

GRANTS COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

9 October 2008

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

The Mayor, Stuart Drummond (Chair) and Councillor Victor Tumilty.

Officers: John Mennear, Asst Director (Community Services)
Brian Neale, Crime and Disorder Co-ordinator
Peter Gouldsbro, Community Safety Officer
Steve Hilton, Public Relations Officer
Sarah Bird, Democratic Services Officer

5. Apologies for Absence

None.

6. Declarations of Interest by Members

None.

7. Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held on 15 August 2008

These were agreed as an accurate record.

8. Community Safety Capital Grants Allocations – Community Safety Officer

Type of decision

Non key.

Purpose of Report

The report was presented to advise members of applications to the Community Safety Capital Fund and sought approval for recommended grant awards.

Issues for Consideration

The Council had decided that its capital budget for 2008/09 would

include an allocation of £150,000 to implement community safety projects, which were associated with and contributed to Safer Hartlepool Partnership's strategy covering crime, disorder and substance misuse. Following an agreement to carry forward an under-spend of £3,717 from 2007/08 this had been increased to £153,717.

Three applications were put forward for consideration. The Community Safety Officer stated that all applications had been checked by Hartlepool Borough Council's finance department to confirm that the core spend and match funding met capital spend criteria. He stated that the Section 17 Group recommendation that there be a minimum of 35% contribution in respect of applications had also been applied.

Throston Allotments

The report which had been previously circulated outlined that the Throston Allotments site was owned and managed by Hartlepool Borough Council (HBC) consisting of 83 plots, currently secured to all sides by a wood solid lathe fence of variable height. The site for a number of years, had experienced problems of anti-social behaviour, theft, vandalism and fly-tipping which had had a negative impact on the allotment holders.

The allotment holders had been encouraged by HBC's Parks and Countryside Department to form an Allotment Association to be involved in site management and general improvements. Site security had been identified as a priority and to this end, it was proposed to replace the full exterior fencing with a 2.4 metre high palisade fence. The total cost of this was £44,500 and so it has been proposed to undertake this in three phases, the first being the fencing of the Wiltshire Way side. The first phase would cost £18,373 with £7000 being received from HBC Minor Works Budget and £3000 from Housing Hartlepool. Project spend would be undertaken through HBC Parks and Countryside Department who would also meet all future revenue costs of maintaining the fencing.

The Community Safety Officer outlined that the original costing submitted had been for a 2 metre high fence but as this would not meet requirements, a further quotation of £23,960 had been submitted to meet the required specification of a 2.4 metre fence. The contribution from other sources would remain the same, therefore the revised application was for £13960. The requirement for 35% match funding had still been met. It was noted that there would be no commitment to the subsequent phases of the fencing. It was expected that the open nature of the fencing should deter unauthorised access to the site and Members asked that there should be a condition to the funding that the fencing should remain open so that the site was visible. The Crime and Disorder Co-ordinator stated that ideally any internal fencing would be removed.

Councillor Tumilty asked that the existing fence could be utilised

elsewhere in the interests of economy and was informed that consideration would be given to this.

Ward Jackson Park

The report outlined how the recently restored Park is extremely well used by Hartlepool residents and in the main does not suffer from damage or vandalism. However over the past few years there have been a number of incidents of criminal damage particularly in relation to the bowling green and buildings, including the 'Place in the Park' area. The bulk of these incidents occur during the hours of darkness when the park is locked.

It was therefore proposed to install three static Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras to cover the bowling green area as well as upgrading the existing CCTV in the Place in the Park and installation of white light fittings. There was a further proposal to install five decorative lighting columns and lanterns from the main entrance on the footpath leading to Place in the Park.

The full cost of the project was £20,850 although £8,000 had been contributed from the HBC Minor Works and Parks and Countryside budgets, leaving a request from the fund of £12,850. This was supported by the Friends of Ward Jackson Park and all future associated revenue costs would be met by HBC Parks and Countryside Department.

The Assistant Director highlighted that lighting was not deemed necessary throughout the park, merely in the proposed areas. He alluded to issues of damage in the refurbished lavatory block but stated that this had been designed to be as vandal proof as necessary.

The Mayor asked whether this proposed CCTV would be compromised by the Scrutiny investigation into CCTV and was informed that the cameras to be sited here were not mainframe cameras but recorded locally and were activated by movement.

The Community Safety Officer stated that the proposed lighting was white lighting which should not disturb local residents. He also said that the Place in the Park franchise had recently been re-let and the new franchisee was looking to extend opening options.

Discussion took place about the need for cameras to be directed onto the lavatory block for monitoring purposes in case of vandalism and it was confirmed that signage to say that CCTV was in place could be displayed.

Grayfields

Grayfields Recreation Ground was re-developed two years ago at a

cost of approximately £1.2 million but despite the redevelopment new build incorporating a number of security measures including CCTV cameras linked to the Council's main system and passive infrared detector alarms which were linked to the HBC CCTV Control Centre there had still been a number of site intrusions particularly to the area surrounding the all weather sports pitch.

It was therefore proposed to install an additional dome camera to provide views of the new sports and fencing areas which were the identified areas of unauthorised access, complemented by five additional external motion sensors. These would be linked into the existing CCTV system and had the support of the Police Crime Prevention Officer and Neighbourhood Policing Team.

The Project was expected to cost £7370 with a capital contribution from Adult and Community Services Department of £2580 therefore the Grant requested was £4790. Adult and Community Services currently met security and maintenance revenue costs for Grayfields and revenue costs relating to this grant request will also be covered.

Councillor Tumilty asked the Public Relations Officer to publicise the awarding of the grants and subsequent revamped security.

The Crime and Disorder Co-ordinator stated that there was a new process so that all grant awards would be subjected to a post completion review in order to monitor whether the measures taken had been effective. He also offered to give a presentation to the Members to elaborate on the Section 17 Group mentioned earlier during the meeting.

Decision

Members approved :-

A grant of £13,960 towards the project at the Throston Allotments but with the proviso that no commitment was given to the future support for phases 2 and 3 of site fencing; that the fencing should remain 'open' so that the site remained visible and that the grant approval would be subjected to a post completion review and appraisal.

A grant of £12,850 towards the project in Ward Jackson park. This would be subject to review and appraisal after completion

A grant of £4,790 towards the project outlined for Grayfields subject to a post completion review and appraisal.

The meeting concluded at 2.25 pm.

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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