



Grant Working Party 8 March 2011

Review of the Rural Areas Community Initiatives Fund's Terms and Conditions

1. Background

- 1.1 The Rural Areas Community Initiatives Fund (RACIF) was created in 2005 with a total budget allocation of £200,000. The grant was originally intended to cover a period of four years, with £50,000 allocated a year from 2005/2006 to 2008/2009.
- 1.2 As at February 2011, the RACIF has supported 63 projects in the Borough's villages; including village hall refurbishments, community woodlands, play area provision, equipment for sports associations and village green improvements.
- 1.3 Money was drawn down fairly slowly in the first two years of the scheme. This was largely due to the fact that it was a new scheme and it therefore took some time for knowledge of the scheme to spread amongst community groups. Furthermore, successful applicants are allowed up to one year in order to carry out their project and claim their grant, which accounts for the delay in spend.
- 1.4 Consequently, a £66,055.15 underspend was carried forward to 2009/2010 and subsequent years.

2. Current situation

- 2.1 As at 1 February 2011, the remaining unallocated RACIF budget amounts to £18,473.01 (from the original £200,000 budget). The financial situation is expressed in further detail in the spreadsheet attached as Appendix A to the Report.
- 2.2 This remaining total (minus any grants that are approved before the end of March 2011) will be carried forward for use in 2011/2012.
- 2.3 Funding for the RACIF was due to come to an end in 2011. Many equivalent funding schemes have been challenged in the current funding climate; however, when the RACIF was considered as part of the Review of Rural Area Funding, Members saw merit in continuing this popular scheme (Report B235 refers). The scheme not only supports the Council's commitment to rural areas but, as a pump-priming grant, also represents a good investment of taxpayers' money; for every £1 the Council has awarded through RACIF, over £2.65 of additional funding has been obtained for schemes.
- 2.4 On 20 October 2010, the Cabinet adopted both the proposals for remaining Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LABGI) funding and the recommendations of the Rural Area Funding Review (Minutes 69 and 71 refers). Therefore, from April

2011 to March 2014 the RACIF will become part of the Rural Action Plan, and will have a total budget of £60,000 (plus any remainder from 2010/2011).

- 2.5 This budget allows approximately £20,000 a year for the next three years. To manage the new budget, it is considered that the terms and conditions of the RACIF should be revised. The current terms state that the maximum grant is £5,000, and the current practice is that once an applicant has received a grant, they are unable to apply for a further grant over the next two years. This rule, however, does not apply to Parish Councils, who may apply as and when the need arises.
- 2.6 Other terms and conditions are connected to this grant scheme, such as obtaining match funding and the need to be a properly constituted group. These conditions would remain valid.

3. Options

- 3.1 The aim is to ensure that as many applications/projects benefit from the grant scheme as possible. The officers, therefore, suggest that the 'first-come-first-served' rule is continued, because a quick and streamlined application process is an integral feature of this small grant scheme.
- 3.2 The average grant awarded since commencing the scheme has been approximately £2,800. As such, it may be sensible to review the maximum level of grant awarded at this point. This is particularly expedient if the 'first-come-first-served' system is retained. Theoretically, if there were four successful grant applications of £5,000 early in a year, the £20,000 allocation could be exhausted very quickly.
- 3.3 In this context, it is therefore suggested that two amendments might be made to the policy:-
- (a) the maximum grant is reduced from £5,000 to, say, £2,500; and
 - (b) applicants are only able to apply to the scheme once every two years, and this includes Parish Councils.
- 3.4 This is consistent with the proposals in Report B495 contained elsewhere on this Grant Working Party agenda which relates to the Recreation, Village Hall and Play Area Scheme funding. If the recommendations of that Report regarding the proposed widening the use of electronic voting are accepted by the Working Party, those seeking between £2,501 and £7,500 for Recreation, Village Hall or Play Area funding would be dealt with in a timely manner.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 It is **RECOMMENDED** that:-
- (1) the Rural Areas Community Initiatives Fund total budget for April 2011 to March 2014, as detailed in Section 2 of Report B496, be noted; and

- (2) the two suggested changes to the Rural Areas Community Initiatives Fund's terms and conditions, as outlined in Section 3.3 of Report B496 , be approved.

