

<b>Report to</b>	<b>Bradford on Avon Area Board</b>	<b>Agenda Item No.11</b>
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>11 May 2011</b>	
<b>Title of Report</b>	<b>Community Area Grants</b>	

## **Purpose of Report**

**To ask Councillors to consider 2 applications seeking 2011/12 Community Area Grant Funding:**

- 1. Staverton Parish Council – new footpath in play area in School Lane to give access to disabled persons in wheelchairs and to parents with prams to access a swing suitable for disabled children - requesting £ 980**

**The officer recommendation is that the application is refused as ineligible under the new grants criteria for 2011/12, which does not allow for the funding of local projects for which town and parish councils have the statutory duty and powers to fund through the Precept.**

- 2. Bradford on Avon Arts Festival 2011 - requesting £ 1, 500**

**The officer recommendation is that a reduced sum of £ 1, 175 is awarded to the Bradford on Avon Arts Festival 2011 to reflect the ineligibility of contributions towards cash prizes and contingency costs. As this is an annual event and recurring expenditure cannot be supported, this would need to be a one-off funding contribution.**

## 1. Background

- 1.1 Area Boards have authority to approve Community Area Grants under powers delegated to them by the Deputy Leader and Cabinet member for Community Services (27 February 2010). Under the Scheme of Delegation Area Boards must adhere to the Area Board Grants Guidance for funding.
- 1.2 In accordance with the Scheme of Delegation, any decision of an Area Board that is contrary to the funding criteria and/or the officer's recommendation would need to demonstrate that the application in question has a wider community benefit, and give specific reasons as to why this should justify an exception to the criteria.
- 1.3 In accordance with the Area Board Grants Guidance, officers are required to provide recommendations in their report, however the decision to support applications and to what level is made by Wiltshire Councillors on this Area Board.
- 1.4 Bradford on Avon Area Board has been allocated a budget in 2011/2012 of £47,110 for community grants, community partnership core funding and councillor led initiatives. The carry forward from the 2010/2011 budget is £12,142. This gives a total budget of £59,252 for the 2011/2012 financial year. It will not be possible for unspent monies at 31/03/12 to be rolled forward into the budget for the 2012/13 financial year.
- 1.5 It has been decided that paper copies of funding applications will no longer appear as part of the agenda in an attempt to reduce the volume of paper used. However, the application forms will be available on the Wiltshire Council website and hard copies will be available upon request.
- 1.6 The 2011/2012 funding criteria and application forms are available on the Council's website ([www.wiltshire.gov.uk/areaboards](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/areaboards)) and paper versions are available from the Community Area Manager.

<b>Background documents used in the preparation of this Report</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Community Area Grant Application Pack 2011/12</b></li><li>• <b>Bradford on Avon Community Area Plan</b></li><li>• <b>Wiltshire Local Area Agreement</b></li><li>• <b>Report of Grant Advisory Group</b></li><li>• <b>Technical Officer reports</b></li></ul>
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## 2 Main Considerations

- 2.1 Councillors will need to be satisfied that grants awarded in the 2011/12 year are made to projects that can realistically proceed within a year of the award being made.
- 2.2 There will be 6 rounds of funding during 2011/12, this being the first round.

### 3 Environmental & Community Implications

3.1 Community Area Grants will contribute to the continuance and/or improvement of cultural, social and community activity and wellbeing in the community area, the extent and specifics of which will be dependent upon the individual project.

### 4 Financial Implications

4.1 Awards must fall within the Area Boards budget allocated to the Bradford on Avon Area Board.

4.2 If grants are awarded in line with officer recommendations, Bradford on Avon Area Board will have a balance of £ 58,077 remaining in the grants budget for the 2011/12 financial year.

### 5 Legal Implications

5.1 There are no specific legal implications related to this report.

### 6 HR Implications

6.1 There are no specific HR implications related to this report.

### 7 Equality and Inclusion Implications

7.1 Community Area Grants give all local community and voluntary groups an equal opportunity to receive funding towards community based projects and schemes.

