

Grant to Somerton Town Council (Executive Decision)

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Purpose of the Report

Councillors are asked to consider the awarding of funding towards the costs of new projector equipment and signage at Edgar Hall, in Somerton.

Public Interest

Community grants are available in each area to voluntary and charitable organisations, not-for-profit groups, Parish or Town councils and other organisations that benefit the wider community. Applications are encouraged that meet a clearly identified local need.

Somerton Town Council has applied for financial assistance from the Area North community grants programme. The application has been assessed by the Neighbourhood Development Officer who has submitted this report to allow the Area North Committee to make an informed decision on the application.

Recommendation

That Councillors consider this application for a grant of £3,280.17 to Somerton Town Council. The grant to be allocated from the Area North Community Grants budget, subject to SSDC standard conditions for community grants (appendix A).

Application Details

Name of applicant	Somerton Town Council
Project	Edgar Hall projector and signage
Total project cost	£6,560.34
Amount requested from SSDC	£3,280.17 (50%)
Recommended special conditions	None
Application assessed by	Chereen Scott, Neighbourhood Development Officer

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	6	7
C Need for project	5	5
D Capacity of Organisation	13	15
E Financial need	3	7
F Innovation	3	3
Grand Total	30	37

Background

Edgar Hall is a town council owned facility housing Somerton Town Council, Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC) Somerset Playing Fields Association and Parrett Catering all of whom are permanent tenants. There are a total of five letting rooms accommodating between 6 and 500 people dependent on the room. The facility is used by community groups on a regular and occasional basis, with private individuals hiring rooms for celebration parties. Regular business users include SSDC, Somerset County Council and the NHS.

Sales / Lettings at Edgar Hall have increased 24% in the last year, with a further 25% increase forecast for the current financial year. Marketing campaigns combined with internal and external improvements have improved the functionality / desirability of the facility.

Consultation

Feedback has been received from users that the current projection system is inadequate compared to the rest of the equipment available. Market research with other comparable venues indicates a higher specification of projection equipment being available. An in house mystery shopper programme also indicated a requirement to upgrade in this area.

Due to the size of the building users are often unsure of the location of the meeting room. Remote visual signage will improve the customer experience and efficiency of the use of the building.

Parish Information

Parish*	Somerton
Parish Population*	4,697
No. of dwellings*	2,234

*Taken from the 2011 census profile

The project

The project is to install a new projector system and internal signage. The existing projector system will be upgraded in the conference room and main hall to provide projection onto a screen with sound enabled through the existing or new audio configuration.

A new digital screen over the entrance to the main hall would provide signposting / welcome message for Edgar Hall clients. This will enable clients to navigate the building to their room. The system will be set up to operate remotely and have the capacity to be updated over a weekly/monthly period.

The project will be run by Somerton Town Council with Terry Philpott (Town Clerk) taking the lead.

Project Costs

Conference Room front projection	£1,513
Main Hall front projection	£1,952
Reception area digital signage	£468
Labour	£2,627
Total project cost	£6,560

Funding Plan

Funding Source	Funds secured
Parish Council	£3,280
Total secured	£3,280
Amount requested from SSDC	£3,280

Previous grants

Area North Committee awarded a grant of £1,000 to Somerton Town Council in 2016/17 towards the costs of the Somerton Recreation Ground Feasibility Study.

Consents and permissions

None applicable.

Conclusion and Recommendation

This application is for £3,280 representing 50% of the project cost. The Town Council has carried out consultation and market research to inform their decision to install a new projector and it will help ensure the Edgar Hall remains a well-used community building.

It is recommended that this application for £ 3,280 is supported.

Financial Implications

If the recommended grant of £3,280 is awarded, £21,720 will remain unallocated for 2016/17.

Council Plan Implications

The project supports:

Council Plan: Health & Communities: Support at least 50 community projects

Area North Development Plan priority: Self-help and community facilities

Carbon Emissions & Climate Change Implications

No implications arising directly from this.

Equality and Diversity Implications

A new, modern projector with the screen being at a suitable height will make viewing of presentation material easier to see.

Appendix A

Standard conditions applying to all Community Grants.

This grant offer is made based on the information provided in application form no. AN16/08 and represents 50% 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.