

FINANCE, POLICY & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE	24 MARCH 2022	AGENDA ITEM: 16
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Report prepared by Angela Price – Town Clerk

GRANT APPLICATIONS

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide members of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee with grant application forms received from local charitable and voluntary organisations.

Detailed information

The grid below provides details of grant applications received and the amounts being requested:

Grants under £500			
Organisation	Constitution	Statement of accounts	Amount requested
U3A	Awaited	√	£ 150.00
VIP (Visually Impaired Persons Support) Group		√	£ 200.00
John Maesfield High School	√	√	£ 500.00
Girlguiding	Not available	Not available	£ 500.00
Ledbury Community Day	√	√	£ 300.00
		TOTAL	£ 1,650.00
Grants over £500			
Ledbury Places	√	√	£ 8,100.00
Ledbury Traders Association	Awaited	Awaited	£ 12,000.00
John Maesfield High School	√	√	£ 10,000.00
Ledbury Poetry Festival	√	√	£ 15,000.00
Ledbury Carnival	Awaited	√	£ 1,000.00
Scouts Hereford & Worcester	Awaited	Awaited	£ 700.00
		TOTAL	£ 46,800.00
Multi-Year applications			
Ledbury Poetry Festival	√	√	Year 1 £20,000.00 Year 2 £10,000.00 Year 3 £10,000.00
LEAF	√	√	Year 1 £19,720.00 Year 2 £19,720.00 Year 3

			£19,720.00
LEAF	√	√	Year 1 £9,166.00 Year 2 £9,166.00 Year 3 £9,166.00
Sustainable Ledbury	√	√	Year 1 £4,480.00 Year 2 £2,412.00
		TOTAL YEAR 1	£53,366.00

Additional information in respect of finances of each organisation will be provided separately for confidentiality purposes.

Ledbury Town Council currently has the following amount available for grant funding in 2021/22:

October Fair Grants	- £ 2,020.00
Unspecified Grants (Section 137)	- <u>£12,000.00</u>
TOTAL GRANT FUNDS AVAILABLE 221/22	- <u>£14,020.00</u>

The total monies allocated for unspecified grants in 2022/23 is £20,000.00, plus October Fair grant which will be received in October 2022.

Prior to the grants being considered at the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee each application was reviewed by the Grants Working Party to identify any that it may be possible to fund from the Great Places to Visit Fund. The following grants are recommended for consideration under the Great Places to Visit Fund:

U3A	£150.00 – to be considered as part of the public realm to provide trees/shrubs etc.
Ledbury Community Day	£300.00 As part of the Queens Jubilee weekend
Ledbury Poetry Festival (part of the multi-year application)	Year 1 - £20,000 – subject to funding being available
Sustainable Ledbury	Total £ 6,892.00 To be considered as part of public realm to work with Ledbury in Bloom and Sustainable Ledbury

Should Members agree to fund the above from the Great Places to Visit fund this would change the totals of the two categories as follows:

Under £ 500.00 – reduced from £1,650.00 to £850.00
Multi-year application – reduced from £53,366 to £26,4774.00

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee give consideration to the information above and attached in respect of grant applications and agree which, if any, of the applications the council provides a grant to.
2. That the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee give consideration to the recommendation from the Grants Working Party in respect of making funding available via the Great Place to Visit as outlined above, thus reducing the overall funding to be considered by Ledbury Town Council.

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Report prepared by Julia Lawrence – Deputy Town Clerk

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE COMMITTEE

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Members of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee with information for consideration in respect of recommendations from the Environment & Leisure Committee meeting on Thursday, 17 March 2022. Please note that all reports referred to below are those that were presented at the meeting on 17 March 2022 and can be found on the Council's website.

Detailed information

1 Outdoor Gym Equipment

Members of the Environment & Leisure Committee agreed to appoint Company 2 to supply and fit the seated leg press at a cost of £770.00 plus VAT. In addition, one of the rubber handles for the double cross-country skier was missing and Members agreed for Company 2 to also supply and fit a rubber handle for £8.50 plus VAT.

