

Environmental Services
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Report

Subject : Request for Discretionary Grant from Bulford Parish Council
Report to : Northern Area Committee
Date : Thursday 29 January 2009
Author : Bob Chequer - Waste Management Officer.
Sponsor : Cllr John Smale

1. Reason for Report:

As a result of the changeover of Parish Clerk at the beginning of 2008 Bulford Parish Council did not claim their 2007/08 Street Sweeping grant from Salisbury District Council for which they would have been eligible. If claimed on time Bulford Parish Council would have received the maximum grant of £750.

To lose this amount of income for 2007/08 and carry it forward into 2008/09 is a significant burden on the Parish Council's small budget. They therefore request a grant of £750 from the Northern Area Committee's Discretionary Budget to help them balance their accounts without a major reduction in their planned expenditure programme for 2008/09.

2. Background:

Salisbury District Council has provided grant support to selected parish councils since 1986 for "Enhanced Highway Cleansing" whereby the selected Town and Parish Councils would be given the opportunity to carry out additional cleaning of the highways if they so wished. A Town or Parish Council could carry out additional cleaning where, and as frequently, it considered necessary. In 1986 the maximum grant was £1,000 in each financial year. The current maximum grant is £750.

The scheme was reviewed by the Improving Waste Management Board in June 2006 (Please see Appendix 1).

Town or parish councils wishing to claim the grant must submit their claims supported by evidence of expenditure in February for work or projects undertaken in that financial year. This is to enable the claims to be processed and settled within the accounting period for that year. The scheme is administered by Environmental Services who hold the budget for these grants. Any under spend within the budget is not carried forward to the following financial year.

The situation with Bulford Parish Council was not brought to Officer's attention until November 2008.

Assuming that Bulford Parish Council submit a claim in February for this financial year it is expected that all ten eligible town and parish councils will make a full claim and there will be no under spend in the overall budget for 2008/09 to assist them.

Letters are being sent (week commencing 19.01.09) to all Town and Parish councils that will advise them of the grant situation for 2009/10 and remind those who have yet to submit their claim to do so by 27th February.

There is a previous occasion where an Area Committee has used its Discretionary Budget to assist parish councils provide or enhance services. In April 2006 the Western Area Committee approved a grant of £214 to parish councils to supplement the council's £386 annual grant for the Parish Skip

service (Please see Appendix 2).

3. Budgetary Information:

NAC SWAG allocation 2008-09	£ 13,470
NAC Discretionary Budget allocation 2008-09	+ £ 27,500
Total funding to spend in 2008/09	= £ 40,970
Grants awarded in Tranche 1 & 2 - 2008/09	- £ 20,585.31
£5,000 to be returned from 2nd Bulford Scout Group (awarded in Tranche 3 06/07) as project did not go ahead	+ £ 5,000
Funding remaining in Tranche 3	= £ 25,384.69

Through the combined South Wiltshire Area Grants (SWAG) and Discretionary budgets the Northern Area Committee has £25,384.69 available to spend before March 31st 2009.

It should be noted that 14 applications for SWAG funding have been received in Tranche 3, totalling £34,819.14. These applications are scheduled to be considered by the NAC SWAG review panel on Tuesday 3rd February.

4. Recommendation:

That the Committee consider the request for a grant from the Discretionary Budget.

Attachments:

Appendix 1. Report to the Improving Waste Management Board June 2006. Street Cleansing Grants to Parish and Town Councils.

Appendix 2. Minute 574 Western Area Committee 13.04.06 and associated notes.

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Report

Subject : Street Cleansing Grants to Parish and Town Councils
Report to : The Improving Waste Management Board
Date : 26 June 2006
Author : Bob Chequer
Cabinet Member : for Environment & Transport Councillor, Dennis Brown

1. Summary:

The purpose of this report is to:

Propose an amendment to the existing policy that, in addition to street cleaning activities, to permit litter reduction or prevention measures to be undertaken or introduced for which the Street Cleaning Grant can be claimed by parish or town councils eligible for this grant.

