

## **ST EDMUNDSBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **GRANT WORKING PARTY**

#### **Minutes of a meeting held on Wednesday 5 February 2014 at 5.00 pm in Room GFR13, West Suffolk House, Western Way, Bury St Edmunds**

PRESENT: Councillors A D Rushen (Chairman)  
Councillors Clifton-Brown, Houlder, Redhead, Spicer  
(substituting for Mrs Broughton), and Thorndyke

BY INVITATION: Councillor Everitt, Portfolio Holder for Communities  
Councillor Mrs Mildmay-White, Portfolio Holder for Sport  
and Health and Wellbeing

#### **9. Substitutes**

The following substitution was declared:

Councillor Spicer substituting for Councillor Mrs Broughton.

#### **10. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs Broughton and French.

#### **11. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2013 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### **12. Declarations of Interests**

Members' declarations of interests are recorded under the item to which the declaration relates.

#### **13. Arts and Sports Revenue Support Grants**

*(Councillor Spicer declared a local non-pecuniary interest as a Friend of the Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds and remained in the meeting for the consideration of this item.)*

The Working Party considered Report E263 (previously circulated) which sought approval for a number of core funding grants for arts and sports organisations.

Report E263 contained details of future core funding for the following organisations:

- (a) Victory Sports Ground, Bury St Edmunds;
- (b) Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds; and
- (c) Smith's Row Art Gallery.

Section 4 provided a brief background to the funding awarded by the Borough Council to each of the above organisations in previous years and the level of support recommended to be provided in 2014/2015 and onwards.

Each application for funding was considered in turn, as follows:

**(a) Victory Sports Ground, Bury St Edmunds**

Pending the redevelopment of the Victory Sports Ground, the Cabinet had agreed that the revenue support grant of £45,250 should remain in place as the organisation did not have the ability to generate new income until the facilities were open. Thereafter, it had been determined that a new agreement would be negotiated, based on sustainable decreases in funding year on year. Members noted that the sports hall had now been open for two months and it was very encouraging that community groups were starting to use the facility.

Discussion was held on whether the grant should be reduced for 2014/2015 now the building work was complete; however, the majority of Members agreed that whilst the redevelopment had been completed, operations were still in their infancy and it was important that a client base was embedded with the aim of the facility to become more self supporting. It was also acknowledged that the facility was currently being run by a small team of volunteers so it was important that support remained at the present time.

In response to a question, the Working Party was informed that the Victory Sports Ground grant would be reduced from 2015/2016 which would result in the grant ceasing completely in a number of years. The organisation was aware that the grant would be depleted in due course but operational support would be provided to the organisation by the Council and other partners during this transitional period.

*(Councillor Mrs Mildmay-White left the meeting at the conclusion of the discussion on the Victory Sports Ground.)*

**(b) Theatre Royal**

The Working Party considered the recommendation was acceptable and considered that the sharing of a box office with The Apex should be progressed.

A typographical error was identified in respect of the proposed grant to be awarded to the Theatre Royal for 2014/2015. The figure should have read £71,250 and not £71,750 as printed. This accurately still reflected the proposed 5% reduction in grant for the forthcoming financial year.

**(c) Smith's Row Art Gallery, Bury St Edmunds**

The Working Party supported the recommendation of providing a grant of £34,485 for 2014/2015 and for a review to be undertaken to determine the level of support in the medium term. A discussion was held on how the organisation linked to the Council's emerging strategic priorities and its role in providing educational support for schools.



**RECOMMENDED: That**

- (1) Victory Sports Ground, Bury St Edmunds be awarded a £45,250 revenue support grant for 2014/2015 and a review be undertaken to produce a funding agreement from 2015/2016 based on year on year reductions which over a number of years will result in the grant ceasing, as outlined in Section 4.2 of Report E263;**
- (2) Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds be awarded a revenue support grant of £71,250 for 2014/2015 and a review be undertaken to determine grant support in the medium term, as outlined in Section 4.3 of Report E263; and**
- (3) Smith's Row Art Gallery, Bury St Edmunds be awarded a revenue support grant of £34,485 for 2014/2015 and a review be undertaken to determine the level of support in the medium term, as outlined in Section 4.4 of Report E263.**

**14. Rural Initiatives Grant Scheme: Application Form and Grant Scoring Matrix**

*(With the agreement of the Chairman, the following item was considered as a matter of urgency, in accordance with S100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, in order that the matter could be considered within the necessary timescale)*

The Working Party considered a verbal report which sought a steer on proposed revisions to the Rural Initiatives Grant Scheme application form and accompanying Grant Scoring Matrix.

The Families and Communities Manager tabled a revised application form, which was provided to applicants that were applying for funding for capital projects between £250 and £10,000 under the Rural Initiatives Grant Scheme.

At the last meeting on 5 December 2013, a suggestion had been made for a simplified version of the matrix or a similar document to be produced to provide Members with a clear understanding of whether sufficient eligibility criteria had been met together with enough background information to help determine the application via the approved email voting system. In addition, the application form itself was to be revised and simplified, as considered appropriate. This had now taken place and the revised application form, together with a Grant Scoring Matrix was tabled for consideration.

The revised application form was generally supported; however, the following initial amendments were identified:

- (a) under the headed section '*What support do you have from your local Parish Council?*,' and where it asks '*Do they support the project in principle?*', the following additional phrase was required to be added, '*if not, why not?*' In addition, the sentence '*Are they providing any*

*financial support for the project? Yes/No,* a request was made for this to be deleted as reference was made in the table below;

- (b) within the table which asked applicants to detail their sources of funding, the words '*Match funding from*' be inserted before the words '*organisations' own funds*' so that it read '*Match funding from organisations' own funds*';
- (c) a column indicating the total amount that was applied for but not actually confirmed was requested to be inserted within this table to fully illustrate the funding gap; and
- (d) a summary of the relevant Ward Member's supporting statement should also be included within the form.

Discussion was then held on the email voting system where clarification was sought on the types of situations when Substitute Members' votes would be taken into account when determining an application.

A revised version of the application form and Grant Scoring Matrix would be emailed to Members for further comment. Comments were required to be returned to the Families and Communities Manager by the end of February 2014. Once Members were satisfied with the new layout, the Families and Communities Manager would, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Working Party, put the new measures into operation for the consideration of future applications under this grant scheme.

RESOLVED: That:

- (1) the re-drafted application form and Grant Scoring Matrix for the Rural Initiatives Grant Scheme (RIGS), as tabled at the meeting of the Grant Working Party on 5 February 2014, be amended to incorporate the suggestions detailed in Minute 14 above; and
- (2) following final comments received by Members of the Working Party by 28 February 2014, the Families and Communities Manager, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Grant Working Party, be given delegated authority to approve and commence the immediate use of a revised version of the RIGS' application form and Grant Scoring Matrix.

*(Councillor Everitt left the meeting during the consideration of this item.)*

The meeting concluded 6.05 pm.

**MRS A D RUSHEN  
CHAIRMAN**