



Cabinet 27 April 2011

Recommendations from the Grant Working Party: 31 March 2011 (May11/01)

Cabinet Member:
Cllr Robert Everitt

Chairman of the Working Party:
Cllr Sarah Broughton

Review of the Grant Terms and Conditions for the Recreation, Village Halls and Play Area Grant Scheme (RVHPAGS) and the Rural Areas Community Initiatives Fund (RACIF) (Report B529)

1. At the Working Party's meeting on 31 March 2011, Report B529 was considered. The report proposed options for complementary amendments to the Council's two rural grants schemes to reflect both the recent pattern of applications and to ensure that the maximum number of rural communities benefit from the funding.
2. Report B529 is **attached as Appendix C** to this report. Each of the recommendations contained in Section 6.1 of Report B529 were recommended for approval by the Working Party, with the exception of an amendment to Recommendation (1) in respect of considering one of four options contained in Section 4.1. Whilst Option 4 was favoured, the Working Party considered the minimum grant available from the RACIF should be amended from zero to £250, to avoid receipt of applications for exceptionally low grants, which could be onerous on officers' time.
3. The Working Party therefore agreed to recommend that the Council's Grants Policy be amended to reflect the following principles:-
 - (1) of the options listed in Section 4.1 of Report B529, Option 4, as amended at the meeting, to apply a minimum grant threshold of £250 to the Rural Areas Community Initiative Fund, be approved, i.e. a minimum of £250 for the Rural Areas Community Initiative Fund (RACIF) and a maximum of £4,000; and a minimum of £4,001 for the Recreation, Village Halls and Play Area Grant Scheme (RVHPAGS) and a maximum of £10,000;
 - (2) as detailed in Section 5.1 of Report B529, the email voting system be retained for awarding grants up to £5,000, and extended to be applicable to both the RVHPAGS and the RACIF grant schemes (up to the amended maximum grant of £4,000 available from the RACIF, as detailed in Option 4 of Section 4.1 of Report B529);
 - (3) the level of match-funding for the RVHPAGS be set at a maximum of 40% of the total project cost or £10,000, whichever is the lesser figure, but maintained at maximum of 50% for the RACIF, as detailed in Section 5.2 of Report B529;

- (4) any reference to 'total project cost' for match-funding purposes, be applied on the basis that it excludes VAT for those organisations able to reclaim the VAT element, as detailed in Section 5.2 of Report B529; and
 - (5) the two-year time lapse in which applicants may reapply to the RACIF also be applied to Parish Councils as well as community groups, as detailed in Section 5.3 of Report B529.
4. However, at the same meeting, the Working Party also held a detailed discussion on whether the two schemes should actually become elements of a single 'umbrella' rural grant scheme; retaining their separate funding budgets, criteria and objectives but making the process easier for applicants. Under such a system, applications would be made on a single application form and the officers would then determine from which funding 'pot' the grant would most appropriately be awarded, managing the available funds efficiently and equitably.
 5. Keeping the two funding pots separate within the one scheme would also ensure that existing allocations in the capital programme were protected for their originally intended purposes, particularly funding for village halls and recreation facilities. £60,000 (plus any underspends from previous years) has been allocated for the RACIF until March 2014 i.e. around £20,000 a year for the next three years. Similarly, funding of £60,447 is currently available for the RVHPAGS. RVHPAGS funding is reviewed annually and an additional £45,000 was added to the 'pot' on 1 April 2011.
 6. In summary, the proposal of the Working Party is to create one Rural Initiatives Grant (RIG) scheme with two 'tiers' of grants, each with its own funding allocation:-
 - (a) grants of up to £4,000 for capital projects which benefit rural communities (as per the existing RACIF scheme); and
 - (b) grants of between £4,001 and £10,000 for capital projects specifically related to village halls and recreation facilities (as per the existing RVHPAGS scheme).
 7. So that the introduction of the new umbrella scheme was not delayed, the Working Party also resolved on 31 March that delegated authority should be given to the Corporate Director for Community Services, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Grant Working Party, to prepare a report on how the two schemes could be combined for consideration by the Cabinet at this meeting. In that context, a revised Grant Policy is attached to this report as **Appendix A**. The opportunity has been taken to simplify the wording of the policy, incorporating the relevant content of the RACIF appendix into the main body of the policy, or into the new combined application form (which is attached as **Appendix B**). The policy has also been amended to reflect the recommended changes to the two schemes outlined above.
 8. Given the tight timetables for producing this report, any comments received from members of the Working Party may need to be reported orally at the meeting.

