



Committee and date
Bowbrook, Copthorne and
Radbrook Local Joint Committee

19 May 2010

7.00 pm

Item/Paper

15

Public

DECISION REPORT – GRANT APPLICATIONS

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Summary

This report considers three applications for grant funding submitted to the Bowbrook, Copthorne and Radbrook Local Joint Committee (LJC) for 2009/10.

A total of £24,250 remains in the budget from 2009/10 and a further £38,000 has been devolved to the committee for the current 2010/11 year to fund projects in the local community served by the LJC. At the present time, therefore, available funds stand at £62,250.

The three applications now under consideration are for:

- £2,036 for refurbishment of a junior football pitch, submitted by the SAHA football club;
- £500 for the Shrewsbury Childrens' Bookfest; and
- £1,591 for environmental and safety improvements, submitted by the Meole Brace Garden and Allotment Club.

Recommendations

It is recommended to the Bowbrook, Copthorne and Radbrook Local Joint Committee that:

A) The following applications are approved:

- £2,036 to the SAHA FC;
- £1,591 to the Meole Brace Garden and Allotment Club

B) The following application is not supported:

- £500 to the Shrewsbury Childrens' Bookfest.

Background

1. From 1 April 2009 Shropshire Council created 28 Local Joint Committees to operate across the whole of Shropshire. These LJC's are legally constituted decision making committees of Shropshire Council.
2. The LJC for Bowbrook, Copthorne and Radbrook has membership from Shropshire Council (3 members) and Shrewsbury Town Council (3 members) all with equal voting rights. Currently, 3 councillors represent the wards on both councils. In these circumstances, the 3 individuals each have 2 votes.
3. One of the main responsibilities of the LJC is to determine expenditure of the devolved budget. A budget of £38,000 has been made available to the LJC for the current financial year. £24,250 remains unallocated from the previous year's budget and is carried forward, giving total available funds of £62,250. Expenditure against this budget is agreed by the Committee after consideration of decision reports. Each member has 2 votes, with decisions determined by a simple majority.

Purposes of the funding

4. The funding devolved to the LJC can be used for a number of different purposes over the year. At the present time, the Committee has not allocated funds to any specific purposes but has indicated that it will receive applications from local organisations for eligible purposes. Funding by the LJC must comply with the general Financial Rules for LJC's that are attached to this report. Applications must demonstrate compliance with the following criteria:
 - Expenditure must be consistent with achieving the aims, objectives and vision set out in Shropshire's Sustainable Community Strategy, the Council's Corporate Plans and local Neighbourhood or Parish Plans.
 - Expenditure must be for activity within the geographical area of the Local Joint Committee.
 - Expenditure must benefit the wider community and should not be used to fund a group which restricts membership based on views, beliefs etc. For example, it would not be appropriate to make a contribution to a religious group but a contribution to say, improvements to a church hall which is open for bookings from the wider community would be acceptable.
 - The budget must not be spent on mainstream council activities, but can be used to enhance mainstream activities.
 - The budget must not be a displacement of existing council funding. For example, a service cannot be reinstated from the local budget if the council has cut funding for it in the previous 3 years.
 - The budget should not be used to meet ongoing staffing costs of an organisation.

Decision-making procedure

5. The LJC elected Members will decide on applications for funding and their decisions will be taken in public, following the process below:
 - a written report by the Lead Officer, setting out the details of applications received and recommending a course of action;
 - a brief verbal introduction to the applications, by the Lead Officer, at the meeting;
 - questions by the elected Members of the officers and/or the applicants (if present);
 - elected Members take the decision.

A slightly different process will need to be taken if there are fewer than three elected Members present, as that is the number required to form a quorum.

Application by the Beacon SAHA Football Club

6. The club wishes to refurbish the junior football pitch at Shelton Hospital. They would level the pitch and provide new goals. Prices for the project are goals: £500, soil: £700 and works: £836, giving a total of £2036. The club provides a valuable leisure activity for local young people and the work would also improve the appearance of the site. The proposal complies with the objectives of LJC funding and represents good value for money and so a recommendation of approval is made.

Application by the Meole Brace Garden and Allotment Club

7. An application for funding from the club was deferred at the previous meeting on 18, March. The club has now come back with revised proposals. It proposes to improve the access to the Stanley Lane site with financial assistance from Veolia Ltd and build, reinforce and resurface dilapidated roadways on the Stanley Road site. The club regards this as important in fulfilling its obligations to members with accessibility problems, such as parents with push chairs, people with mobility scooters, as well as cyclists and walkers in general. It also wishes to improve the appearance of the site. The club organises a range of technical talks, demonstrations and open days and an annual show. It says that the improvements would allow it to explore a wider range of community-based projects in the future. The club has forged links with Meole Brace Senior School and has approached Meole Brace Junior School.

8. 27 of the 84 members live in the Radbrook and Bowbrook wards, with the remainder living in Meole/Column/Sutton, where the site is located. The club has applied to both this LJC and the Meole, Column and Sutton LJC. The revised proposals now total £4,775 and request £1,591 from this LJC. The club states that it would contribute £511 through volunteer labour.
9. The proposal complies with the objectives of LJC funding. On the basis of the reduced costs and the efforts to forge links with local schools and the community, it is considered that a recommendation of approval to a grant can be made.

Application by the Shrewsbury Childrens' Bookfest

10. The applicant is a charity that seeks to develop a love of books through a series of annual events. The application is specifically for help towards the May Literary Festival, which takes place in venues across Shrewsbury. Although clearly a very worthwhile charity and event, the Bookfest operates for the benefit of children across the town and has no particular connection with this LJC area. The organisation has sought funding from other LJCs, including the Severn Loop LJC, and therefore it is recommended that the Bowbrook, Copthorne and Radbrook LJC should not provide a grant on this occasion.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

1. Locality Working – Local Joint Committees Supplementary Report – Implementation Executive 19 March 2009.

Human Rights Act Appraisal

At this stage the recommendations are unlikely to result in any implications for the Human Rights Act.

Environmental Appraisal

Two of the projects would have a positive impact on the environment. The Childrens' Bookfest would be neutral in its effect.

Risk Management Appraisal

The Council needs to address the risk of legal challenge to decisions through procedural or other errors. This has been carefully assessed. There are no risks specifically relating to the two applications.

Community / Consultations Appraisal

The Meole Brace Garden and allotment Club application was previously considered at the 18, March meeting of the committee.

Cabinet Member

Gwilym Butler

Local Members

Peter Nutting, Peter Adams, Keith Roberts

Appendices

LJC Financial Procedure Rules