2 Future of the Shelter

Members of the Environment & Leisure Committee agreed that the Shelter should be moved to the revised location as set out in the report to Members (Item No. 8, Appendix C).

Initially, the Shelter should be moved to the revised location so that it is still facing in the same direction as the current location and then, only when revised CCTV is in operation, to move it 180 degrees so that it is facing Bye Street. However, Members need to appreciate that the original supplier of this Shelter is no longer in business so an alternative contractor will need to be found to oversee the move. Furthermore, whilst Members considered that the Shelter did not need to be on a hard standing surface, Councillor Whattler noted that in view of the current situation whereby youths were leaving rubbish, empty bottles and needles in the immediate area, a hard standing surface made it easier to clear up afterwards whereas standing the Shelter on grass could cause a problem and Members suggested that placing the shelter on paving slabs may be an alternative option.

Members should note that whilst the above has been agreed in principle, costs to move the Shelter are not known at this time.

3 Children's Play Area

Members of the Environment & Leisure Committee debated which item of play equipment could be considered for the play area. Members will note that originally it had been the intention to retain the hex swings but move to another location, which had to be within the children's play area and then make way for a new piece of equipment. The Deputy Clerk advised that the two options put forward would go out to consultation to two local primary schools as well as John Masefield Secondary School. Councillor Whattler suggested that the Explorer Dome should still be an option and therefore Members agreed that this should be included as part of the overall consultation.

Members noted that Item No. 8.3 of the report advised that the maximum cost to supply and install the Cosmos Quest Q112 amounted to £27,610.90 plus VAT. This included the cost of the equipment, groundworks, installation and safety surfacing.

The Explorer Dome, which was put forward by another company was £38,730.00 plus VAT. At that time, working on the basis that this Company was to be selected, there would have been an additional charge of £6,200.00 to install it and £529.11 to remove existing equipment (hex swings) and disposal. If the hex swings were to remain in their current situation then this latter charge would not be required.

However, Members need to appreciate that as this potentially could now be a one-off project, then other costs would need to be borne in mind, i.e. site prelims, Heras Security Fencing, freight etc and these costs are not shown here.

Subject to funds and other plans proposed for the Recreational Ground, to be detailed below, it may be prudent to leave this as a stand-alone project for the next financial year, 2023/24 whereby there would hopefully be sufficient funds to cover this. This could be anything from approximately £27,610.00 (Quest) to approximately £44,930.00 (Explorer Dome) but excluding the other prelim costs referred to above and inflation.

As noted above, the consultation with school children will be organised shortly to gauge their preference as to what they would like to see at the Recreational Ground and this will be reported back to the Environment & Leisure Committee at the next available opportunity.

4 Skate Park

Members of the Environment & Leisure Committee were presented with a Report, Item No. 9 relating to the Skate Park. Quotations had been received from two companies. Committee Members selected Company 2 to work with Ledbury Town Council. They had presented two options: Option One was to undertake priority maintenance/riding service replacement on the equipment for £26,181.80 plus VAT. Option Two was in respect of new equipment totalling £34,221.00 plus VAT.

Members of the Environment & Leisure Committee agreed in principle to Option Two subject to the Deputy Clerk receiving further clarification relating to the installation costs shown on the Company's quotations as there was a significant difference. Option One amounted to £20,095.00 [3 x site operatives and being on site for 12 days whereas Option Two amounted to £6,500.00 [2 x site operatives and being on site for 5 days].

As noted above, should the new children's play equipment be postponed until 2023/24, then that would leave sufficient funds to install the Skate Park (Option Two) subject to confirmation of installation costs. What the quotation does not allow for is a new tarmac surface underneath the existing pieces of equipment once they are moved to their new positions. A ball park figure for the resurfacing could well be in the region of £5,000.00 to £6,000.00 but until the equipment is removed, it is difficult to ascertain how much resurfacing will be necessary, if any.