9. Incorporating the above recommendations and resolution of the Working Party on 31 March, 2011, it is therefore

RECOMMENDED: - That

- (1) applications to the Rural Areas Community Initiative Fund (RACIF) and the Recreation, Village Halls and Play Area Grant Scheme (RVHPAGS) be hereafter invited and considered by the Cabinet, through its Grant Working Party, under one 'umbrella' Rural Initiatives Grants scheme;***
- (2) a single combined application form, as set out in Appendix B of Report B584, be introduced with immediate effect;***
- (3) as detailed in Section 5.1 of Report B529, the email voting system currently used by the Grant Working Party be retained for the awarding of grants up to £5,000, and extended to be applicable to both the RVHPAGS and the RACIF rural grant schemes (and any successor rural grant schemes operated by the Cabinet);***
- (4) subject to the approval of the full Council:-***
 - (a) the Council's Grants Policy be amended as set out in Appendix A to Report B583; and***
 - (b) the Corporate Director for Community, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder with responsibility for grants, be authorised to make minor typographic, grammatical and/or factual changes to the Council's Grants Policy before it is re-published, and to keep it updated in relation to any future changes made by Cabinet in relation to its own delegated decision-making powers to officers in consultation with the Grant Working Party.***



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Grants Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to set out the procedures, criteria and conditions in relation to grants awarded by the Council and to ensure that criteria for decision making in respect of applications are related to the Council's own priorities.
- 1.2 The Council is committed to supporting voluntary organisations and community groups which operate within St Edmundsbury and whose services support the Council's aims and objectives. The Council each year gives grants totalling many thousands of pounds to a large range of voluntary organisations, including those which give advice and support to individuals, community organisations, residents groups, sports clubs and art and cultural bodies. The Council's grants include:
- Core funding grants;
 - Rural Initiatives Grant Scheme for specific capital projects; and
 - Grants of less than £250 for Residents' Associations.
- 1.3 Although the Council provides a range of grants, the budgets for grant aid are clearly limited and not all applications will be approved. Some will be refused and others may be approved but for a lesser amount than that originally requested. The Council wishes to ensure that its grant funding will be used effectively and encourages voluntary organisations to seek other sources of funding wherever this is possible.
- 1.4 The Council recognises the importance of its grant funding to individual voluntary organisations and this means that simple, fair and transparent application and assessment mechanisms are maintained.
- 1.5 The Council has also developed and published various documents which organisations may need to refer to, including its Rural Action Plan and Corporate Plan. These are available at: www.stedmundsbury.gov.uk

2. Why does St Edmundsbury Borough Council give grants?

- 2.1 The Council's vision is to improve the quality of life for everyone in St Edmundsbury in a cost effective and efficient manner. The Council recognises that it cannot achieve this on its own; working towards this vision will require effective partnerships with a range of organisations, including those in the voluntary sector. In many cases an element of this partnership will involve grant support to those organisations which contribute to the objectives contained within the Council's Corporate Plan.

2.2 The Council has adopted a set of core values which capture the mission statement. These are set out in the Council's Corporate Plan and include a Council which:

- (a) is customer focused;
- (b) provides value for money;
- (c) manages resources effectively;
- (d) works for improvement;
- (e) values and invests in staff and Members;
- (f) is accountable and accessible;
- (g) celebrates success; and
- (h) is committed to equal opportunity.

2.3 The Council has established four overarching priorities:

- (a) to improve the safety and wellbeing of the community;
- (b) to secure a sustainable and attractive environment;
- (c) to create a prosperous local economy; and
- (d) to raise standards and corporate efficiency.

2.4 The Council is, therefore, keen to ensure that any grant funding that is given to an organisation is used in a way which is consistent with our values and assists the Council in meeting its own priorities for the people of St Edmundsbury. It recognises that voluntary organisations can provide services within the community in a way which the Council, as a statutory agency, is unable to do. By making grant funding available, the Council, therefore, is supporting partnerships with voluntary organisations to deliver its corporate aims.

3. What funding is available from the Council?

3.1 The Council offers three main types of funding. Applicants cannot apply to more than one fund for a particular project. Any application should be consistent with the Council's priorities.

1) Core Funding – this is available to support the running costs of an organisation which provides a service to people in St Edmundsbury. Organisations may apply for funding for up to three years. The Council and the applicant will agree a funding agreement which sets out what the organisation will do and what the Council agrees to do over the duration of the agreement. The funding agreement will be more detailed for larger grants, and in these cases the Council may require a detailed service level agreement and specific performance monitoring arrangements. Applications for core funding must be received by the 1st of October each year in order that the Grant Working Party can consider applications in time for the Council's budget setting process. Applications are considered by the Grant Working Party which makes recommendations to Cabinet.

Where a grant is approved for an organisation for the purpose of paying the rent due to the Borough Council, the Council will exercise its discretion as to whether to release the allocated funds direct to the applicant, or to make an internal transfer of funds within the

Council. Each applicant will be fully advised of the timing of any such transfers in order that they can make entries in their own accounting records.

2) Rural Initiatives Grant Scheme – this is a one-off match-funding grant scheme from £250 up to £10,000, which must be used for a specific capital project. Larger grants of over £4,000 are reserved for village halls and recreation facilities, but smaller grants can also be used for a wide variety of other schemes which benefit rural communities. The organisation will need to sign up to a funding agreement, which will include the standard terms and conditions. Monitoring of the agreement/project will be required to ensure the effective management of resources. The project must contribute to the Council's priorities.