For further information, please contact:-

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RURAL COMMUNITY INITIATIVES FUND - C792																
Applicants	Approved by Grant Panel		Approved by cabinet date	Committed (includes any late adjustments)	Payments 2004/2005	Payments 2005/2006	Payments 2006/2007	Payments 2007/2008	Payments 2008/2009	Payments 2009/2010	Payments in 2010/2011	Budgets	Balance to pay (committed less all paid to date)	Status @ 31/07/10	Description	
	Maximum	Date														
	Email/GP	Cab														
Opening budget brought forward																
												0.00				
Approved prior to 2005/06																
Cygnets Childcare	2,000.00			2,000.00	2,000.00							0.00	Fully paid	Prior Scheme approval		
Kedington Woodland	7,500.00			7,500.00		7,500.00						0.00	Fully paid	Prior Scheme approval all work done through Leisure Services		
Internal Transaction	253.00			253.00	253.00							0.00	Fully paid	Prior Scheme approval		
Approved 2005/06																
Barnham Parish Council	3,500.00	07/03/2006		3,500.00			3,500.00					0.00	Fully paid	Street Lighting - Increase safety in the area		
Hundon Sports Association	1,500.00	07/12/2005		1,500.00	1,500.00							0.00	Fully paid	Install path around Multi-use games area - Improve safety		
Ixworth & Ixworth Thorpe Parish Council	5,000.00	07/03/2006		5,000.00			5,000.00					0.00	Fully paid	Regenerate former waste ground/chalk pit to form an Amenity /Wildlife area called Robin's Copse for the village		
Kedington Community Centre	3,865.00	03/08/2005		2,485.44	970.00		1,515.44					0.00	Fully paid	Improvements to Community Centre, including new guttering and fascia boards		
Total paid in 2005/06						4,723.00										
Budget 2005/06												50,000.00				
Budget Balance as at 31/03/06												45,277.00				
2006/07																
Bradfield St George Village Hall Committee	500.00	21/06/2006		500.00		500.00						0.00	Fully paid	Improvements to Village Hall		
Chedburgh Parish Council	945.00			945.00		945.00						0.00	Fully paid	Improvement to Access at the Erskine Centre		
Suffolk County Council	3,333.00			3,333.00		3,333.00						0.00	Fully paid	Contribution to Suffolk Rural Services Scheme		
Cowlinge Village Hall Committees	4,595.00	06/03/2007		4,595.00			4,595.00					0.00	Fully paid	Repair Hall Roof and increase the level of insulation		
Great & Little Whelmetham Parish Council	5,000.00	02/08/2006		5,000.00			5,000.00					0.00	Fully paid	Car Park adjacent to Village Green		
Great Barton Thanksgiving Fund	5,000.00	21/11/2006		5,000.00			5,000.00					0.00	Fully paid	Contribution towards Village Hall Refurbishment programme		
Great Livermere Parish Council	2,185.00	21/11/2006		2,185.00			2,185.00					0.00	Fully paid	Reinstallation of Parish pump		
Great Saxham PCC	5,000.00	21/11/2006		5,000.00			5,000.00					0.00	Fully paid	Creation of small meeting area (including improved heating, lighting & chairs) for all sections of the community		
Hargrave Parish Council	4,000.00	21/11/2006		4,000.00		4,000.00						0.00	Fully paid	Improvements to Village Hall		
Hundon Parish Council	5,000.00	06/03/2007		5,000.00			5,000.00					0.00	Fully paid	Improvements to Churchyard		
Stanton Parish Council	2,000.00	21/11/2006		2,000.00			2,000.00					0.00	Fully paid	New Tables and Chairs		
St Leonards Church, Wixoe	4,500.00	21/11/2006		4,500.00			4,500.00					0.00	Fully paid	Modernise and improve Electrical system, this included replacing heating system with a more economical one.		
Total paid in 2006/07						16,278.00										
Budget 2006/07												50,000.00				
Budget Balance as at 31/03/07												78,999.00				
2007/08																
Bardwell Playing Field Association Mgmt Comm	2,537.00	21/02/2008		2,537.00				2,537.00				0.00	Fully paid	Extension to existing storage shed at the playing fields		
Bradfield St Clare PC	500.00	24/04/2007		500.00		500.00						0.00	Fully paid	Purchase and install a bench for Pitcher's Green		
Clare Parish Council	800.00	11/03/2008		800.00				800.00				0.00	Fully paid	Design and purchase an interpretation board		
Culford Parish Council	3,000.00	11/09/2007		3,000.00			3,000.00					0.00	Fully paid	Install a footpath which links Brockley Corner to the main part of Culford		
