

RECORD OF DECISION MADE UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

(as a result of the Community Facilities Capital and District Wide Grants Panel meeting on 25 March 2020 being cancelled due to Covid-19 situation)

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

Any interest to declare/ or conflict and any dispensation granted N/A

SERVICE DIRECTORATE: Legal and Community

1. DECISION TAKEN

The approval of funding awards to the following bodies:

- Baldock Community Association £50,000 towards the refurbishment of toilet facilities, reception area, small hall and office areas of Baldock Community Centre
- Baldock Methodist Church £32,251 towards the refurbishment of kitchen and toilet facilities in order to comply with DDA requirements.
- Cassel Memorial Hall £21,654, towards the replacement of part of the old felt roofing, refurbish Ladies and Men's toilets, replace south facing wooden windows and add a patio to south side of the building.
- Hitchin BID £27,800 towards major improvements to the Hitchin Information Centre in order to make it a more inviting, accessible and a generally improved centre for the local community to use.
- Getting Rooted CIC £10,000 towards the provision of a classroom sized heated greenhouse for food growing, sharing and educational purposes at the Ron's Plot community gardening project located at Burford Way Allotments, Hitchin.
- Letchworth & Baldock District Scouts £26,284 towards renovations to roof and flooring at the Scout Head Quarters in Icknield Way.
- Letchworth Garden City Community Group £32,000 towards the Replacement of the heating system in Mrs Howard Memorial Hall on Norton Way
- Ravidassia Community Centre £25,000 towards the refit of a commercial standard kitchen for Healthy World Food Project at their centre in Hitchin
- Our Lady & St.Andrew Parish Church £50,000 towards replace existing wooden hut with a two storey community facility consisting of two community halls on Grove Road, Hitchin.
- Royston Royal British Legion Club Ltd £49,431 towards the refurbishment of the building.

2. DECISION TAKER

The Executive Member for Community Engagement in consultation with the Service Director – Legal and Community

3. DATE DECISION TAKEN:

27.5.2020

4. REASON FOR DECISION

The Community Facilities Capital and District Wide Grants Panel meeting on 25 March 2020 was cancelled due to the Covid-19 situation.

5. CONSULTATION WITH COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Consultation including the effect on stakeholders, partners and the public is contained within the report published with the Community Facilities Capital and District Wide Grants Panel agenda for the meeting on 25 March 2020.

Given the current Covid-19 situation and government advice regarding gatherings, the meeting of the Community Facilities Capital and District Wide Grants Panel was not possible. Therefore, the Community Facilities Capital and District Wide Grants Panel Members were requested to provide an indication as to how they would have voted and any comments as to guide the decision maker.

This was followed up by a telephone conference call on May 12, 2020 with Panel members attended and listened by the Executive member for Community Engagement, and these comments and follow up information are in italics.

Votes and comments were received:

Baldock Community Association (£50,000)

8 votes were received in favour of the recommendation

The following Members voted: Councillors Ian Albert, David Barnard, Clare Billing, Ruth Brown, Bill Davidson, Michael Muir, Sue Ngwala and Mike Rice

Comments were received from the following Members:

Councillor Ian Albert

Check though on availability of additional funding (fundraising) needed for project.

Councillor David Barnard

Have grant applications submitted elsewhere.

Councillor Ruth Brown

The fundraising target seems a little ambitious.

This application was agreed on condition that the project is scaled down to phase 1 to renovate the toilets in line with Disabled Access requirements and that the association provide some funding from their reserves or external sources towards the project costs. The Panel agreed that joint funding of less than 10% would be acceptable given the extraordinary circumstances. (Applications have been submitted to Hertfordshire County Locality budget holders.)

They can consider the second phase once the Coronavirus lock down measures are lifted. Once the venue is open and operating, they will be generating income and can restart fundraising activities.

Baldock Methodist Church (£32,251)

8 votes were received in favour of the recommendation

The following Members voted: Councillors Ian Albert, David Barnard, Clare Billing, Ruth Brown, Bill Davidson, Michael Muir, Sue Ngwala and Mike Rice

Comments were received from the following Members:

Councillor David Barnard
Have Grant applications submitted elsewhere?

Councillor Ruth Brown
Widely used community facility by diverse groups. I suggest that given the level of reserves held, a larger contribution from the organisation should be requested.

After the discussion on 12 May and following Cllr Brown's suggestion, the church have agreed to provide an additional £2000 from their reserves and the final funding amount has been lowered accordingly.

Cassel Memorial Hall (£21,654)

7 votes were received in favour if the recommendation with 1 abstention

The following Members voted: Councillors Ian Albert, David Barnard, Clare Billing, Ruth Brown, Bill Davidson, Michael Muir, Sue Ngwala and Mike Rice

Comments were received from the following Member:

Councillor Clare Billing
A lot of the information was not visible for this application, just blank restricted pages. The criteria for the CFCP is not met. The grant is not supposed to be for repairs and maintenance. The application does not demonstrate increased use from these repairs.

