbouring villages. There are no services for the 132 people over the age of 65 within the village. The only existing support for parents of 77 children between 0-4 years is the monthly visit of the Mobile Children’s Library.</p> <p>New provision proposed includes a number of separate activities, including specific services for socially isolated and potentially vulnerable people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Lunch Plus’ sessions for older people and • ‘Coffee Plus’ for parents with toddlers • youth club ‘I-Life’ and. • Other activities to be enabled include a community film club, coffee mornings and exercise classes. <p>Early results from a current village survey indicate strong interest in the planned new activities.</p>
<p>Innovation and Creativity</p> <p>This is a new initiative turning the church facility into a community centre currently lacking in the village, which will enable a range of new services to be provided locally by the community itself. By adding a kitchen and toilet facilities the centre will be able to support services for elderly and young people and families, and strengthen the offer for the wider community. Providing an internet connection for an intergenerational project to close the digital divide is innovative.</p>
<p>Sustainable Business Case</p> <p>The bid is for capital funding for installation of a kitchen / toilets to support the transition of the facility from a church to a functioning community centre. £80,000 funding secured to date and plans in place to secure the remainder. Once up and running, the project seems sustainable based on revenue from hire charges.</p> <p>Whilst the total project costs may appear high the Big Society Fund has funded similar separate projects up to the value requested in previous waves so overall the value for money for the community benefit is not an issue.</p>

Community Involvement

Questionnaires, interviews and public meetings have been conducted to establish need and include the wider community in the development of this plan. A group of volunteers is committed to this project and leaders for the new activities to be provided have already come forward.

Section 3 – Service Officer View

Where applicable

We would support the project in terms of service provision as it is a good example of intergenerational project and will complement our day opportunity services for older/vulnerable people. Good needs analysis submitted.

New facilities will enable a wide range of community activities to be introduced in Stadhampton and neighbouring villages, with broad usage across different sections of the community. Adapting an existing building is cost efficient.

Section 4 – Locality Review Group Assessment

County councillors for the area expressed their strong support for the bid which seems to meet the fund's criteria and a number of local needs.