Applications for this grant may be made throughout the year, although an individual organisation cannot re-apply for funding from the Council within two years of a grant being awarded for up to £4,000 and three years for grants approved between £4,001 and £10,000. All applications will be considered by the Grant Working Party, who will approve grants up to £5,000. For larger grants, the Grant Working Party will make recommendations at the quarterly meetings to the Cabinet for approval.

3) Grants of £250 or less – grants of up to £120 are available to Residents' Associations from a small annual budget. This grant is only available to groups with less than five years worth of annual funding in their accounts. A £250 pump-priming grant is available for eligible groups, but will only be allocated to new groups in their first year of operation. Applications for these grants may be made throughout the year, and will be decided by officers in accordance with this policy and the Council's priorities under delegated authorities.

4. Other assistance available from the Council

4.1 In addition to providing funding, the Council is committed to helping voluntary organisations by offering advice and support. Officers may be able to assist organisations in applying for other sources of funding. Information about alternative sources of funding is available on the Council's website.

5. Who can apply?

5.1 Applications will be considered from local groups or organisations which:

- (a) directly benefit the people who live in St Edmundsbury;
- (b) have a management committee which is responsible for making sure the organisation carries out its aims and objectives. The management committee should have an agreed constitution;
- (c) have their own bank account in the name of the organisation;
- (d) comply with the Council's Equalities Policy, which is available on the Council's website (www.stedmundsbury.gov.uk); and
- (e) work towards one or more of the Council's priorities.

5.2 The Council will **not** normally provide grants:

- (a) for projects which conflict with the Council's priorities;
- (b) to national charities;
- (c) religious bodies for the purposes of promoting their beliefs;
- (d) political parties or groups engaged in party political activities;
- (e) to fund 'mainstream' public services (e.g. highway maintenance);
- (f) to private enterprises (applications from social enterprises will be considered);
- (g) to educational establishments, except where community use can be demonstrated;
- (h) to individuals; and
- (i) for work or activities which have already happened (i.e. retrospective applications).

5.3 Applications involving church-owned/run village halls (and in some instances the church itself) will be considered where:

- (a) substantial use of the hall (or church) is for non-church activities;
- (b) there are no suitable alternative premises for community use;
- (c) the proposal is endorsed by the Parish Council/Parish Meeting;
- (d) the proposal is necessary to facilitate the use of the building by the general community, including disadvantaged and excluded sections of the community; and
- (e) the proposal does not constitute repairs to the fabric of the building.

5.4 Projects involving churches are only likely to be acceptable if it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that the proposal will achieve wider social inclusion objectives, by facilitating substantial use of the church by the community at large for meetings, functions and general village activities.

6. How does the Council decide which applications should be successful?

6.1 Every organisation which provides funding has its own priority areas and ways of deciding whether an organisation should be supported or not. Applications are assessed against the following criteria:

- (a) effective organisational and financial management;
- (b) value for money;
- (c) level of use / number of beneficiaries;
- (d) level of demand (e.g. what consultation the applicant has carried out?);
- (e) ability to attract other funding into the Borough;
- (f) level of match funding;
- (g) commitment to equality; and
- (h) the viability of the organisation or the deliverability of the project.

6.2 Key questions for the Council in considering any application are:

- Will the scheme be of significant benefit to the community?
- Is there a clearly identified need?
- Is there local enthusiasm and commitment?
- Will the scheme have a long term impact?
- Has the scheme obtained at least 50% match funding.

- Is the scheme financially sustainable in the longer term, without the need for ongoing financial support from the Borough Council?
- 6.3 Applications will be assessed against the Council's priorities. The Council's budget constraints will always limit the amount it can pay to organisations in grant aid. Therefore, those organisations which contribute more to the Council's priorities are much more likely to receive grant aid.
- 6.4 A scoring assessment matrix will be used to assess grant applications and to rank these in order of priority. It should be noted that this is for advisory purposes only and the Council reserves the right to decide applications following discussion at the meetings where they are being considered.
- 6.5 The Council is keen to ensure that organisations and projects funded are sustainable. The Council will, therefore, be looking for evidence of this within each application.
- 6.6 The Council will expect projects to have identified match funding, and this should include an element of local funding which could arise from fundraising activities, local donations, the Parish Council or other local organisations. With the exception of core funding, the Council will not award a grant of more than 50% of the total project cost for grants approved up to £4,000, and 40% for grants approved from £4,001 to £10,000. The total project cost for match funding purposes excludes Value Added Tax (VAT) for those groups that can reclaim it.
- 6.7 The Council encourages applicants to apply for funding from other sources. It is not just money that counts as 'match funding', volunteer time can also be taken into account. Volunteer time can account for up to 25% of the cost of the scheme and is costed at £50 per day per person for standard labour. Normal meetings in association with planning the project and completing funding applications would not usually count towards match funding. Activities such as work parties or conservation work could be counted as volunteer time. The Council needs to see how the organisation is contributing to the project.
- 6.8 Organisations will be asked to declare the sources of additional funding and other financial information on the application form.
- 6.9 Timescales for grant approval:
- For grants between £250 and £5,000 the email consideration system is in place and applicants can expect a decision within 14 days of receipt of the application form.
- Grants over £5,000 are considered at the quarterly Grant Working Party meetings held in March, June, September and December. These grants are subject to full approval by Cabinet and expiry of the call-in period. Applicants would normally have a decision within 28 days of the Grant Working Party meeting.
- 6.10 The Council may also, at its own discretion, consider if a grant applicant is indebted to the Council. The Council may seek either full clarification of the monies owed and/or agree a mutually satisfactory settlement. Any outstanding national non-domestic rates