2. Background:

At its meeting on 25 March 1986 the council's Housing & Health Committee approved the "Scheme for Enhancement of Highway Cleansing" whereby selected Town and Parish Councils would be given the opportunity to carry out additional cleaning of the highways if they so wished. A Town or Parish Council could carry out additional cleaning where, and as frequently, it considered necessary, subject to the total expenditure not exceeding £1,000 (the grant approved at that time) in each financial year.

Detailed conditions of the scheme were prepared at that time. (See appendix 1)

From the commencement of the scheme seven Parish / Town Councils were eligible for this grant: Amesbury, Bulford, Downton, Durrington, Mere, Tisbury and Wilton. With effect from 1 April 2005 three further Parish Councils became eligible for this grant: Alderbury, Laverstock and Redlynch.

Since 2003/04 there has been a fairly consistent use of the scheme according to financial records:

In 2003/04 of the seven Town or Parish Councils entitled to claim the £1932 street cleaning grant five councils claimed the full grant and two submitted claims for a lesser amount.

In 2004/05 again, of the seven Town or Parish Councils entitled to claim the £1932 street cleaning grant five councils claimed the full grant and two submitted claims for a lesser amount.

In 2005/06 ten councils were entitled to claim the £750 street cleaning grant of whom seven submitted claims for the full grant, two for a lesser amount and one made no claim.

Following an unsuccessful claim at the end of March 2006 to use the grant for the purchase of litter bins, Laverstock PC queried whether the existing policy is "out-dated" and requested a review of the scheme to meet the needs of the councils for whom it is intended.

3. Considerations:

The financial records indicate that consistently 70% (five out of the seven or seven out of the ten) councils eligible for the grant make full use of it. This does not support the suggestion that the scheme is not used by many of the town or parish councils.

Would those councils continue to undertake enhanced cleaning of highways if an easier managed yet less effective alternative were available, leading to a possible decrease in the amenity standard of those areas?

The provision of extra litterbins will not necessarily be a solution to littering from passing vehicles.

We should avoid the grant being used just because it is there to be used without some justification that the outcome of the expenditure will remove, reduce or prevent litter on the highway.

4. Conclusions:

The councils should not lose sight of the improvements that have been gained by using these grants to remove litter from the street scene. Alternative uses for the grant should promote measures to support ongoing cleansing. In order to be flexible we should not just consider one or two possible options for the use of the grant other than for the cleansing of highways but review applications for alternative uses on their individual merit.

The Waste Management Officer or nominated deputy for this purpose will be responsible for evaluating grant applications and deciding whether or not an application is suitable for grant support.

If town or parish councils wish to request the grant for any other purpose than carrying out cleansing activities applications should be made as early as possible in the appropriate financial year to ensure completion of that application within that financial year.

Applications for the supply of litterbins will be considered as part of an overall litter reduction or prevention programme on highways. The siting of bins will be subject to the agreement of the Waste Management Officer or nominated deputy. Town or parish councils will be responsible for fixing the bins on site, emptying and servicing, and arranging with the Waste Management Officer or nominated deputy the point of collection for the bagged litter arisings.

5. Recommendations:

That the existing policy be amended so that, in addition to street cleaning activities, other litter reduction or prevention measures can be undertaken or introduced for which the Street Cleaning Grant can be claimed by parish or town councils eligible for this grant.

Applications for alternative uses of the Street Cleansing Grant will be considered and evaluated on the merits of the proposals affect in reducing or preventing litter on, or littering of, the highways.

The Waste Management Officer or nominated deputy for this purpose will be responsible for evaluating grant applications and deciding whether or not an application is suitable for grant support.

When it is agreed that the grant can be used for the provision of litter bins, town or parish councils will be responsible for fixing the bins on site, emptying and servicing, and arranging with the Waste Management Officer or nominated deputy the point of collection for the bagged litter arisings.

