

## DECISION REPORT – GRANT APPLICATIONS

**Responsible Officer** Nick Taylor

Email: [nick.taylor@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:nick.taylor@shropshire.gov.uk)

Telephone: 01743 252502

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### Summary

This report considers applications for grant funding submitted to the Bowbrook, Copthorne and Radbrook Local Joint Committee (LJC) for 2010/11.

A total of £24,250 remained 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. So far, grants totalling £11,303.25 have been awarded. At the present time, therefore, available funds stand at £50,947.

The applications now under consideration are set out in the report, with details attached.

### Recommendations

It is recommended to the Bowbrook, Copthorne and Radbrook Local Joint Committee that the following decisions are made on the submitted applications:

- Shrewsbury Handbells – approve grant of £2,000;
- Shrewsbury Amateur Operatic Society – refuse the application but offer to reconsider the application in the event that the society incurs a loss on its production;
- Shropshire Army Cadet Force Band and Bugles – approve grant of £185.71, on condition that at least three other LJCs also contribute similar amounts;
- Bowbrook Allotment Community – approve grant of £700 for noticeboard and signage;
- Trinity Churches, Meole Brace, for Café Connect, at Radbrook Green – approve grant of £1,200;
- Edgefield Green Fingers Garden Club – approve grant of £1,000;
- Oxon Church Community Hall – approve grant of £3,000 plus further £1 for every additional £1 raised by the church, up to a maximum of £3,000;
- St Winifreds RC Church – refuse the application;
- DASH Disability Arts in Shropshire – refuse the application.

## **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 remained unallocated from the previous year's budget and has been carried forward, giving total available funds for 2010/11 of £62,250. So far in this financial year, grants totalling £11,303.25 have been allocated, leaving £50,947 to be spent. 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.

## Applications under consideration

| Applicant                                     | Purpose of grant   | Amount requested from BCR LJC | Comment   |
|---|--|-------------------------------|---|
| 1. Shrewsbury Handbells                       | Purchase of 8 new bells plus music. Total cost £3,611.   | £3,611                        | This is a self-funded voluntary group that meets in Copthorne, whose fees for playing are given to charity. Suggest a grant of £2,000.                                  |
| 2. Shrewsbury Amateur Operatic Society        | Contribution to funding of performance of "Oliver" at Theatre Severn, 10-12 February 2011. Total cost of project expected to be £26,329, less box office income etc.         | £1,000                        | Application made to all six Shrewsbury LJC's. Suggest no grant but offer to reconsider after the performance if the Society incurs a loss on the performance.           |
| 3. Shropshire Army Cadet Force Ban and Bugles | Purchase of laptop, printer and projector for the platoon, based at Copthorne Barracks. Cost of £1,300 in total.   | £185.71                       | Application made to all six Shrewsbury LJC's plus Bayston Hill. Suggest agree grant on condition that at least 3 other LJC's also contribute similar amounts.           |
| 4. Bowbrook Allotment Community               | Development of the community hut into an information centre with information boards, signage of trail, camping cookers, trees/shrubs and flowering bulbs. Total cost £1,340. | £1,090                        | The group received a grant in the previous financial year. Suggest £700 for notice board and signage and that they approach the Town Council for help towards planting. |

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|--|---|---------|---|
| 5. Trinity Churches, Meole Brace                   | New food display cabinet for Café Connect, at Radbrook Green shopping centre, which serves mainly elderly residents. Total cost £2,200.   | £1,200  | The project serves a needy section of the community. Suggest approval.  |
| 6. Edgefield Greenfingers Garden Club, Gains Park  | New benches, planters and slabs for planters, to enhance the existing gardens for residents and the community.  | £1,990  | No contribution proposed by the applicant. Suggest approximately 50% funding of £1,000.   |
| 7. Oxon Church Community Hall                      | Repairs to roof of hall and to chimney - complete overhaul of roof. Total cost £11,016 plus VAT.  | £11,016 | Over 20 local community groups and organisations are identified as users. No other contributions have been identified by the applicant. Suggest an initial grant of £3,000 plus a further £1 for every additional £1 raised by the church, up to a maximum of £3,000. |
| 8. St Winefrides RC Church, Mynd Close, Shrewsbury | Reconstruction of existing car park and construction of extension. Total cost £17,000.  | £1,000  | Application made to all 6 Shrewsbury LJC's plus Bayston Hill. The applicant has already widened the access and made a contribution of £8,000 to the cost. Suggest no support, on the grounds that this is not as high priority as facilities within the BCR LJC area. |
| 9. DASH Disability Arts in Shropshire              | Creation of "digital hotdesk" at DASH SPACE, in Monkmoor for local users. The project involves purchase of sophisticated digital media equipment and software. Total cost £7,450. | £833.33 | Application made to all 6 Shrewsbury LJC's plus Bayston Hill. Usage of the facility by groups and individuals beyond the Monkmoor area is not clear; therefore, suggest refusal.  |

**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**

**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 applications.

**Community / Consultations Appraisal**

**Cabinet Member**

Gwilym Butler

**Local Members**

Peter Nutting, Peter Adams, Keith Roberts

**Appendices**