which are collected by the Council on behalf of HM Government are excluded from this requirement.

7. Quick guide

7.1 This section provides a quick guide to the different grants available from the Council:

	Core funding	Rural Initiatives Grant Scheme	Grants of £250 or less
Minimum / Maximum grant awarded.	None	Between £250 and £10,000	Max £250
Capital or Revenue.	Revenue	Capital	Revenue
When can I apply?	By October each year	Any time	Any time
Who decides the grant?	Grant Working Party and Cabinet	Grants up to £5,000: Grant Working Party. Grants over £5,000: Grant Working Party and Cabinet	Officers
Examples:			
Improvements to village halls and rural community buildings – e.g. access improvements, heating, extensions, buying new furniture or equipment.		✓	
Rural sport or recreational facilities – e.g. improving playing fields and changing facilities, toilets or access.		✓	
Rural play areas – e.g. improvements to existing play areas, new equipment or safety improvements.		✓	
Environmental conservation – e.g. setting up a community woodland.		✓ (up to £4,000)	
Creation of a social enterprise business.	✓	✓ (up to £4,000)	
Rural transport – e.g. provision of vehicles or provision of infrastructure (bus shelters)		✓ (up to £4,000)	
Small annual grant to help with running costs of residents' associations.			✓

8. How to apply?

- 8.1 The Council's application pack provides the information which organisations need when submitting an application for funding. It also provides information about other local organisations which may be able to offer advice, support and training. The Council has standard grant application forms, but applicants may be asked to provide additional information for some applications when more detailed information is needed (e.g. building projects).
- 8.2 If applicants would like help completing the application form or would like to ask for clarification, they are invited to contact the Council – contact details are provided on the application form and on the Council's website.
- 8.3 Applications for **core funding** from the Council can only be submitted once a year unless there are exceptional circumstances. Completed grant applications must be in the hands of the Council by 1st October annually for grants to be considered for the following financial year. Only one core funding application per organisation will be considered in each financial year.
- 8.4 An application for other grant schemes can be submitted at any time.

9. Decision making

- 9.1 The Council's Grant Working Party will normally assess applications for core funding during November and December. All applicants will be told whether their application has been successful and will be told the level of funding in March for a 1st April start. Organisations should confirm whether they are eligible to reclaim/not pay VAT.
- 9.2 All project grant applications must have the support of the Ward Councillor prior to consideration by the Grant Working Party. Applications for between £250 and £5,000 will be considered by members of the Grant Working Party following circulation of details by email. If the majority of members (including substitutes where appropriate) are in agreement, the grant will be approved by officers under delegated authority. If there is not a majority in favour of awarding the grant, the application will be referred to the next available meeting of the Grant Working Party for determination. For applications over £5,000 the Grant Working Party will consider the proposals at their quarterly meetings and a recommendation will be forwarded to the next available Cabinet meeting for approval.
- 9.3 Where grant applications are of an urgent nature and are time dependent (e.g. Health and Safety matters), a decision in respect of funding will be made as quickly as possible. However, please discuss this with the Council as soon as possible, preferably prior to an application being made. Work undertaken **before** the grant is decided will be ineligible for grant funding, unless prior written authorisation has been provided by the Council.
- 9.4 Unsuccessful groups will be informed why their application was unsuccessful and advised of other possible sources of funding where appropriate. There is no right of appeal against the Council's grant funding decisions.

9.5 At the time of notification of the funding decision, applicants will be advised when funding will be received, subject to the signing of a funding agreement.

10. Grant Working Party

10.1 The Grant Working Party consists of a group of Members with the following terms of reference:-

"To consider grant applications and recommend to officers or the Cabinet the level of grants payable to organisations, based on the policies agreed by Council".

10.2 The Grant Working Party will be politically balanced and consist of at least six members. The Council may amend the terms of reference and membership arrangements from time to time.

11. Conditions

11.1 Conditions will be detailed in the funding agreement but all grants will be subject to the following conditions:

- Work on the project must start within twelve months of the grant being paid. If this is not possible, please contact the Council;
- the grant must be used solely for the purposes set out in the funding agreement;
- if projects are altered or varied from the original proposal, Council approval is required prior to any grant funding being released; and
- where capital funding is required to improve land or buildings, these should be owned by the organisation applying or a suitable lease should be in place.

