Wiltshire Council
Where everybody matters

Report to	Southern Wiltshire Area Board
Date of Meeting	2 February 2012
Title of Report	Old Sarum Community Room bid

1.   Purpose of the Report

To request that the Area Board considers funding a project at the Old Sarum Community Rooms submitted by Cllr Ian McLennan (application attached).

2.   Background

About Councillor Bids

In addition to the Community Area Grant Scheme, Area Boards are able to use a proportion of their funding for projects which fall outside the criteria of the Community Area Grant Scheme. These projects would be initiated by Councillor Members for consideration and approval by the Area Board.

Any project initiated by a Councillor outside of the Community Grants system must have the approval of the Area Board and should clearly set out one or more of the following:

- Evidence of community need
- Clear links to the community plan
- Evidence that it addresses an on-going issue that has been logged via the Community Issues System

The Area Board may wish to agree to limit the amount of money used for Area Board projects in order to retain a viable grants pot. This might be a set sum or a percentage of the whole budget.

In considering requests the Area Board will need to bear in mind the impact this will have on the amount of funding available to support applications from local community groups and organizations.

3. The Old Sarum Community Room

The long-term goal of this project is to move into the dedicated community centre which will be built as part of the new development. This will not be until the second half of 2013 therefore OSCR require funding to assist with running costs until the new centre is developed.

The bid

The application form sets out the statistics referring to deprivation and vulnerable families and also the usage of the OSCR by groups trying to tackle these issues. The application is also supplemented by letters of support from the OSCR users.

In 2009/10 the Board funded £5000 start-up costs which produced many benefits. Firstly, it helped get the OSCR ready for use, it acted as a catalyst to encourage local residents to get involved in running the centre and it also helped the OSCR bring in extra funding.

Since then, the Area Board has not been asked to fund the OSCR, however it has benefitted from Council support in the form of a Performance Reward Grant which the Board endorsed which has enabled the volunteers to undergo some training and put on some community events. It also enabled the OSCR to employ a Community Worker for 6 months. Prior to this the OSCR had support from workers under the Future Jobs Fund initiative. The volunteers involved in running the community centre have had to take on the responsibility of being trustees of a charity and managing challenging issues such as negotiating the lease. The PRG funding was targeted towards capacity building in order to manage these issues and also develop a greater sense of community through putting on events. It is hoped that these skills will be crucial in managing the new centre when it is built. Without this project, the new centre would have had to start from scratch.

The OSCR has developed immensely in the last year, especially since the Community Worker, a local resident, was in post. Now there are regular bookings that provide some crucial services to the community. The funding for that worker has now finished and as part of this wider project the OSCR are applying to the Community Covenant Grant scheme to fund a part-time post for another 12 months.

Although, there are regular bookings the revenue does not cover the costs and that is why the funding is required. As already mentioned, the £5000 requested from the Board is part of a wider project which looks to secure core funding for this project until late 2013 when it is likely they are able to move to the new facility. The amount requested from the Community Covenant Grant scheme is around £17,200 (£12,000 for running costs and £5,200 for a part-time worker).

Recommendation:

1. That the Area Board allocates £5000 towards the running of the OSCR subject to:
a) The funding is to be used solely to support the core running costs of the OSCR eg. rent and insurance.
b) The itemized expenditure be reported to the Community Area Manager.

Appendices:

1. Cllr Project Application Form (including letters of support from users)
2. OSCR Business Plan summary

3. Income and Expenditure Accounts for OSCR to December 31st 2011 (to be circulated on Monday 30 January 2012).

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