

Agenda Item: 7

Meeting: Executive

Date: 12 May 2009

Subject: Grant Aid

Report of: Portfolio Holder for Safer and Stronger Communities

Summary: The report proposes that the Executive adopt the proposed criteria for the awarding of grant aid.

Advising Officer: Edwina Grant, Deputy Chief Executive/ Director of Children, Families & Learning

Contact Officer: Sue Barrow, PA to the Assistant Director Leisure, Culture, Libraries, Adult & Community Learning & Grants Officer

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: All

Function of: Executive

Key Decision Yes

**Reason for urgency/
Exemption from call-in
(if appropriate)** N/A

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Executive approve the proposed criteria for the Central Bedfordshire grant aid schemes as set out in Appendices B1,B2 and B3.

Reason for Recommendations: To obtain Executive approval for the proposed criteria for the Central Bedfordshire grant aid schemes.

Background

1. Mid Beds District Council and South Beds District Council operated grant aid schemes for voluntary groups. These were as listed below:-
2. Mid Beds District Council

Name of Scheme –

Criteria

Capital Grant Aid – Health Sport

For projects that help to develop children’s playgroup activities, general sporting facilities or projects aimed at

	encouraging people to live healthier and more active lifestyles.
Capital Grant Aid – Arts & Cultural Projects	Aimed at helping groups in the development, promotion and/or the awareness of dance, music, theatre, literature, choral and arts activities.
Capital Grant Aid – Community Projects Programme & Village Investment Partnership Programme	To encourage organisations, in co-operation with their Town/Parish Council or Parish Meeting, to help make their towns and villages safe and pleasant places in which to live.
Burial Grounds & Cemeteries	To enable Town and Parish Councils to replace existing burial ground facilities, which have become full or are nearing that state.

3. South Beds District Council

<u>Name of Scheme</u>	<u>Criteria</u>
Village Hall Grant Scheme	To enable village hall management committees to provide new buildings, improve access, undertake critical repairs, obtain essential equipment and engage technical and specialist services.
Flagship Fund	To enable groups to apply for funding for community projects and Parish Plans
More Active – Community Groups	To encourage leisure development projects and activities within the arts, sport, play, open spaces, countryside recreation and community development.
More Active – Talented Individuals	Aimed at those who are not in full time employment and have reached a level of excellence in their field with the potential to go further.

Proposed Grant Aid Schemes for Central Bedfordshire

4. The budget for 2009/10 provides for capital of £135,000 for Capital Grants £50,000 for the Cemeteries Fund and a revenue budget of £7,000 for Talented Individuals. The criteria for the awarding of Central Bedfordshire Grants have been based on the criteria for both the former District Council schemes. The matrix attached at Appendix A sets out the criteria for each former District Council scheme and the proposed for the Central Bedfordshire grant aid schemes.

5. The criteria for each of the three schemes have also been outlined in three separate documents, which will form part of the grant application packs. These documents are attached at Appendix B1, B2 and B3.
6. It is proposed that the maximum grant available under the Capital Grants scheme is set at £10,000. This is £5,000 less than the maximum grant available under the former Mid Beds scheme and £5,000 more than the former South Beds maximum grant of £5,000.

To support the management of projects it is proposed that the maximum grant for Talented Individuals is £250 (previously £300 for South Beds).

It is proposed that the grant available from the Cemeteries Fund remains at 25% of the total project cost, subject to a maximum of £50,000. Applications submitted to this scheme for amounts in excess of £15,000 will be referred to the Executive for approval. Applications to this former Mid Beds fund have historically numbered no more than one or two per year.

7. It is anticipated that the Capital Grants scheme will help attract substantial additional funding into Central Bedfordshire. During 2007/08, 33 grants totalling £217,796 were awarded by Mid Beds District Council, eight of which were used to attract monies from the Landfill Communities Fund totalling £238,394 for Mid Beds based projects. Of the £245,439 awarded in grant aid to Mid Beds organisations during 2009/10, nine of those organisations were able to attract a total of £421,163 in additional funding from the Landfill Communities Fund funding for further Mid Beds based projects.

Application Process

8. Following approval of the criteria for the Central Bedfordshire Grant Aid, the schemes will be promoted and applications invited from those organisations and individuals who meet the criteria.
9. Meetings will be held four times per year to consider the applications submitted. The deadline date for the submission of completed application forms will be advertised and will be not less than one month prior to the date of the meetings.
10. An index of the applications that are to be considered for grant aid will be circulated to all elected Members prior to any decisions being made. The index will include the date, time and venue of the meeting at which the applications are to be considered. Elected Members and applicants will be welcome to attend the meeting in order to speak on behalf of applications.
11. The Scheme of Delegation within the Constitution of Central Bedfordshire Council delegates the authority to approve grant applications to the Director of Children, Families and Learning, up to a maximum of £15,000, subject to the application being in accordance with the approved council criteria relating to the relevant grant fund and to any grant being 'one-off' with no recurring liability, and subject to consultation with the relevant Portfolio holder. (4.4.20)

12. The index will be re-issued to all elected Members after each meeting with confirmation of the grants awarded.
13. Members are asked to consider and approve the criteria for the Central Bedfordshire Grant Aid Schemes as set out in Appendix B1, B2 and B3..

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

All applicants to the Capital Grant Aid and Talented Individual schemes are required to meet at least one of the four relevant Council priorities-

1. Supporting and caring for an ageing population
2. Educating, protecting and providing opportunities for children and young people
3. Creating safer communities
4. Promoting healthier lifestyles

Financial:

The budgets have been agreed for all three schemes and the schemes will commence with the following available balances –

Grant Aid Scheme	Balance brought forward	Budget approved for 2009/10	Total budget for 2009/10
Capital Grants – Lifestyles & General community Projects	£94,158	£135,000	£229,158
Cemetery Fund	£39,909	£50,000	£89,909
Talented Individuals	Nil	£7,000	£7,000

Legal:

None.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

None.

Equalities/Human Rights:

All applicants to the Capital Grants schemes have to prove that their organisations have an Equal Opportunities Policy or follow equal opportunities procedures.

Community Development/Safety:

Under the proposed criteria potential applicants will be encouraged to apply for grant aid to help to develop their local communities and improve community safety.

Risk Management / Sustainability:

On 18 March 2009, the Mid Beds District Council Executive approved the recommendations of the Overview Committee's Biggleswade Skate Park Task Force (minute E/08/68) which included the requirement that all applicants to the Capital Grants schemes have to demonstrate the ongoing financial viability of any facility delivered following the completion of the project and that the organisation has a clear and robust governance structure in place. This requirement has been carried through to the criteria for Central Bedfordshire capital grant schemes.

Appendices:

Appendix A - matrix which compares the criteria of the former District Council schemes and lists the proposed criteria for the Central Bedfordshire grant aid schemes

Appendix B1, B2 and B3 – the criteria for each of the three grant aid schemes which will form part of the grant application packs.

Background Papers (open to public inspection):

None

Location of papers: Priory House, Chicksands