12. How will the payments be made?

12.1 The Economic Development Manager and the Head of Neighbourhood Management and Development, or their authorised deputies, have delegated authority to authorise payment of grants.

12.2 The Council's preferred method of payment is direct into the organisation's bank account by BACS. The payment has to be paid to the organisation and not to an individual. The grant can be made by one payment, or the Council can agree to make the payments through the year (e.g. monthly, quarterly). This can be agreed between the case officer and the organisation, and for large projects or core funding grants, funding is likely to be on the receipt of satisfactory progress reports (see funding agreements). For capital projects, payments will be made either on completion of the work or by staged payments and receipt of final invoices.

13. Communication

- 13.1 The Council will publish information about its grant scheme, including the timetable, Grants Policy, application forms and funding criteria on its website: www.stedmundsbury.gov.uk/grants. Information will also be published from time to time in the Council's regular publication 'Community Spirit' which is delivered to every household in the Borough.

14. Monitoring and Evaluation

- 14.1 Every grant which the Council gives will be subject to a funding agreement. This will need to be signed before the funds are released. The nature of the agreement will depend on the level and type of grant awarded.
- 14.2 The funding agreement will include standard terms and conditions and will set out the commitments of both the Council and the organisation.
- 14.3 The Council will need to monitor how the money is spent and whether the organisation is doing what it has agreed in the funding agreement. In order to do this the Council will ask the organisation to supply a copy of its annual report which will show what has been happening over the last year. The organisation should also submit its annual accounts. The Council needs to make sure that tax payers' money is being used properly and that the organisation is being managed well.
- 14.4 The Council may ask for interim progress reports and end of year reports detailing progress made towards the objectives set out in the funding agreement. Upon receiving a satisfactory progress report, additional funding will be released as detailed in the payment timetable. Failure to meet the agreed targets may result in delayed or no further funding.
- 14.5 The Council may also visit the organisation or project to see what progress is being made and how the grant is being used. Alternatively individuals or organisations may be asked to attend meetings to report on the use of the grant.
- 14.6 The Council may ask organisations receiving funding to demonstrate audit procedures to ensure value for money and that a high standard of service is being provided to the public.
- 14.7 Other methods of monitoring and evaluation may be used as appropriate.

15. Promotion and acknowledgement

- 15.1 The Council will wish to promote the grants and support which has been given to organisations / projects, with the organisation involved. Similarly, any promotion / publicity regarding the project or service must mention St Edmundsbury Borough Council's involvement in an agreed manner.

- 15.2 The Council will normally require that successful grant applicants recognise the Council's grant support through the provision of appropriate signage on buildings, acknowledgements in leaflets or documentation, including software applications or other promotional activity. This will be detailed within the funding agreement.
- 15.3 All recognition and acknowledgments must be in accordance with the Council's current corporate branding and logo requirements.

16. Further information

- 16.1 For further information please contact:

Community Funding Officer
Community Development Unit
St Edmundsbury Borough Council
West Suffolk House
Western way
Bury St Edmunds
IP33 3YU

Tel: 01284 757079
Fax: 01284 757421
Email: ruralgrants@stedsbc.gov.uk

- 16.2 Information about the Council's grant schemes are available on its website at:
www.stedmundsbury.gov.uk/grants

Appendix B

For office use only
Date received:
Applicant:



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Rural Initiatives Grant Scheme

Grant application form for Capital Project Grants between £250 and £10,000

Please read the Grants Policy before completing your application form.

Please write clearly in black ink or type, and use N/A if the question is not applicable.

Prior to submitting this application please contact us using the details below to ensure that your application meets the correct criteria:

Community Funding Officer
Community Development Unit
St Edmundsbury Borough Council
West Suffolk House
Western Way
Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk
IP33 3YU

Phone: 01284 757079

Fax: 01284 757421

Email: ruralgrants@stedsbc.gov.uk

**Part A
General details**

Name of organisation:

Address:

Phone:

Fax:

Email:

Postcode:

Website:

Name of contact person for this application:

Address (if different from above):

Daytime phone:

Fax:

Postcode:

Email:

Position within the organisation (for example secretary, chairman, treasurer):

What type of organisation is it:

- Registered charity (please state number) _____
- Formally constituted club/association/trust
- Company limited by guarantee (not for profit)
- Amateur sports club
- Town/parish council
- Other (please specify) _____

When was your organisation set up:

Month:

Year:

Please briefly describe your organisations' aims, activities and objectives:

Have you received a grant from St Edmundsbury Borough Council before? yes / no

If yes, please state the year and amount received for the last three financial years:

Year: _____ £

Year: _____ £

Year: _____ £

Are you receiving any other kind of help from the council? yes / no

If yes, please give details:

Part B Project details

Please explain what you need the grant for (continue on a separate sheet if necessary),
listing some specific SMART outcomes - SMART outcomes are:

- **Specific** – tightly defined, relating directly to the issue being addressed;
- **Measurable** – provide information that records the situation at the start of the period and at the end;
- **Achievable** – can be achieved within the timescale;
- **Relevant** – have a strong connection to priorities and activities; and
- **Time-bound** – set specific time periods.