Fakenham Magna Parish Council	5,000.00	24/04/2007		5,000.00			5,000.00					0.00	Fully paid	Provide new Bus Shelter (in the form of a lych gate)		
Friends Of Pakenham Windmill	3,275.00	18/03/2008		3,275.00					3,275.00			0.00	Fully paid	Windmill restoration works		
Hargrave Village Hall Management Committee	2,000.00	18/03/2008		2,000.00				2,000.00				0.00	Fully paid	Refurbishment of kitchen at village hall		
Horringer Community Council	850.00	26/10/2007		850.00			850.00					0.00	Fully paid	Purchase of new chairs for the village hall		
Kedington Community Association	2,887.50	18/12/2007		2,887.50				2,887.50				0.00	Fully paid	Replacement of Emergency Exit doors leading from main hall to patio area		
Ketton Early Birds Play Group	5,000.00	15/11/2007		5,000.00			5,000.00					0.00	Fully paid	Building for Playgroup		
Little Ouse Headwaters Project	5,000.00	31/08/2007		5,000.00				5,000.00				0.00	Fully paid	Purchase land to continue the Wildlife corridor by the Little Ouse		
Ousden Village Hall Committee	800.00	10/07/2007		800.00			800.00					0.00	Fully paid	Purchase safety surfacing for the play area		
Stanton Parish Council	3,490.00	11/09/2007		3,490.00			3,490.00					0.00	Fully paid	Purchase and install a Youyh shelter		
Stanton Woodland and Wildlife Action Group	5,000.00	14/05/2007		5,000.00			5,000.00					0.00	Fully paid	Purchase and establishment of a Community wood		
The Saxhams Parish Council	3,000.00	21/01/2008		3,000.00				3,000.00				0.00	Fully paid	Purchase Swings, Climbing Frame, Climbing net and Adventure trail.		
Thurlow Sports Club	3,700.00	23/10/2007		3,700.00			3,700.00					0.00	Fully paid	Purchase of a diesel ride-on triple mower		
Whepstead Parish Council	1,000.00	22/06/2007		1,000.00			1,000.00					0.00	Fully paid	Install public address and loop systems at the Community Centre		
Rural Shop Alliance	80.00			80.00			80.00					0.00	Fully paid			
Internal Transaction	287.91			287.91			287.91					0.00	Fully paid			
Total paid in 2007/08							72,003.35									
Budget 2007/08												50,000.00				
Budget Balance as at 31/03/08												56,995.65				
2008/09																
Brockley Cricket Club	1,380.00	24/04/2008		1,380.00				1,380.00				0.00	Fully paid	Erect a chain link fence around 2 sides of the cricket ground		
Hawstead Parish Council	217.00	17/04/2008		217.00				217.00				0.00	Fully paid	Refurbish Swings on Hawstead Green		
Coney Weston Parish Council	3,000.00	10/06/2008		3,000.00				3,000.00				0.00	Fully paid	Upgrade Village Play Area		
Thurlow Youth Cricket Club	475.00	26/06/2008		475.00				475.00				0.00	Fully paid	Purchase of new Tables and Chairs		
Withersfield Village Hall Management Comm	3,500.00	08/07/2008		3,500.00					3,500.00			0.00	Fully paid	Purchase of new Tables and Chairs		
Fornham All Saints Parish Council	2,250.00	12/08/2008		2,250.00				2,250.00				0.00	Fully paid	Extension of Footpath on Pigeon Lane		
Barrow Village Hall Management Committee	4,658.00	15/08/2008		4,658.00				4,658.00				0.00	Fully paid	To replace the Play Safety Surfacing		
Great Livermere Parish Council	2,214.00	07/10/2008		2,214.00					2,214.00			0.00	Fully paid	Street Lighting by the Community Centre		
Troston Parish Council	5,000.00	24/11/2008		5,000.00				5,000.00				0.00	Fully paid	Refurbish Village Playground		
Hepworth Parish Council	1,495.00	13/01/2009		1,495.00				1,495.00				0.00	Fully paid	Create Paved Area with 2 Benches and a interpretation board		
Horringer Parish Council	5,000.00	29/01/2009		5,000.00				5,000.00				0.00	Fully paid	Refurbishment of Car Park (Phase 2)		
Clare Duplicate Bridge Club	1,241.00	18/03/2009		1,241.00				1,241.00				0.00	Fully paid	Purchase of Bridge Handsets, Laptop & Screen		
Total paid in 2008/2009								40,940.50								
Budget 2008/09												50,000.00				
Budget Balance as at 31/03/09												66,055.15				
2009/10																
Bardwell Parish Council	1,208.00	30/04/2009		1,208.00					1,208.00			0.00	Fully paid	Various Play Equipment works (Fence, Safety Surface etc)		
Bardwell Parish Council	1,750.00	29/05/2009		1,750.00					1,750.00			0.00	Fully paid	Tithe Barn Improvements		
Barnham Village Hall	5,000.00	15/05/2009		5,000.00					5,000.00			0.00	Fully paid	Refurbishment Of Kitchen		
Lidgate Parish Council	1,767.63	07/05/2009		1,767.63					1,767.63			0.00	Fully paid	Improvements around Lidgate Pond		

