
REPORT TO:	Housing and Community Services Committee	AGENDA ITEM: 12
DATE OF MEETING:	09 October 2003	CATEGORY:
REPORT FROM:	Head of Community Services	RECOMMENDED OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	M Roseburgh	DOC:
SUBJECT:	Community Partnerships Scheme	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	All	TERMS OF REFERENCE: CS07

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 That members consider the recommendations of the Community Partnerships Scheme Assessment Panel and award grants totalling £26,195 to Burton YMCA and Linton Parochial Church Council Brick Room management committee.
- 1.2 That members agree to the proposal for a mini review of the operation of the scheme since it's reintroduction in 2002/2003. This would accompany the scheduled report to the February 2004 Housing and Community Services committee following the third meeting of the assessment panel.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To update members on applications for funding received by the Community Partnerships Scheme. Further, to seek approval for recommendations from the assessment panel for both awards from the scheme and for a mini review of the scheme to follow the panels next meeting.

3.0 Executive Summary

- 3.1 The Community Partnership Scheme for 2003/04 is continuing according to the same processes and procedures as was agreed when the scheme was launched last year except for an increase in budget to £150,000 and extra panel meetings to allow for distribution of the grants across the year. In addition to allocating grant the scheme allows for funding advice and project development support to the voluntary and community sector.
- 3.2 In total six applications were received for the second bidding round asking for approximately £70,000 against a budget for the year of £150,000 and a remaining budget, following round 1 awards and with one further round scheduled, of £100,605. One application was withdrawn at the last minute, as funds were available from an alternative source. The panel assessed and ranked the remaining applications according to the criteria and has made a recommendation to fund two of the five projects. In addition to considering the scores at this round the panel needed to bear in mind other factors such as scores from previous and future applicants, the overall budget, the development stage of projects and quality of information received.

Consequently two awards are recommended, one for the full amount requested and one for 25% of the total project costs as allowed by the schemes rules. Two other projects are to be reconsidered at the next panel meeting and the remaining project is to be invited to resubmit and offered support in the application process. In addition following general consideration of the effectiveness of the scheme it was recommended that a mini-review should accompany the final panel meeting.

4.0 Detail

- 4.1 A revamped Community Partnerships Scheme was re-launched midway through 2002/03 offering capital grants of up to £25,000 to projects brought forward from the voluntary and community sector. As part of the re-launch it was agreed that an assessment panel should be set up comprising the Partnership Development Officer and three Councillors. Further this panel would assess projects against set criteria and then make recommendations about grant distribution to the Committee. Following the first and only meeting of the panel last year the Housing and Community Services Committee in February 2003 approved grants amounting to £50,000 to six projects from a total of nine applications received.
- 4.2 The amount of grant available for distribution through the Scheme has since been increased from £50,000 in 2002/03 to £150,000 in 2003/04. This increase in grant, the number of projects registering an interest in the scheme and the development stage of some of the projects meant three evenly spaced meetings of the assessment panel were scheduled for the year in May, September and January.
- 4.3 In addition to simply operating a grants programme the Community Partnership Scheme through the Partnership Development Officer is also able to offer some advice in relation to making funding applications, sources of funding and project development. Further in some instances the officer is able to offer limited direct project development support.
- 4.4 In the period since the June committee the Partnership Development Officer has received a further 22 enquiries from different groups about the scheme. Responses have ranged from merely signposting to other funders or sending out forms to site meetings and more intensive project development support
- 4.5 The applications received for this meeting of the panel are a combination of projects resubmitting having had some project development support, projects that have received some advice or support and projects that have seen publicity about the scheme and simply requested a form.
- 4.6 In brief applications were received from six organisations as follows:
 - Burton YMCA – for a minibus to support their furniture project in South Derbyshire (Requesting £3,750)
 - Findern Parish Council - for renovations to the Parish Rooms (Requesting £25,000)
 - Brick Room Management Committee Linton - for improvements to the church based community facility (Requesting £25,000)
 - Melbourne Methodist Church – for provision of a youth facility (Requesting £10,000)
 - Staunton Harold Sailing Club - for training boats and windsurfing (Requesting £6,000)
 - Shardlow Parish Council – for improvements to play areas

(Requesting £2,099)

4.7 Further details of the projects have been summarised in Appendix 1.

4.8 The Community Partnerships Scheme Assessment Panel met on September 10th and scored the applications against the questions and weightings previously agreed during the relaunch of the scheme and attached as Appendix 2. The weighted criteria include links with corporate priorities, sustainability, value of other contributions, value for money, community involvement, risk and commitment to equal opportunities.