Please show other sources of funding for the project and whether these have been confirmed:

Source:	Amount:	Confirmed/applied for and so on:
Organisations' own funds:		
Volunteer time:		
Fundraising activities:		
Donations/sponsorship:		
Grants from other organisations. Please list below:		
Total:		

If the total amount of funding available does not meet the costs of the project, please explain how the additional funding will be raised:

What community consultation has been carried out to identify the need for this project (for example questionnaires, public meetings):

Has a business plan been prepared for the project (large-scale projects will require a business plan) and have all the necessary planning permissions been sought? If yes, please attach these documents with your application.

Yes / no

The council will monitor and evaluate the success of the project and will request information from you about how successful it was and any problems encountered.

<p>Signed:</p> <p>This form should be signed by the chairperson, secretary or treasurer for your organisation</p>
<p>Full name (please print):</p>
<p>Position within group:</p>
<p>Date:</p>

St Edmundsbury Borough Council is under a duty to protect the public funds it administers, and to this end may use the information you have provided on this form for the prevention and detection of fraud. It may also share this information with other bodies responsible for auditing or administering public funds for these purposes. For further information, see:

www.stedmundsbury.gov.uk/dataprotection

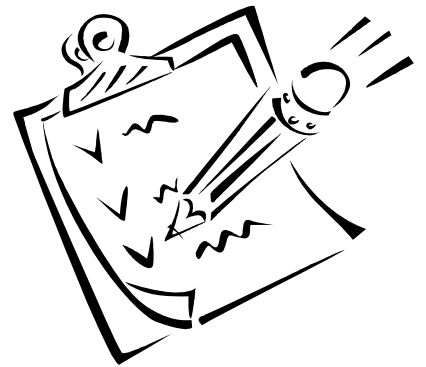
Please return your completed form and other required information (please see the checklist below) to:

Community Funding Officer
 Community Development Unit
 St Edmundsbury Borough Council
 West Suffolk House
 Western Way
 Bury St Edmunds
 Suffolk
 IP33 3YU

Phone: 01284 757079
 Fax: 01284 757421
 Email: ruralgrants@stedsbc.gov.uk

Checklist for grant application:

Have you enclosed the following documents with your application?



- ✓ Copy of your organisation's constitution
- ✓ Copy of your latest accounts
- ✓ Copy of your last bank statement
- ✓ Copy of any professional estimates / quotes for the project
- ✓ A completed ward member response form
- ✓ A completed St Edmundsbury Borough Council priorities form (p.9)
- ✓ Supplier information request form (for payment if your grant is approved)
- ✓ Planning and building regulations approval, if required
- ✓ Any other information you feel will support your application

Ward member response form

Note to applicants:

You must ask your local ward member to complete this form. If you do not know who this is, please phone: 01284 757079 or email: ruralgrants@stedsbc.gov.uk

Name of applicant:

Brief description of scheme:

Notification of support / rejection (please delete as appropriate)

Reasons (please continue overleaf if necessary):

Please print name:

Signature:

Ward represented:

Date:

Please return this completed form, together with your application form, to:

Community Funding Officer
Community Development Unit
St Edmundsbury Borough Council
West Suffolk House
Western Way
Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk
IP33 3YU
Phone: 01284 757079
Fax: 01284 757421
Email: ruralgrants@stedsbc.gov.uk

St Edmundsbury Borough Council priorities

Applicants: your project must fit in with at least one of the following priorities from the Corporate Plan in order to be eligible. Please tick next to those that apply and explain **briefly** how your project helps us to meet this priority.

Corporate Plan

Priorities are to:

1. improve the safety and well being of the community

Our project helps towards this priority by:

2. secure a sustainable and attractive environment

Our project helps towards this priority by:

3. create a prosperous local economy

Our project helps towards this priority by:

4. raise standards and corporate efficiency.

Our project helps towards this priority by:

Supplier information request form

(for payment if your grant is approved)

Supplier Number (office use only): _____

This authority is under a duty to protect the public funds it administers, and to this end may use the information you have provided on this form for the prevention and detection of fraud. It may also share this information with other bodies responsible for auditing or administering public funds for these purposes. For further information, see <http://www.stedmundsbury.gov.uk/dataprotection>

