

Bradford on Avon Area Board

Note of Grants Advisory Group, 28 February 2011

Present: Bil Bailey, Limpley Stoke Parish Council
Matthew Midlane, Monkton Farleigh Parish Council
Alan Mines, Wingfield Parish Council
Peter Dunford, Bradford on Avon Community Area Manager (secretary)

Apologies: Terry Biles, Westwood Parish Council

A note was given to PD, prepared by the Advisory Group members, outlining the current processes and procedures for the group. PD to advise of any revisions needed to the note.

It was agreed that PD would prepare an 'end of year report' on the grants awarded in 2010/11 in time for the May 2011 meeting of the Board and this could include a statement by the Advisory Group on the success or otherwise of how they perceive the grant and decision making processes have operated to date.

Community Area Grant Applications:

- i) Bradford on Avon Town Council – £ 2, 798 sought for Hanging Baskets
 - Concern whether the 3 quotes received are sufficiently competitive, the proposed price coming in at approx. £ 100 per basket.
 - Is this good value for money when the flowers will only be in bloom for maybe 5 months of the year ?
 - The Town Council is showing reserves of over £ 200,000 so why can it not fully fund this project ?
 - This could only be one-off support, not recurring year on year

- ii) Bradford on Avon Community Partnership - £ 2, 492 sought for Come and Try it Sporting Activities
 - There seems to be no costing provision for first aid or health and safety arrangements e.g. St John Ambulance
 - The in kind 'time' contribution of £ 2,000 is high compared to the secured cash contribution of £ 1,500
 - The Advisory Group was generally supportive of this initiative

- iii) Holt Parish Council - £ 2, 825 sought for the Tannery Development Brief
- The background history to the site and application is insufficiently clear. What are the details of the Section 106 developer contribution ?
 - The owner of the site in question does not appear to be a signatory to this participatory process
 - Concern was raised that this might well be an exercise with a predetermined political objective, and not a *bona fide* planning consultation for which other mechanisms exist, and so might be embargoed as an improper use of public money. The views of the County's Monitoring Officer are sought on the legitimacy of this application.
 - The views of planning officers are sought reference proposed changes in spatial planning policy and the timing of this application – is it premature ?
 - The Grants Advisory Group's view is that the Grants system was not designed to provide funding to aid and support campaigns of pressure groups such as described in this project. The claim that 1640 people will benefit from this project is also highly questionable as confirmed by discreet enquiries made within the area. Noting the comments of the Spatial Planning Officer, the obvious questions to ask are why the developers have not submitted a planning application in the normal way and have they been urged to do so by Holt Parish Council?
- iv) Bradford on Avon Development Trust/ Bradford on Avon Town Council /Climate Friendly Bradford - £ 7, 100 sought for the BoA 2026 study
- The cost of the proposed exercise was felt to be high, above the normal grant award threshold of £ 5,000
 - The objectives of the exercise were felt to be rather unclear
 - The views of planning officers are sought reference proposed changes in spatial planning policy and the timing of this application – is it premature ?
 - If policies are changing this expenditure could be wasted money
 - The Grants Advisory Group's view is the Grants system does not exist to aid this type of project. In view of the comments made by both the Spatial Planning and Economic Development Officers, we believe that, given the doubts expressed and at this particular time, the application as it stands should be rejected.
- v) Walkers Are Welcome - £ 708 sought for a launch event
- It was noted Bradford on Avon had now been confirmed as the first town in Wiltshire with 'Walkers are Welcome' status. This application would therefore be focusing on launching and celebrating this designation
 - The Advisory Group was generally supportive of this initiative

Comments received by Technical Officers

Principal Property and Planning Solicitor

Tannery Site, Holt

I can see nothing about this application which gives me concern that there is any illegality; on the contrary a development brief would be very much in line with the current spatial planning legislative regime and with the proposed changes to it under the Localism Bill, particularly in relation to proposals for neighbourhood planning.

Spatial Planning Officer

i) Tannery Site, Holt

The spatial planning team would support the use of an Enquiry by Design process at this site. However, we would encourage the Parish Council to prepare some form of 'design guide' rather than a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). A formal consultation led by Wiltshire Council is required before an SPD can be adopted, and the spatial planning team does not currently have the necessary resources to commit to this process.

ii) Bradford on Avon 2026 Study

The spatial planning team supports the proposal for a local planning initiative in Bradford on Avon. However, given the current state of change in the planning system, we would suggest that it would be best not to pre-determine the outcome of this process. As such, it may be better not to specify at this stage that the initiative would lead to a 'town plan' or a Supplementary Planning Document. We would suggest that the project should instead focus on undertaking a 'vision and scoping' exercise at present: the results of this 'vision and scoping' exercise could then inform the appropriate way forward.

The application refers to the timetable for adoption of the Wiltshire Core Strategy on p.1: this timetable has now been revised, and an updated timetable is available on our website at: www.wiltshire.gov.uk/wiltshirecorestrategy

The application at the moment clearly states that the objective is to prepare a Supplementary Planning Document. It might therefore be necessary to revisit the project plan (the five-stage process) and budget if the project is to instead focus on a vision and scoping study. However, I would emphasise that the spatial planning team are supportive of the principle of local-level planning in Bradford on Avon.

I would be happy to talk with Gerald Milward-Oliver about a revised application if that would be helpful (I think he has previously had some discussions with Andrew Maxted about these ideas and I'm sure Andrew would also be happy to discuss further).

Economic Development Officer

i) Tannery Site, Holt

I have no difficulty in offering full support for the application from Holt Parish Council, particularly as the majority of the funding being sought is to come from the private sector. Holt very much needs the opportunity to collect its own thoughts so that future development proposals can be viewed in the light of the results of the Enquiry by Design process.

ii) **Bradford on Avon 2026 Study**

I have a number of points to make in relation to the application from the **Bradford on Avon Development Trust**.

1. The application is not quite correct in that West Wiltshire Enterprise has yet to effect the name change to Mid Wiltshire Enterprise.
2. WWE has agreed to make a grant towards the cost of producing a Town Plan for Bradford on Avon, but that is on the basis that there is general agreement that the Development Trust is the appropriate body to undertake this project.
3. WWE would need to be assured that the Town Council, The Community Area Partnership and Wiltshire Council's spatial planners were fully supportive of the initiative.
4. The proposed content and timing of the Plan process should be agreed with the spatial planners to ensure that it fits in with the development of the Core Strategy and LDF.
5. WWE would also need assurances that the three organisations named in 3 above had seats at the table of the steering group that will make the essential decisions about the progress of the project.
6. MWE/WWE would also want to be closely involved in the process.
7. Good models for the composition of a steering group can be found in similar projects being undertaken in Warminster, Westbury and through Transforming Trowbridge.

Sports Development Officer

Come and Try It Sporting Activities

I support the application having been involved in the planning for the initiative and know that there is good community support for it too. The Council will also be running an alternative sports event at St Laurence School on the Sunday of the Festival and will be supporting the Triathlon as an Olympic Legacy event.