The table below illustrates the weighted scores from the appraisals, the total score and the ranking. The application from Shardlow Parish Council was not scored. The reason for this was that following discussions between the Partnership Development Officer and C Mason it became apparent that there was an equivalent amount to that requested available and earmarked for Shardlow available from a Leisure Services budget. The Parish Council were contacted and agreed to withdraw their application in light of this information,

Project	Council Priorities	External Funding	Sustain-ability	Community Involvement	Value for Money	Risk	Equal Opps	Total	Rank
Burton YMCA	1.00	1.33	2.17	1.67	1.00	0.50	0.50	8.17	1
Findern Parish Rooms	0.50	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.33	0.33	0.00	3.17	5
Linton "Rickman's Corner"	0.50	1.33	2.00	1.33	0.67	0.33	0.33	6.50	2
Melbourne Youth Facility	0.50	1.33	1.17	1.00	0.33	0.17	0.17	4.67	3=
Staunton Harold Sailing Club	0.50	0.67	2.00	0.33	0.67	0.33	0.17	4.67	3=

4.9 With the scoring completed the assessment panel then considered how best to distribute grants, particularly bearing in mind that a third and final round of applications was scheduled for January. The panel took into consideration a number of factors, first and foremost the scores attained through the assessment process but also judgements about how the applications scored in comparison to previous applications, whether the projects were time critical, whether awards could be scaled down, whether projects could be usefully deferred or resubmitted pending further information and whether special conditions should be attached.

4.10 As a result of these deliberations the panel's recommendations were as follows. That the top-scoring project (Burton YMCA) should receive a full award. That the second highest scoring project (Linton Brick Rooms) should receive a full award downscaled from £25,000 to £22,445 to fit in with the scheme's eligibility criteria of awarding up to 25% of total project costs.

4.11 At this point the panel had awarded approximately half of the years resources (£75,590) with a scheduled final round of applications to come. It was therefore

considered prudent and fair not to make any other awards at this point but to take the following course of action. That the scores of the Melbourne Athenaeum and Staunton Harold Sailing Club projects be reconsidered at the next panel meeting alongside those of new and existing applications and in light of the available budget. They would also be invited to supply a project update at the time of the panel meeting.

4.12 In the case of Findern Parish Council the Panel felt they should be offered some additional support with their applications should they wish to resubmit.

4.13 The panel's recommendation for distribution of grant following receipt of the second round of applications this financial year is therefore as follows:

Burton YMCA	£3,750
Linton Brick Room Management Committee	£22,445

4.14 When committee has agreed the allocation of resources both projects will be contacted and informed of the decision. Successful projects will then have 12 months in which to spend their award. If the grant is not spent within this time period then applicants will need to reapply unless otherwise agreed. Grant payments will be released upon receipt of invoices or independently certified completion reports. The projects will also be monitored to ensure that the aims and objectives of the project have been met.

4.15 In addition to making recommendations for the allocation of grant the panel also considered the overall effectiveness of the scheme in relation to processes, technicalities and eligibility. Some suggestions for minor improvements were made in light of the panels experience at its 3 meetings since the schemes reintroduction. Further it felt a mini review of the scheme should be held and reported on alongside the final meeting of the panel in this financial year. In addition to examining the processes it was felt the mini-review should also look at statistics relating to the nature and volume of applications and attempt to draw out any lessons for future years of the scheme.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 The award of grants falls within the Community Partnerships budget allocation.

6.0 Corporate Implications

6.1 The scheme contributes to a number of the Council's key aims including safeguarding and enhancing the natural and built environment, promoting the health and welfare of all sections of the community, managing resources efficiently and effectively and supporting the development of the National Forest. In addition each individual project's impact on corporate priorities has been assessed as part of the appraisal process.

7.0 Community Implications

7.1 The scheme maximises funding available for community investment by providing both direct funding and enabling leverage from other funding sources. It also continues to offer a direct line of communication with the voluntary and community sector that had been lost since the demise of the former Community Partnership Scheme.

7.2 The impact on the community and amount of community involvement in each individual project has been assessed as part of the appraisal process.

8.0 Conclusions

8.1 The reintroduced Community Partnerships Scheme continues to provide the District Council with an excellent means to support a variety of community partners in improving the quality of life for local residents. It also enables the community partners to lever in additional external funding to the district.

9.0 Background Papers

9.1 File: CPS – Returned applications and assessments 2003/04

