

Grant to The Speedwell Hall, Crewkerne (Executive Decision)

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Purpose of the Report

Councillors are asked to consider the awarding of a grant for £12,500 toward replacing the wooden floor at The Speedwell Hall in Crewkerne.

Public Interest

Speedwell Hall has applied for financial assistance from the Area West Community Grants Capital programme. The application has been assessed by the Neighbourhood Development Officer who has submitted this report to allow the Area West Committee to make an informed decision on the application.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Councillors award a grant of £12,500 to Speedwell Hall, the grant to be allocated from the Area West Capital Grants programme subject to SSDC standard conditions for community grants (Appendix A) and the following special conditions:

- Establish and maintain a “sinking and repairs fund” to support future repairs and maintenance of the hall.

Application Details

Name of applicant	Speedwell Hall
Project	Replacement of wooden floor
Total project cost	£30,720
Amount requested from SSDC	£12,500
Recommended special conditions	Establishment of sinking fund for future maintenance, repairs and replacement. That the recommendations of SSDC’s Conservation Officer are taken into account when carrying out the work.
Application assessed by	Alison Baker, Neighbourhood Development Officer, Area West

Community Grants Assessment Score

The table below shows the grant scoring for this application. In order to be considered for SSDC funding under the Community Grants policies, applications need to meet the minimum score of 22.

Category	Actual Score	Maximum score possible
A Eligibility	Y	Y
B Equalities Impact	4	7
C Need for project	4	5
D Capacity of Organisation	12	15
E Financial need	5	7
F Innovation	3	3
Grand Total	28	37

Background

The Speedwell hall was left for community use (and in particular ‘the young ladies of Crewkerne’) in the early 1900’s by the 2 ladies that had previously ran a milliners in the property.

The hall is grade 2 listed and consists of a main hall, kitchen, meeting room and community garden – all of which can be hired by local community groups.

The hall is almost entirely self-sufficient and relies on income from hiring and fundraising to carry out most maintenance. However, in order for the hall to remain operational, significant works now need to take place, including the replacement of the wooden floor in the main hall.

It is estimated that the Speedwell Hall has approximately 7,000 visits a year from the various community groups and organisations that regularly hire the hall, as well as one off events – including fundraising events.

Regular users of the hall include Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Rangers, Somerset Community Choir, U3A and Little Monkey’s baby and toddler group and toy hire. The hall also plays host to a number of one off events and concerts.

More information can be found on the Speedwell Hall website:-

<https://thespeedwell.co.uk/>

Parish Information

Parish*	Crewkerne
Parish Population*	7,826
No. of dwellings*	3,802

*Taken from the 2011 census profile

The project

The project is to replace the existing wooden floor which is beyond repair, like for like in the main community hall. At the same time repairing/replacing joists and improving air flow where necessary. All this work has to comply with grade 2 listing and local planning regulations.

This is the first part of the hall renewal. The next stage will be to update decorations, electrics and heating. The Hall’s management committee envisage a large amount of this work will be

carried out by trustees and volunteers. Once the funding has been secured for the floor replacement, the intention is to ring fence all future profits from fund raising events for the second stage of this project.

After this work has been completed the Hall will have a sinking fund of £5,000 which it intends to increase by 10% per annum.

Local Support / evidence of need

Following complaints from users, particularly the young and old, observations from the committee and potential users, the Speedwell Hall Management committee commissioned a full survey. This was carried out by local qualified surveyor (report is available for inspection). This showed deterioration in the sub structure and although short term repairs have been made over the years, there is now the need for a long term solution to the problems with the floor.

Income has already been lost due to the deterioration of the floor. For example a weekly toddler group has already ceased hiring the hall because of condition of floor. If the work is not carried out within the next 12 months then the Hall would need to close for health and safety reasons.

As the Hall is Grade 2 listed the management committee have consulted with SSDC's Conservation Officer who has approved their plans.

Project Costs

Remove existing skirting boards and pitch pine flooring. Remove rotten floor boards and dispose. Supply and fit new floor joists, pitch pine floor and skirting boards	£17,750
Build new sleeper floor to support joists	£3,000
Make good walls and fit and supply floating laminate flooring inc. underlay	£5,970
Contingency	£4,000
Total project cost	£30,720

Funding Plan

Funding Source	Funds secured
Own funds (inc fundraising)	£16,720
Crewkerne Town Council	£1,000
Norman Family Trust	£500
Total secured	£18,220
Amount recommended from SSDC	£12,500

The Club has requested £12,500 from SSDC. This equates to 41% of the total budget cost.

Previous grants

None during the last three years.

Consents and permissions

The Speedwell Hall management Committee have consulted the District Council's Conservation Officer who has confirmed that listed building consent is not required for this work.

Conclusion and Recommendation

It is recommended that a grant of £12,500 is awarded.

Financial Implications

It is recommended that this grant is awarded from the Area West Community Grants Capital fund. There is currently £140,627 unallocated in the Capital fund (excluding this grant) until the end of this financial year. If members approve the award a balance of £128,127 will remain available for other projects

Council Plan Implications

The project supports:

Our Vision for South Somerset

A place where businesses flourish, communities are safe, vibrant and healthy; where residents enjoy good housing, leisure, cultural and sporting activities

Health and Communities

- Support communities so that they can identify their needs and develop local solutions.
- Help people to live well by enabling quality cultural, leisure, play, sport & healthy lifestyle facilities & activities.

Area West Development Plan Implications

Priority 4 - Health & Wellbeing of individuals - Supporting community groups and the voluntary sector to work with statutory providers to improve access to advice, services, social activities, with an emphasis on vulnerable individuals and groups– e.g. LIC's, youth support, activities for older people, making better use of halls, digital inclusion skills etc.

Equality and Diversity Implications

The Club is fully inclusive and has an equality statement as part of its constitution.

Appendix A

Standard conditions applying to all Community Grants.

This grant offer is made based on the information provided in the application form and represents 41 % of the total project costs. The grant will be reduced if the costs of the total project are less than originally anticipated. Phased payments may be made in exceptional circumstances (e.g. to help with cash-flow for a larger building project) and are subject to agreement.

The applicant agrees to: -

- Notify SSDC if there is a material change to the information provided in the application.
- Start the project within six months of this grant offer and notify SSDC of any changes to the project or start date as soon as possible.
- Confirm that all other funding sources have been secured if this was not already in place at the time of the application and before starting the project.
- Acknowledge SSDC assistance towards the project in any relevant publicity about the project (e.g. leaflets, posters, websites, and promotional materials) and on any permanent acknowledgement (e.g. plaques, signs etc).
- Work in conjunction with SSDC officers to monitor and share the success of the project and the benefits to the community resulting from SSDC's contribution to the project.
- Provide a project update and/or supply before and after photos if requested.
- Supply receipted invoices or receipts which provide evidence of the **full** cost of the project so that the grant can be released.

Standard conditions applying to buildings, facilities and equipment

- Establish and maintain a "sinking fund" to support future replacement of the building / facility / equipment as grant funding is only awarded on a one-off basis.
- Use the SSDC Building Control service where buildings regulations are required.
- Use a contractor selected from the SSDC approved list for play area facilities.
- Incorporate disabled access and provide an access statement where relevant.

Special conditions

Access Review to help with future improvements.