Name of Company/Applicant	
Full payment address including postcode	
Address to which orders should be sent (if different from payment address)	
Telephone No - for account queries	
Fax No - for account queries	
Website address if applicable	
VAT Registration No or NR if not registered for VAT	
Company Registration Number	
Settlement Terms	
Construction Industry Unique Tax Reference Number and National Insurance Number (If not a Limited Company)	
Supplier A/C No or Ref to be quoted on remittance advice	
Type of company e.g. electrical goods, Consultant Engineer	
The Councils preferred method of payment is by BACS with the remittance advice being emailed or faxed	
Email address OR Fax no for BACS advice -not phone/faxes	
BACS details for payments to be made direct	
Bank Name	
Bank Address	
Sort Code	
Account Number	
Third Party Account Details	
Factor details for payments to be made to a third party	
Factor Name	
Factor Address	
Factor Bank Name	
Factor Bank Address	
Sort Code	
Account Number	
Third Party Account Number	
PLEASE RETURN TO: Community Development Unit, St Edmundsbury Borough Council, West Suffolk House, Western Way, Bury St Edmunds IP333YU, ruralgrants@stedsdbc.gov.uk , 01284 757079	

Grant Working Party 31 March 2011

Review of Grant Terms and Conditions for the Recreation, Village Halls and Play Area Grant Scheme and the Rural Areas Community Initiatives Fund

1. Background

- 1.1 On 8 March 2011, the Grant Working Party considered Reports B495 'Grants Policy Relating to Recreation, Village Halls and Play Area Grant Scheme (RVHPAGS) Funding' and B496 'Review of the Rural Areas Community Initiatives Funds (RACIF) Terms and Conditions'. Since the two reports are intrinsically linked, and any decision made about one grant fund affects the other, Members asked officers to produce one combined report for a specifically arranged Grant Working Party meeting.

2. Current situation

- 2.1 For the RVHPAGS the minimum grant available is £5,000 with no maximum. Applicants are able to apply for a maximum of 50% of the total project cost, and cannot apply again within three years of a previous approval by the Council. This three-year rule was approved by Full Council on 1 March 2011 and the Grants Policy will be amended to reflect this.
- 2.2 For the RACIF, the minimum grant available is £500 and the maximum is £5,000. Applicants are able to apply for a maximum of 50% of the total project cost, and cannot apply again within two years of a previous approval by the Council (although currently this rule does not apply to Parish Councils, who can apply as many times as they wish).
- 2.3 At the Grant Working Party meeting of 8 March 2011, Members asked officers to analyse grants approved over the last two years, in order to illustrate the impact of changes to the minimum and maximum criteria. These statistics form Appendix A of this report.
- 2.4 In summary, Appendix A tells us that as at March 2011:-
- (a) for the RACIF, in 2010/2011, all 12 grants approved were less than £3,500. Only two of the nine projects approved for 2009/2010 were over £3,500; and
 - (b) for the RVHPAGS, out of the 15 grants approved over the last two financial years 2009/2010 and 2010/2011, the maximum grant awarded was £8,000.

3. Scenarios

- 3.1 If a **£2,500 maximum** had been in place for the RACIF in the last two years, then:-
- (a) in 2009/2010, three grants out of the nine approved (totalling £13,000) would have been processed through the RVHPAGS instead;
 - (b) in 2010/2011, three grants out of the 12 approved (totalling £9,399.84) would have been processed through the RVHPAGS instead; and
 - (c) this would have resulted in an additional £22,400 now being available to the RACIF but a potential deficit on the RVHPAGS.
- 3.2 If a **£3,000 maximum** had been in place for the RACIF in the last two years, then:-
- (a) in 2009/2010, two grants out of the nine approved (totalling £10,000) would have been processed through the RVHPAGS instead;
 - (b) in 2010/2011, two grants out of the 12 approved (totalling £6,682) would have been processed through the RVHPAGS instead; and
 - (c) this would have resulted in an additional £16,682 now being available to the RACIF but a potential deficit on the RVHPAGS.
- 3.3 If a **£3,500 maximum** had been in place for RACIF in the last two years, then:-
- (a) in 2009/2010, two grants out of the nine approved (totalling £10,000) would have been processed through the RVHPAGS instead;
 - (b) in 2010/2011, all of the 12 grants approved would still have been processed through the RACIF; and
 - (c) this would have resulted in an additional £10,000 now being available to RACIF with the same amount reduced from the RVHPAGS budget.
- 3.4 If a **£4,000 maximum** had been in place for RACIF in the last two years, then the situation would have been identical to scenario in Section 3.3 above.
- 3.5 Over the last two financial years, 2009/2010 and 2010/2011, the highest grant approved in either scheme was £8,000 for the RVHPAGS. Therefore if there had been a maximum grant of £10,000 this would not have affected any applicant.

4. Options for change

- 4.1 As explained at the previous meeting, it is felt that, in order to extend the impact of the remaining funding, a lower maximum grant should be introduced for the RACIF, which would require a corresponding change to the minimum grant for the RVHPAGS. The options suggested by officers are:-

Option 1: no minimum for the RACIF and a maximum of £2,500. A minimum of £2,501 for the RVHPAGS and a maximum of £10,000.

Option 2: no minimum for the RACIF and a maximum of £3,000. A minimum of £3,001 for the RVHPAGS and a maximum of £10,000.