It should be noted that the skate park in its current state is not fit for purpose and if not repaired as a priority will need to be closed for safety reasons.

5 CCTV

Members of the Environment & Leisure Committee were advised that quotations had been sought from companies to provide a new CCTV system to replace the existing system "like for like". However, in view of the recent fire on the basketball court, the companies have since been requested to revisit their quotations to include CCTV coverage at the other end of the Recreational Ground, i.e. overlooking the basketball court and facing towards the children's play area. That enhancement would mean an additional two cameras, so potentially looking at six cameras in total.

However, in view of the change in location of the Shelter, these costs will again need to be re-addressed to allow for CCTV facing towards the proposed new location of the Shelter, i.e. a camera potentially positioned near Bye Street looking inwards, towards the Shelter/Skate Park. In the meantime, advice is being sought from Herefordshire Council to understand who this area of land belongs to as that may have an impact on installing a CCTV camera/light column.

As noted in the Report, Item No. 18, the estimated costs to install 6 to 8 cameras was in the region of circa £4,900 to £6,000. With additional CCTV now proposed at the other end of the Recreational Ground (Bye Street), then these costs are likely to increase further. Members are asked to note that once all revised quotations have been received, then they will be presented to Herefordshire Council's Monitoring Centre to ensure that the proposed new equipment would be compatible with their systems should Ledbury Town Council be in a position to link into their systems at a future time.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee give consideration to the information above and agree to the costs noted for the outdoor gym equipment for £778.50 plus VAT.
2. That the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee give consideration to the other costs put forward in respect of the Children's Play Area, Shelter and Skate Park, acknowledging that funding could be available for the Skate Park (Option Two), subject to clarification on the installation costs, and provided that the children's play area project referred to above is deferred until 2023/24.

Costs for the Skate Park – New Equipment is £34,221.00 plus VAT.

Costs for undertaking resurfacing works once existing equipment is removed could be in the region of £5,000 to £6,000, if required.

3. That the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee give consideration to the other costs put forward in respect of the CCTV at the Recreational Ground.

Costs for the CCTV cameras to be in the region of £4,900 to £6,000.

Report prepared by Angela Price – Town Clerk

COMMUNITY HALL – ELECTRICITY COSTS

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Members of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee with information received from Mr Martin Eager, Ledbury Community Hall Manager, in respect of the cost of electricity and storage in relation to the CCTV housed in the Community Hall.

Detailed Information

At a meeting of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee held on 25 November 2021 members were requested to give consideration to correspondence received in respect of the cost of the electricity supply to the councils cctv and storage of said cctv at the Community Hall Ledbury.

At that meeting the Clerk was instructed to investigate the costs in relation to the cctv and report back to the committee for further consideration. In his correspondence, Mr Eager had asked for the wattage information to run the cctv so that he could calculate the cost for a 3-year period. Following numerous attempts to obtain the wattage information from Sentinel they finally provided information advising that the cctv system uses 2000 watts per hour. This information was subsequently provided to Mr Eager who in turn has provided the attached invoice for consideration in the sum of £10,176.06 from April 2019 to March 2022.

Mr Eager advises that the invoice has been carefully worked out by Ledbury Community Association member and in Mr Eager's view the figure are correct given the information supplied by Ledbury Town Council. Mr Eager has advised that the next invoice will issued in October 2022 for the period April – September 2022 and every six months thereafter.

Mr Eager has also advised that Ledbury Town Council may, if they wish, consider the installation of a separate meter supply, subject to this being possible.

Recommendation

Members are requested to give consideration to the aforementioned information and the attached invoice received from the Ledbury Community Hall Association in respect of costs for the power supply and storage of the cctv, which is stored in a cupboard in the Community Hall.

Report prepared by Angela Price – Town Clerk

OPTIONS TO IMPROVE INTERNET SPEEDS AT TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES

Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to ask Members of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee to give consideration to options on how the internet speeds at the Council offices could be improved.

