

Area North Committee – 25th July 2007

11. Community Grant - (Executive Decision)

Head of Service: Charlotte Jones, Head of Area Development (North)
Lead Officer: Madelaine King-Oakley, Area Support Team Leader (North)
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Purpose of the report

For Members to consider the request for funding towards the refurbishment of the kitchen facilities at the Lady Smith Memorial Institute (the Parish Rooms), Somerton.

Recommendation

It is recommended that £3,000 is awarded from the Area North Capital Programme (community facilities) to the Lady Smith Memorial Institute, towards the refurbishment of the kitchen facilities at the Parish Rooms Somerton, subject to the standard conditions for Community Grants

Name of applicant: Lady Smith Memorial Institute (Reg charity 304629)

Project: Refurbishment of kitchen facilities at the Parish Rooms, Somerton

Project description: A complete refurbishment of the kitchen area, providing access for disabled people, new kitchen fittings, flooring and electrical work

Total project cost: £15,336 (including fees)

Amount requested: £3000 (20%)

Amount recommended: £3000

Special Conditions: None

Application assessed by: Charlotte Jones, Head of Area Development

Community Grants Assessment score

Category	Score	Max score
A Eligibility	Yes	
B Target groups	2	6
C Project	5	5
D Capacity of organisation	15	15
E Financial need	4	5
F Innovation	1	3
TOTAL	27	34

Introduction

The Lady Smith Memorial Institute is a charitable trust which owns and manages the Parish Rooms, Market Place, Somerton. The building was first gifted to the people of Somerton as a community hall at the turn of the last century. It is a popular and central venue for Somerton, serving a wide variety of groups, and hosting numerous community events throughout the year. Over the past few years the managing committee of trustees have carried out a number of projects aimed at making the facilities fit for the next 100 years, largely through refurbishment and access improvements.

The parish rooms also hosts the SSDC Community Office, and the kitchen is used by SSDC staff.

About the project

The kitchen is small, and currently compliant, the fittings are old, although well maintained, are beyond their life, and no longer meet higher standards for health and hygiene, as well as the Disability Discrimination Act.

Many groups make good use of the Parish Rooms including the Dramatic Society, the Arts Festival, the Green Gardeners and the Somerton Wives to name a few. In general terms the main hall is in use for 15 – 20 hours per week. One booking was recently lost due the condition of the kitchen, and several users have requested improvements. Catering is limited in the current facilities, and many groups welcome the chance to fundraise through catered events.

The Parish Rooms hopes to make more use of its facilities, for example through the Active Living programme, and the new kitchen would greatly improve what the Parish Rooms can offer.

Costs and funding

The cost of the work is estimated to be £15,336.

Funding sources are as follows:

Own funds (including Town Council grant)	3,000
Awards for All	9,500
Application to SSDC	3,000

Additional comments

Only one estimate for the work was received, despite 3 tenders being sought by the applicant, using detailed plans comments on the project have been sought from SSDC Building Control and Property Services, and will be available at the meeting.

Planning consent is not required for this project, and the plans have been passed for Building Regulations.

Conclusion

Overall it is felt that the Parish Hall and its current users will benefit immensely from this project, and the new kitchen could also assist in bringing new groups to the Parish Rooms, including activities for older people. The project will be well managed by the Town Clerk, and the town council fully support the Committee's efforts.

The recommendation is to support the amount requested subject to the usual grants conditions.

Corporate Priorities

- 11 – Work in partnership with others to improve the health prospects for all
- 16 – Maintain above 80% people satisfied with their neighbourhoods as a place to live

Area Priorities

- 5 – Maintain and improve local access to services especially for health and social needs
- 6 – Support communities to maintain and develop facilities and activities

Background Papers: *Area North Community Grants File*