7.2 Implications relating to individual grant applications are outlined within section 8 – “Officer Recommendations”.

## 8 Officer Recommendations

Ref	Applicant	Project proposal	Funding requested
8.1	Staverton Parish Council	<b>New footpath in play area in School Lane to give access to disabled persons in wheelchairs and to parents with prams to access a swing suitable for disabled children</b>	<b>£ 980</b>

- 8.1.1 This application was submitted in March 2011 and would have been eligible under the former rules. However it falls foul of the revised community area grant criteria for 2011/12, approved by the Cabinet and introduced as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011, which does not allow for the funding of local projects which the Parish Council has the statutory duty to fund through its precepting powers.
- 8.1.2 The applicant was advised verbally of the likelihood of this rule change at the time of application and has submitted a statement to explain that the Parish Council has a very small precept of approximately £ 20,000 in 2011/12 most of which is spent on the Clerk's salary and other Council outgoings. The pavilion building costs ran over budget by £ 26,000 and the running costs are also depleting Parish Council reserves as income from hiring the sports field is insufficient to cover these costs. The Parish Council did increase its Precept last year to help with the overspend on the pavilion but did not feel justified in increasing the Precept for 2011/12 in view of the financial constraints felt by residents in the present climate.
- 8.1.3 The application demonstrates a link to the Bradford on Avon Community Plan and Wiltshire Local Area Agreement through its aim to provide access to modern play facilities for all, including the disabled and low income families.
- 8.1.4 Members of the Grants Advisory Group have commented that no matching funding, volunteer labour or fundraising efforts have been demonstrated by the applicant. They see this as a core parish project and therefore not eligible for funding under the new eligibility criteria. The GAG recommend refusal of this application, their full comments are available in an appendix to this report.
- 8.1.5 The project will provide a new footpath from the main entrance gate continuing down to the rear of the play area which will be landscaped and fitted with a bench. Access to most of the equipment in this play area is limited by the uneven surface. The completion of the play area will provide modern play facilities which have been lacking in Staverton for many years – without this pathway its full use will be denied to a deserving section of the community. A quotation of £ 980 + VAT has been received for this work.

**The officer recommendation is that the application is refused as ineligible under the new grants criteria for 2011/12, which does not allow for the funding of local projects for which town and parish councils have the statutory duty and powers to fund through the Precept.**

Ref	Applicant	Project proposal	Funding requested
8.2	Bradford on Avon Arts Festival	Bradford on Avon Arts Festival 2011	£ 1, 500

8.2.1 This application meets the community area grant criteria for 2011/12, although contributions to cash prizes ( £ 350) and to contingency funds (£ 300) are not deemed to be eligible expenditures. This would need to be one-off funding contribution towards what is an annual event.

8.2.2 The application demonstrates a link to the Bradford on Avon Community Plan and Wiltshire Local Area Agreement through its contribution to community cohesion; to cultural development; to tourism development; to activities for young people; and to community volunteering.

8.2.3 Members of the Grants Advisory Group are generally supportive of the initiative but agree that contributions to cash prizes and for contingency funds would not be eligible and they have also requested clarification on the other sources of funding for the event. Their full comments are available in an appendix to this report.

8.2.4 The Arts Development Officers is supportive of the project, her comments are in the appendix.

8.2.5 The project is an annual event, voluntary and non-profit-making, which aims to affirm, enable and enhance 'community' while highlighting the abundance of artistic talent through an all-inclusive community event. Now in its seventh year, the festival has grown year on year as people meet up with friends, build connections and enjoy and appreciate the vibrancy of the community. The costs include erecting staging, PA system, awning in case of inclement weather and printing of literature.

**The officer recommendation is that a reduced sum of £ 1, 175 is awarded to the Bradford on Avon Arts Festival 2011 to reflect the ineligibility of contributions towards cash prizes and contingency costs. As this is an annual event and recurring expenditure cannot be supported, this would need to be a one-off funding contribution.**

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<b>Appendices:</b>	<p><b>Grant applications from:</b></p> <p><b>Staverton Parish Council</b>  <b>Bradford on Avon Arts Festival</b></p> <p><b>Report from the Grants Advisory Group together with</b>  <b>comments from Arts Development Officer</b></p>
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**No unpublished documents have been relied upon in the preparation of this report.**

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