Detailed information

As Members are aware the internet speeds in the council offices are very poor, as they are in many places around Ledbury and although Gigaclear are working to install the infrastructure needed to improve the availability in Ledbury it is unlikely this will be operational for another 9-12 months for the Council offices.

Therefore, the Clerk has discussed this with the Council's IT providers, and they have suggested the council may wish to consider one of the following options as an interim measure:

1. Leased Line

1 year contract
100Mbps (upgradable to up to 1000Mbps later)
monthly cost - £375 plus VAT
Provider Installation - £1,850 plus VAT

3-year contract
100Mbps (upgradable to up to 1000Mbps later)
monthly cost - £425 plus VAT
Provider Installation – Free

(IT recommend 1 year option as this would allow to switch to Gigaclear once its available without being tied into a long-term contract)

2. Bonded Broadband – this aggregates broadband speed by using multiple internet connections but it is not much cheaper than a leased line and it would not be as fast.

3. Starlink - <https://www.starlink.com/satellites>

“Starlink internet works by sending information through the vacuum of space, where it travels much faster than in fibre-optic cable and can reach far more people and places. It is a constellation of multiple satellites that orbit the planet at about 550km covering the entire globe.”

This would involve having a satellite dish installed onto the council offices or a pole as described in the attached information, however if the Council were to agree to this option officers would need to investigate whether it would be possible to erect a pole to the council offices due to it being a listed building.

The cost of the Starlink internet is £500 installation and £90 per month.

Recommendation

Members are requested to give consideration to the information provided above and make a recommendation to full Council in respect of improving the internet speeds at the council offices, until such time the upgrade being carried out by Gigaclear becomes available.

Report prepared by Angela Price – Town Clerk

NOTIFICATION OF PAY AWARD

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee of the 2021/22 Local Government Pay Award.

Detailed Information

Every year the Local Government Association consider the annual pay award for Local Government Employees, which would take effect from 1 April of each year.

Unions have been in discussion with the LGA in respect of the 2021/22 pay award with an agreement finally being reached and announced on 2 March 2022 of 1.75% with effect from 1 April 2021.

Therefore, the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee is advised that this increase and any back dated payments will be take effect in the March payroll, this will ensure that this is paid out of the 2021/2022 budget and that the 2022/23 budget is not affected.

When setting the 2021/22 budget the Clerk allowed for a 5% increase in salaries and therefore there is provision for this increase of 1.75%.

Recommendation

That Members of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee receive and note the above information.

Report prepared by Angela Price – Town Clerk

MANAGED PAYPHONE – LEDBURY STATION

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform Councillors of correspondence received in respect of the managed payphone at Ledbury Train Station.

Detailed Information

BT have provided notification that the managed payphone contract in respect of the payphone at the Train Station in Ledbury is due to close in 2025 and that Openreach will no longer offer this product when the public switched telephone network (PTSN) is switched off. Therefore, Openreach have announced a “stop sell2 for 223 to support the transition away from WWLR

BT are working to upgrade to make their payphones compatible with all-IP and the equipment relating to the payphone at the station will need to be upgraded or changed out completely to ensure its continued availability. Openreach have advised that they will cover the costs of the upgrade or replacement, however if the payphone does not currently have a power supply, this will need to be arranged via a fused spur before the upgrade is completed by an Openreach engineer.

However, if the upgrade is no longer wanted then the payphone service can be removed completely by advising the payphone customer service team.

What is Stop Sell?

Information on this can be found at the following link:

<https://www.openreach.co.uk/cpportal/products/product-withdrawal/stop-sells-updates>

The annual income from the payphone has slowly been decreasing annually and Members may wish to take this into consideration when making a recommendation to Council on whether to continue with the provision of the phone.

Recommendation

Members of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee are requested to give consideration to the above information and make the following recommendations to council:

1. Arrange an inspection to be carried out to establish whether there is a power supply already available to this payphone

2. Whether or not to continue with the provision of this payphone, noting that if there is not power supply to this the Council will be required, as the holder of the contract with BT, to fund and arrange the installation of a spur to accommodate the updated service.