

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: New Communities Portfolio Holder 1 September 2009
AUTHOR/S: Executive Director (Operational Services) / Corporate Manager
(New Communities)

COMMUNITY FACILITY GRANT APPLICATION WATERBEACH PARISH COUNCIL

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to recommend a grant of £40,000 (10% of the total project costs) to Waterbeach Parish Council towards a new Youth and Community building. The total budget for 2009/10 is £100,000, and £66,149 is available to spend.

This is not a key decision as it is within policy and budget and it was first published in the June 2009 Forward Plan.

Background

2. Waterbeach is a large village with a population of approximately 4800. It currently has no village hall or community centre. Activities and meetings take place at a number of venues but the need for a more central meeting place was identified in the recent village survey (2007).
3. The low level of vandalism and antisocial behaviour in the village is mainly attributed to the excellent work done by the Youth Club, which is administered by Waterbeach & Landbeach Action for Youth (WAY), a registered charity. It is held up in the district as a model of good practice, and has 250 members, with about 40-50 attending each session, which is held 3 evenings a week. During school holidays there are also afternoon sessions, as well as drop-in sessions offering advice and guidance on various issues. The present meeting place for the Youth Club is the old sports pavilion and a portacabin, which is nearing the end of its life, and is not fully secure.
4. In addition to the requirement for the Youth Club, Parish surveys carried out in 2001 and 2007 both identified a demand for a community owned facility, which would enable a much wider range of activities to take place, as well as offer a secure place for meetings and private functions. A number of new user groups would also make use of the new facility.
5. Waterbeach Parish Council has received quotes from 5 companies to perform the main construction works and 3 are being asked to tender. The estimated total costs are £400,000.
6. The Parish council has agreed to provide £15,000 towards the project and an anonymous donation of £100,000 has been offered. Applications have been made to various grant-aiding bodies, particularly Young Lives (£100,000), WREN (£50,000), Donarbon (£10,000). A further £50,000 from Young Lives may be available for equipment and furnishings, and some funds (maximum £50,000 may be available from the Big Lottery Fund Community Sustainable Energy Programme.

This gives a possible total capital fund of £325,000 for the build and £50,000 for equipment and furnishings.

Considerations

7. The building will be located on the recreation ground and planning permission has already been received. It will be owned and initially managed by the Parish Council although it is anticipated that a charitable trust may be set up to manage it in the future. It is anticipated that an annual sum would be set aside in a reserve fund for any major repairs/maintenance works. The Parish Council will continue to raise money through the local precept.

Options

8. To award the recommended grant level, to award a greater or lesser amount, or to not to offer a grant.

Implications

9. Obviously the no-grant option would seriously put back the project and the ability of the village to raise a similar amount of capital may not be possible in the future. The recommended grant level will enable the project to be delivered.

10. Financial	Capital Funds – within budget
Legal	None
Staffing	None
Risk Management	No risk to SCDC
Equal Opportunities	The new facility will enhance equal opportunities within the village

Consultations

11. The residents of Waterbeach have been consulted, with surveys performed in 2001 and 2007, and very few adverse comments have been received towards the proposed facility. The Youth Group has been extensively consulted, with many ideas coming from the members.
12. The local District Councillors, James Hockney and Peter Johnson, have been consulted and are both very supportive of the project.

Councillor Johnson's comments are – "I have been involved with this project from 2007 when I attended an AGM of the WAY project, it was at this point it was recognised that a new building was needed so that the good work that has been done could continue. This is such a wonderful project and so needed by the community that I give it my fullest backing and I recommend that the maximum amount be awarded to this application."

Councillor Hockney's comment is – "I fully support the grant bid for a Youth/Community building in Waterbeach. It is clear that there is a real need for this building, as Waterbeach has no village hall or community. In addition the current youth club building is no longer adequate for the needs of the village."

Effect on Strategic Aims

13.	Commitment to being a listening council, providing first class services accessible to all.
	Providing a grant to a village project.
	Commitment to ensuring that South Cambridgeshire continues to be a safe and healthy place for all.
	Providing a grant to construct a new village hall will enhance community cohesion and encourage community and recreational activity.
	Commitment to making South Cambridgeshire a place in which residents can feel proud to live.
	The new village hall will add to the amenities of the village and has been clearly identified as a local need through village surveys.
	Commitment to assisting provision for local jobs for all.
The new village hall may offer job/volunteer opportunities.	
Commitment to providing a voice for rural life.	
The new village hall will offer a meeting place for local groups to discuss local matters.	

Conclusions / Summary

14. The village of Waterbeach is greatly in need of a single community building to accommodate the growing Youth Club and number of user groups wishing to hold activities and meetings within the village in a clean, safe and secure environment.
15. Officers have been kept well informed about this project and have been out on site to discuss the proposals with the applicants and the Youth Leaders. The project has been well managed and is the result of a considerable amount of hard work and co-operation locally. The project is a high priority for Waterbeach and is deliverable with work expected to start in 2009.

Recommendations

15. To provide a grant of £40,000 (10% of the total project costs) towards the costs of a new Youth and Community building at Waterbeach.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

Capital Grant Application Form and accompanying information.

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