Copy of:

CONDITIONS FOR SCHEME FOR ENHANCEMENT OF HIGHWAY CLEANSING

Approved by the Housing & Health Committee 25 March 1986

1. The scheme shall apply to the following parishes only:

Amesbury	Durrington
Bulford	Wilton
Downton	Tisbury
Mere	
2. The scheme shall not apply to any trunk road.
3. Each Town and Parish SHALL be responsible for:-
 - a) The enhanced cleaning of highways where it appears necessary in the interests of public health or the amenities of the area.
 - b) Employing a part-time hand sweeper.
 - c) Providing as necessary brooms, shovels, plastic sacks and protective clothing.
 - d) Determining the areas to be swept/scavenged
 - e) Determining the hours to be worked.
 - f) Arranging the rate of pay per hour.
 - g) Paying the employee direct
 - h) Claiming grant for the expenses incurred excluding VAT from the District Council by submitting copies of invoices every three months.
 - i) All necessary indemnities and insurances.
 - j) Monitoring expenditure to ensure that the grant sum awarded by the District Council is not exceeded.
4. The expression "highway" under this scheme includes carriageways and footways together with verges and lay-bys which are maintainable at public expense.
5. Subject to compliance with the conditions in clause 2 above the Salisbury District Council SHALL grant a sum of money equal to the expenses incurred by each Parish / Town Council provided that such sum shall not exceed £1,000 during each financial year commencing 1st April.
6. The District Council will collect the sweepings from an agreed site on an agreed day.
7. The District Council will review the scheme annually.
8. The Salisbury District Council reserves the right to cease operating the scheme after giving three months' notice in writing.

Notes:

Prior to the 1st January 2006 parish councils hired private skips for parishioners to use to deposit their household bulky waste. These were tipped at the County Councils Thorny Down Waste Transfer Station. The use of these skips was unsupervised and the arisings regularly contained commercial waste, building waste and sometimes hazardous waste. From 1st January 2006 Wiltshire County Council's refused to accept this waste for disposal. This meant there was an immediate and significant increase in cost to the parish councils to cover the contractors cost for disposal, without a commensurate increase in grant from the council.

Environmental Services offered an alternative service using refuse compaction vehicles for bulky waste collection in place of open skips hired by parish councils. This was a supervised service that ensured only household non-recyclable waste was deposited.

The Parish Skip Grant at that time was £386 per annum and enabled parishes to hire skips on two occasions per year. As the council's service was £300 per visit only one visit could be funded from the grant.

Western Area Committee 13.06.06

Minute 574. Parish Waste Skips

The Committee considered the previously circulated report of the Waste Management Officer.

Resolved –

- (1) That part of the £214 shortfall (see **Note 2** below) (subject to the availability of funds) for parish skips be met from the Western Area Discretionary Budget (2006-07) to enable those parishes with a population of less than 1000 people to receive two SDC refuse vehicles visits per year.

NOTE 1: Parishes with a tax base of less than 1000 are as follows:-

Alvediston, Ansty, Barford St Martin, Berwick St John, Berwick St Leonard, Bishopstone, Broadchalke, Burcombe, Bowerchalke, Chicklade, Chilmark, Compton Chamberlayne, Dinton, Donhead St Andrew, Donhead St Mary, East Knoyle, Ebbesbourne Wake, Fonthill Bishop, Fonthill Gifford, Fovant, Hindon, Kilminster, Maiden Bradley, Quidhampton, Sedgehill and Semley, Stratford Tony, Swallowcliffe, Teffont, Tisbury, Tollard Royal, West Knoyle, West Tisbury and Zeals

NOTE 2: The cost per skip visit is £300, thus two visits per year cost £600. Parishes of less than 1000 population currently receive a skip grant of £386 pa from Salisbury District Council. The shortfall is therefore £214.

- (2) That those Parishes entitled to this discretionary funding be encouraged to actively recycle waste wherever possible.