



Grant Working Party 5 February 2014

Arts and Sport Revenue Support Grants

1. Summary and reasons for recommendations

- 1.1 As advised at the Grant Working Party meeting on 5 December 2013, discussions were still underway in relation to core funding in respect of the Theatre Royal, Smith's Row/Bury St Edmunds Art Gallery and the Victory Sports Ground. This report brings to the Working Party recommendations in respect of future funding for each of those organisations.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is **RECOMMENDED** that subject to the budget setting process for 2014/2015:
- (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 £71,750 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.

Contact details

Name
Title

Telephone
E-mail

Portfolio holders

Sara Mildmay-White
Portfolio Holder for Health
and Wellbeing, and Sport
01359 270580
[sara.mildmay-
white@stedsbc.gov.uk](mailto:sara.mildmay-white@stedsbc.gov.uk)

Lead officer

Neil Anthony
Head of Leisure, Culture and
Communities
01284 757064
neil.anthony@westsuffolk.gov.uk

Sarah Stamp
Portfolio Holder for Heritage,
Arts and Culture
01284 769360
sarah.stamp@stedsbc.gov.uk

3. Corporate priorities

3.1 The recommendations meet the following, as contained within the Corporate Plan:

- (a) Corporate Priority 1: *'Working together for strong, healthy and diverse communities.'*

4. Key issues

4.1 Funding Available

4.1.1 Previous decision making in relation to the revenue grants below has not made any assumptions about reductions to the grants. However, while the previous amounts remain available to award, officers have been in discussion with each of the organisations about the budgetary pressures faced by the Council and the need to review working practices to achieve efficiencies.

4.2 Victory Sports Ground, Bury St Edmunds

4.2.1 The Grant Working Party last considered the annual revenue support grant for the Victory Sports Ground in December 2011. At that time, a consortium comprising the Victory Sports Ground (Bury St Edmunds) Ltd, South Lees School and the Bury St Edmunds Cricket Club were working with the Borough Council and users to secure the redevelopment of the site.

4.2.2 Pending that redevelopment the Cabinet had agreed that the revenue grant of £45,250 remain in place as the clubs did not have the ability to generate new income until the facilities were open. Thereafter, a new agreement would be negotiated, based on sustainable decreases in funding year on year.

4.2.3 The Sports Hall has now been open for two months and it is very encouraging that Community Groups are starting to use the facility. The scheme has primarily been developed through very skilful and talented volunteer effort. They is a clear understanding that the grant will need to be reduced in future years.

4.3 Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds

4.3.1 For 2012/2013 and 2013/2014 an award of £75,000 per year has been made to the Theatre Royal. The funding was provided in the knowledge that the Theatre has been successful in retaining some Arts Councils core funding, albeit at reduced levels, and that it had increased the numbers attending events and had an effective programme of outreach work taking performances out to villages.

4.3.2 Members of the Working Party will be aware that during the last two years a range of discussions have been held with the Theatre Royal to explore closer working relationships. These discussions did not result in any changes which produce savings. However, over recent months the Theatre Royal has

addressed a number of internal issues. A new Leadership Team is now in place and officers believe the prospects for partnership working with the Borough Council and more widely are now much improved. As a result, officers recommend that whilst fresh discussions are taken, the Council should continue to provide a revenue grant, but at a 5% reduction to the previous award, ie a grant of £71,750. During 2014/2015 a review will be carried out in partnership with the other funders, the Arts Council and Suffolk County Council to determine grant support in the medium term. The willingness to engage in partnership working will be a factor in that review.

4.4 Smith's Row Art Gallery, Bury St Edmunds

4.4.1 For 2012/2013 and 2013/2014, the Council has provided a revenue support grant of £36,300. The two-year funding agreement was made after the Gallery lost its Art Council core funding. Since then the Gallery, which is also a registered charity, has sought a variety of project funding to continue its work. Both the Borough and County Councils provided two year funding agreements to the Gallery to provide some stability and help the Gallery demonstrate to other potential sources of funding that there was still support from local funders.

4.4.2 As well as providing access to art for local people, both from the current venue and via travelling exhibitions and out-reach, the Art Gallery has a role to play as part of the visitor attraction for the town. Officers believe it is appropriate to continue to support the Gallery, but with a 5% reduction in the level of funding which would produce a revenue grant for 2014/2015 of 34,485. During 2014/2015 officers would conduct a funding review to include the Arts Council and Suffolk County Council to determine the level of support in the medium term. The Council is keen to see the access to works of art maintained and would wish to see future funding focussed on this outcome, rather than infrastructure costs.

5. Other options considered

5.1 The Council has historically provided revenue grants to a number of arts and sport organisations but is not required by any duty to do so.

6. Community impact, including health and well-being impact

6.1.1 Any funds awarded would have a positive impact on the community as they support local access to sport, theatre and the arts. Sports and arts activities stimulate the interest of local people, provide a reason for them to get out of their houses and an opportunity to socialise. All things which help promote wellbeing and so have a positive impact on the health of our communities.

6.2 Crime and disorder impact *(including Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998)*

6.2.1 No adverse impact.

6.3 Diversity and equality impact *(including the findings of the Equality Impact Assessment)*

6.3.1 Part of the funding criteria is that groups funded should have an equalities policy.

6.4 **Sustainability impact** (including completing a Sustainability Impact Assessment)

6.4.1 No adverse impact anticipated.

7. **Consultation** (what consultation has been undertaken, and what were the outcomes?)

7.1 Internal consultation and discussion with individual organisations and the portfolio holders.

8. **Financial and resource implications** (including asset management implications)

8.1 All the applications received can be accommodated within the budget.

8.2 At its meeting in December 2013, the Grant Working Party noted that the adoption by full Council of the Families and Communities Strategy provides a new framework for the way the Councils engage with communities and deploy their limited funding. As a result, St Edmundsbury's Grant Policy will be reviewed in the light of that strategy.

9. **Risk/opportunity assessment** (potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)

Risk area	Inherent level of risk (before controls)	Controls	Residual risk (after controls)
That organisations funded are unable to provide the service detailed in the application so the benefit of those services is lost to the community	Medium	Officers will be working with each of the organisations to review future funding and sustainability.	Low

10. **Legal and policy implications**

10.1 None

11. **Wards affected**

11.1 All

12. **Background papers**

12.1 Report C252 to Grant Working Party: 2012/2013 Core Funding Applications from Voluntary Organisations – 6 December 2011

Report C253 to Grant Working Party: Grants or Management Fees for Former Council Leisure Services – 6 December 2011