

Area West Committee – 15th August 2012

## 7. Request for a Community Grant – Forton Community Association (Executive Decision)

*Strategic Director:* Rina Singh (Place and Performance)  
*Assistant Director:* Helen Rutter / Kim Close (Communities)  
*Service Manager:* Andrew Gillespie, Area Development Manager (West)  
*Lead Officer:* Paul Philpott Community Development Officer and  
*Contact Details:* paul.philpott@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01460 260359

### Purpose of the Report

To consider an application for financial assistance towards the construction of Forton Community Centre.

### Public Interest

Forton Community Association has applied for financial assistance towards construction of a new Community Centre on the Forton recreational ground.

### Recommendation

That a provisional grant offer of £12,500 be made to Forton Community Association towards the Forton Community Centre Project, subject to the necessary funds to complete the project being raised within the next 12 months.

<b>Name of Applicant</b>	<b>Forton Community Association</b>
<b>Project</b>	Erection of a new community centre
<b>Phase 1</b>	Completion of groundworks. Erection and waterproofing of the shell.
<b>Phase 2</b>	Fitting Out
<b>Project Cost Phase 1</b>	£48,348
<b>Project Cost Phase 2</b>	£100,000
<b>Total</b>	£148,348
<b>Amount requested from SSDC</b>	£12,500 (towards Phase 1)
<b>Application assessed by</b>	Paul Philpott, Community Development Officer.

### Background

Forton is a small rural village comprising 120 houses with a population of approximately 350. At present the only community facility in the village is a small clubhouse for the football team. For many years there has been strong local support for the creation of a better community building.

A grant application was submitted to SSDC in 2007 by Forton Rangers Football Club towards an extension to their clubhouse. A grant of £12,500 was approved towards this project at the April 2007 Area West Committee. However, the applicants could not take forward their project for a variety of design and financial reasons.

Forton Community Association was formed three years ago. Following village surveys, it was agreed that a new purpose built community centre would better serve the

aspirations and needs of the community and the interest groups that would use it. These groups include

Forton Rangers Football Club  
 The Pre school group  
 The Line Dancing club  
 Skittles groups  
 Exercise groups  
 Coffee morning groups and  
 The Cricket Club.

A report was made by the Area Development Manger to the Area West Committee of September 2011. The Committee was advised that the change to both project and responsible body had resulted in a formal withdrawal of the original grant offer. However the new Community Association were encouraged to submit a new grant application as soon as they were ready. The Community Association has continued to work hard to develop plans for the new Community Centre.

### Project Description

The centre will have dimensions of 27.6 metres x 14 metres and a seating capacity of 120 people. The building will have disabled access and toilet facilities. The centre will incorporate changing rooms, a kitchen, bar, meeting room and skittles alley. It will also accommodate a mobile stage. The existing small clubhouse will be retained and continue to be used. Externally provision will be made for bicycle racks. Forton Community Association will also be liaising with the South Somerset Disability Forum and the SSDC Community Cohesion Officer to inform the internal design of the Centre.

Drawing for external layout attached at Appendix 1.

### Project costs

Project costs were sought this year with the most competitive quote established at £212,000 plus VAT.

To seek a more economic solution, the community came together to pool their resources and expertise to drive the project costs down. Village tradesmen have been identified to undertake the work, and 20 skilled volunteers will contribute in an unpaid capacity.

Tatworth and Forton Parish Council have also provided a £5,000 grant to the football club to extend the existing sewerage pipe system to their pavilion. The contractor for this work will install a water pipe in the same trench and extend the trench and the water and sewage pipes the short distance from the football pavilion to the site of the community centre. This will reduce the cost of groundwork even further. The total cost is now projected at £148,348, which is a significant saving.

Table 1:

Groundworks	£6,664
Erection of the centres shell	£23,684
Windows and doors	£7,000
Contractors charge	£8,000
Fees and expenses (planning / building control )	£3,000
Fitting out	£100,000
<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>£148,348</b>

## Funding

Forton Community Association plan to complete the project in two phases. The cost of phase 1 is £48,348. In addition VAT will be charged at 20%. This charge is refundable upon completion and will be met by a private loan.

So far, Forton Community Association has raised £35,848. They have requested the maximum Area West capital grant of £12,500 to meet the balance of the cost to enable them to complete phase 1.

Table 2:

<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Status</b>
Own Funds	£35,848	Confirmed
SDDC	£12,500	Pending
Big Lottery/Sport England/ Local Fundraising	£100,000	Pending
<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>£148,348</b>	

## Assessment

Table 3

<b>Category</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Maximum score</b>
Eligibility	Y	
Target Groups	6	7
Project	4	5
Capacity of Organisation	14	15
Financial need	5	7
Innovation	2	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>37</b>

The Community Development Officer has assessed the application and the project has reached an overall score of 31 as outlined in the table above. This application exceeds the minimum score required for funding to be considered.

The Association have provided details of fund raising for phase 1 of their project, but funding for phase 2 which totals £100,000 has not yet been secured. There is therefore a risk that the project will not be completed.

Nevertheless, as described above, Area West Committee has indicated its “in principle” support for the Forton Community Centre Project and this ought to extend to the fundraising effort needed to build it.

Forton Community Association expect to raise the majority of funds they still need from Sport England and the Big Lottery and they are at present preparing detailed grant applications to these bodies.

These applications are more likely to be successful if they can demonstrate significant local support, including that of SDDC.

## **Recommendation**

Therefore, it is recommended that a provisional grant offer of £12,500 be made to Forton Community Association towards the Forton Community Centre Project, subject to the necessary funds to complete the project being raised within the next 12 months.

## **Financial Implications**

The Community Grant Scheme budget is £107,000. To date £54,246 of grant funding has been approved. This leaves a remaining budget of £52,754. The grant requested in this report for £12,500 can be funded from this budget.

## **Council Plan Implications**

Focus Four: Health and Communities – We want communities that are healthy, self reliant and have individuals who are willing to help each other.

## **Carbon Emissions & Adapting to Climate Change Implications (NI 188)**

The centre will have provision for cycle racks to encourage local use of bicycles. A community centre may also reduce car journeys to attend clubs and events elsewhere.

## **Equality and Diversity Implications**

Forton Community Association has confirmed that disabled access and disabled toilet facilities will be provided. The Association will also work the SSDC Community Cohesion Officer and the South Somerset Disability Forum to inform the internal Centre design for phase 2.

**Appendix 1:** *Location map*

**Background Papers:** *Community Grant Criteria  
([www.southsomerset.gov.uk/communities/funding-for-your-group-or-project](http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/communities/funding-for-your-group-or-project))  
Grant applications on File  
AW Committee March 2011 Capital Grants*

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