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	Maximum	Date													
Horringer Baby & Toddler Group	500.00	24/07/2009		500.00						500.00		0.00	Fully paid	New Equipment	
Troston Parish Council	500.00	28/08/2009		500.00						500.00		0.00	Fully paid	Replace Goalposts/Nets on the Recreation Ground	
Ousden Village Hall Management Committee	3,000.00	26/10/2009		3,000.00						3,000.00		0.00	Fully paid	Provision of sheltered area (with Picnic Tables) on Playing Field	
Bardwell Parish Council	5,000.00	11/02/2010		5,000.00						5,000.00		0.00	Fully paid	Install a Cricket square on Playing Field	
Great Livermere Parish Council	1,585.00	28/01/2010		1,585.00						1,585.00		0.00	Fully paid	Multi-Play area on Playing Field for young people	
Total paid in 2009/2010										24,299.63					
Budget 2009/10												0.00			
Budget Balance as at 31/03/10												41,755.52			
2010/11															
Pakenham Parish Council	1,000.00	28/04/2010		1,000.00						1,000.00		0.00	Fully paid	Build Permanent Car Park at Village Playing Fields	
Barningham Parish Council	750.00	21/06/2010		750.00						750.00		0.00	Fully paid	Upgrade Emergency Lighting and Fire Alarm system	
Troston Parish Council	2,000.00	21/07/2010		2,000.00								2,000.00	O/S	Install aerial for the Childrens Play Area	
Stanton Community Village Hall Management	2,717.84	07/09/2010		2,717.84						2,717.84		0.00	Fully paid	Purchase Chairs, Tea Cups & Saucers for Village Hall	
Bardwell Parish Council	2,083.67	21/09/2010		2,083.67						2,083.67		0.00	Fully paid	Replace chairs and tables in the Tithe Barn	
Bardwell Parish Council	2,374.00	25/10/2010		2,374.00						1,833.50		540.50	O/S	Emergency work to protect the Tithe Barn from further water damage	
Horringer Cum Ickworth Parish Council	3,427.00	25/10/2010		3,427.00						3,427.00		0.00	Fully paid	Resurface the short access road from the A143 to the Community Centre	
Stanton Football Club	675.00	07/12/2010		675.00								675.00	O/S	Purchase good quality second-hand compact Tractor flail mower and front loader.	
Rougham Parish/Mouse Lane Committee	3,255.00	17/01/2011		3,255.00						3,255.00		0.00	Fully paid	Replacement of old and some new play equipment	
Total paid in 2010/2011										20,067.01					
Budget 2010/11												0.00			
Budget Balance as at 16/02/11												21,688.51			
Total committed													2,540.50		
Budget Balance uncommitted funds C792													19,148.01		
Total all grants				181,526.99	4,723.00	16,278.00	72,003.35	40,940.50	24,299.63	20,067.01			0.00		
Fund Summary															
Capital Funding		200,000.00													
Less Actuals															
2005/2006		4,723.00													
2006/2007		16,278.00													
2007/2008		72,003.35													
2008/2009		40,940.50													
2009/2010		24,299.63													
2010/2011		20,067.01													
		178,311.49													
Less Committed		2,540.50													
Uncommitted Balance @ 16/02/11		19,148.01													