Following the telephone conference call on 12 May 2020 the panel were all happy to support this application.

Hitchin BID (£27,800)

7 votes were received in favour of the recommendation with 1 abstention

The following Members voted: Councillors Ian Albert, David Barnard, Clare Billing, Ruth Brown, Bill Davidson, Michael Muir, Sue Ngwala and Mike Rice

Comments were received from the following Members

Councillor David Barnard
I have concerns that this is an easy funding avenue. What other funds have been pledged?

Councillor Ruth Brown
There don't seem to be any accounts from Hitchin BID itself. My understanding is that their contribution is the running costs.

Following the telephone conference call on 12 May 2020 the panel were all happy to support this application.

Getting Rooted CIC (£10,000)

8 votes were received in favour of the recommendations

The following Members voted: Councillors Ian Albert, David Barnard, Clare Billing, Ruth Brown, Bill Davidson, Michael Muir, Sue Ngwala and Mike Rice

Comments were received from the following Members

Councillor David Barnard
The sum recommended seems high.

Councillor Ruth Brown

This seems a very worthwhile community worthwhile community project.

Following the telephone conference call on 12 May 2020 the panel were all happy to support this application. Cllr Barnard withdrew his previous comment as the applicant had requested the minimum amount available under this funding stream.

Letchworth & Baldock District Scouts (£26,284)

8 votes were received in favour of the recommendation

The following Members voted: Councillors Ian Albert, David Barnard, Clare Billing, Ruth Brown, Bill Davidson, Michael Muir, Sue Ngwala and Mike Rice

Comments were received from the following Members

Councillor David Barnard
Happy to support

Councillor Ruth Brown
Given the level of reserves held, I suggest a larger contribution from the organisation towards match funding.

After 12 May, the organisation responded to queries on the level of reserves held in accounts to clarify that these were all ring fenced for the various scouting groups in the district and they were not able to provide any extra towards the project.

Letchworth Garden City Community Group (£25,000)

7 votes were received in favour of the recommendation with 1 abstention

The following Members voted: Councillors Ian Albert, David Barnard, Clare Billing, Ruth Brown, Bill Davidson, Michael Muir, Sue Ngwala and Mike Rice

Comments were received from the following Member

Councillor David Barnard
Letchworth Heritage Foundation should fund these repairs/upgrades. NHDC has spent a vast sum to renovate these buildings in the past.

Ravidassia Community Centre (£25,000)

6 votes were received in favour of and 2 against the recommendation

The following Members voted: Councillors Ian Albert, David Barnard, Clare Billing, Ruth Brown, Bill Davidson, Michael Muir, Sue Ngwala and Mike Rice

Comments were received from the following Members:

Councillor Ian Albert
Some concern about the ability to generate match funding needed.

Councillor David Barnard
Too expensive. Could support 50%

Councillor Ruth Brown
Limited reach and scope. Organisation holds substantial funds (8 x annual expenditure). If granted suggest reducing to £25k.

Initially the application was for £50K, and after 12 May the applicant has been approached and offered 50% of the requested amount. It will be released on condition that the project is still viable with this level of funding (£25K) from the Council.

Our Lady & St.Andrew Parish Church (£50,000)

7 votes were received in favour of the recommendation

The following Members voted: Councillors Ian Albert, David Barnard, Ruth Brown, Bill Davidson, Michael Muir, Sue Ngwala and Mike Rice

Comments were received from the following Members:

Councillor Ian Albert

Very good project but significant grants required, and planning permission needed

Councillor David Barnard

What sum is being granted by the Diocese, and others. Proportional grant depending on other funding sources

Councillor Ruth Brown

Wide reach and scope with substantial match funding. Conditional on obtaining external funding.

Following the telephone conference call on 12 May 2020 the panel were happy to support this application.

Royston Royal British Legion Club Ltd (£49,431)

6 votes were received in favour of and 1 against the recommendation

The following Members voted: Councillors Ian Albert, David Barnard, Ruth Brown, Bill Davidson, Michael Muir, Sue Ngwala and Mike Rice

Comments were received from the following Members:

Councillor Ian Albert

Check on additional grant money needed to complete project.

Councillor Ruth Brown

Quotes provided are vastly in excess of project cost and no plan provided for raising the additional funding. No indication of footfall and primarily for the benefit of members.

After the 12 May, information was requested, and the applicant responded to these comments that the venue is primarily for the benefit of members to say that they welcome any one to attend or to hire the Club and it is not for the exclusive use of Members.

6. SUPPORTING REPORT

Other information relevant to the decision, such as legal, financial, risk, social value and equality implications, is contained within the report published within the Community Facilities Capital and District Wide Grants Panel agenda for the meeting on 25 March 2020 via link below:

<http://srvmodgov01.north-herts.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=269&MId=2484&Ver=4>

NOTIFICATION DATE

29.5.2020

Judi Billings

Signature of Executive Member Decision taker

Date 27.5.2020

J. Khan

Signature of Service Director: Legal and Community