Option 3: no minimum for the RACIF and a maximum of £3,500. A minimum of £3,501 for the RVHPAGS and a maximum of £10,000.

Option 4: no minimum for the RACIF and a maximum of £4,000. A minimum of £4,001 for the RVHPAGS and a maximum of £10,000.

- 4.2 Options 3 and 4 are the preferred options. Appendix A shows that no applicant in 2010/2011 would have been disappointed had either set of these minimum and maximum rules applied. These options also achieve a good balance between extending the number of RACIF applications which can potentially be considered while not having too significant an impact on the RVHPAGS funding pot. Officers would monitor applications to ensure that a disproportionate amount of officer time is not taken on grant applications under £500.

5. Additional Considerations

- 5.1 **Email voting system:** in addition to one of the options above, the officers suggest that the present email voting system be retained at £5,000 and extended to cover both grant schemes. This will ensure that applications for grants of £5,000 or less are dealt with swiftly and efficiently. If the £5,000 threshold is not maintained (and extended to RVHPAGS) it will mean applicants just falling into the RVHPAGS funding pot could potentially have to wait up to 15 weeks to have the application determined, compared to the current two weeks for sums up to £5,000. Should this amendment be agreed by Council, the Grants Policy will be altered accordingly; all grants up to £5,000 administered under the RVHPAGS will no longer require Cabinet approval.
- 5.2 **Match-funding percentage:** Grants are currently available on an up to 50% (of the total project cost) match-funding basis. In line with discussions at the previous Grant Working Party meeting it is proposed that for the RVHPAGS the maximum grant be reduced to a maximum of 40%, or £10,000, whichever is the lesser amount. This ensures that no one scheme can secure a disproportionate amount of the funding available. Officers suggest that the 50% maximum figure be retained for the RACIF as the projects involved are on a smaller scale. However, for both schemes it should be made clear that the maximum percentage excludes VAT for those organisations who are able to reclaim the VAT element.

5.3 **Timescales regarding applicants reapplying:** currently community groups can apply once every two years to the RACIF and Parish Councils can apply as often as they wish. Members may wish to amend this so that the two-year rule applies to Parish Councils as well. Officers feel that this is an appropriate timescale for small-scale projects.

5.4 Under the terms of the RVHPAGS, applicants are not able to reapply for funding within three years of a previous approval. Officers feel that this is an appropriate timescale for larger projects.

6. Recommendations

6.1 It is **RECOMMENDED** that:-

- (1) one of the four options listed in Section 4.1 of Report B529, be approved;
- (2) the email voting system be retained for awarding grants up to £5,000, and extended to cover both the Recreation, Village Halls and Play Area Grant Scheme (RVHPAGS) and the Rural Areas Community Initiatives Fund (RACIF) grant scheme (with the amended maximum grant available from the RACIF), and the Council's Grants Policy be amended accordingly as detailed in Section 5.1 of Report B529;
- (3) the level of match-funding for the RVHPAGS be set at a maximum of 40% of the total project cost or £10,000, whichever is the lesser figure, but maintained at maximum of 50% for the RACIF, as detailed in Section 5.2 of Report B529;
- (4) total project cost for match-funding purposes excludes VAT for those groups that can reclaim it, as also detailed in Section 5.2 of Report B529; and
- (5) Members consider if they wish to apply the two-year timescale for re-applications to the RACIF to Parish Councils as well as community groups, as detailed in Section 5.3 of Report B529.

For further information, please contact:-

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Statistics of grants approved for 2009-10 and 2010-11

Rural Areas Community Initiatives Fund grants approved			
2009-10		2010-11	
1	£1,208.00	1	£1,000.00
2	£1,750.00	2	£750.00
3	£5,000.00	3	£2,000.00
4	£1,767.63	4	£2,717.84
5	£500.00	5	£2,083.67
6	£500.00	6	£2,374.00
7	£3,000.00	7	£3,427.00
8	£5,000.00	8	£675.00
9	£1,585.00	9	£3,255.00
		10	£2,300.00
		11	£1,000.00
		12	£1,171.80
Total = £20,310.63		Total = £22,754.31	
Average grant = £2,256.74		Average grant = £1,896.19	

Please note: No.s 10, 11 and 12 above were not included in the Rural Areas Community Initiatives Fund budget attached to report B496 at the Grant Working Party Meeting on 8 March 2011 because these grants were approved subsequent to the budget being updated for the report.

Recreation, Village Halls and Play Area grants approved			
2009-10		2010-11	
1	8,000.00	1	4,810.00
2	5,000.00	2	7,500.00
3	4,000.00	3	8,000.00
4	5,000.00	4	5,200.00
5	6,000.00	5	7,500.00
6	5,000.00	6	5,000.00
7	7,500.00	7	4,000.00
		8	5,000.00
Total = £40,500.00		Total = £47,010.00	
Average grant = £5,785.71		Average grant = £5,876.00	