

Community Grant to Stoke sub Hamdon Parish Council (Executive Decision)

Director: Kirsty Larkins, Service Delivery
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Purpose of the Report

Councillors are asked to consider the awarding of a grant of £17,245 to Stoke sub Hamdon Parish Council towards Hamdon Youth & Family Centre Refurbishment.

Public Interest

Awarding grants is a key way that SSDC supports and helps to deliver community projects sponsored by Parishes and voluntary community organisations in the towns and villages across the district.

Stoke sub Hamdon Parish Council has applied to the Area North community grants programme for financial assistance with the costs of £47,398 towards the refurbishment of Hamdon Youth & Family Centre. The Locality Officer who is submitting this report, to enable the Area North Committee to make an informed decision about the application, has assessed the application.

Recommendation

That Area North Committee endorse the awarding of a grant, and recommend to District Executive that a grant of £17,245 be awarded to Stoke Sub Hamdon Parish Council towards the Hamdon Youth & Family Centre Refurbishment. The grant to be allocated from the Area North capital programme and subject to SSDC standard conditions for community grants (appendix A).

Note – Within the District Council's scheme of delegation, grants of up to £12,500 are considered by Area Committees but District Executive is the decision making committee for amounts over £12,500.

Application Details

Name of applicant:	Stoke sub Hamdon Parish Council
Project:	Hamdon Youth & Family Centre Refurbishment
Total project cost:	£47,398
Amount requested from SSDC:	£17,245
% amount requested	36%
Application assessed by:	Adrian Moore

Community Grants Assessment Score

The table below shows the grant scoring for this application. Applications must meet the minimum score of 22 to be considered for SSDC funding under Community Grants policies.

Category	Max Score available	Officer assessment score
A Supports Council Plan/Area Chapter	1	1
B Supports Equalities & Diversity	1	1
C Supports Environment Strategy	3	1
D Need for Project	10	9
E Capacity of Organisation	15	13
F Financial need	7	6
Total	37	31

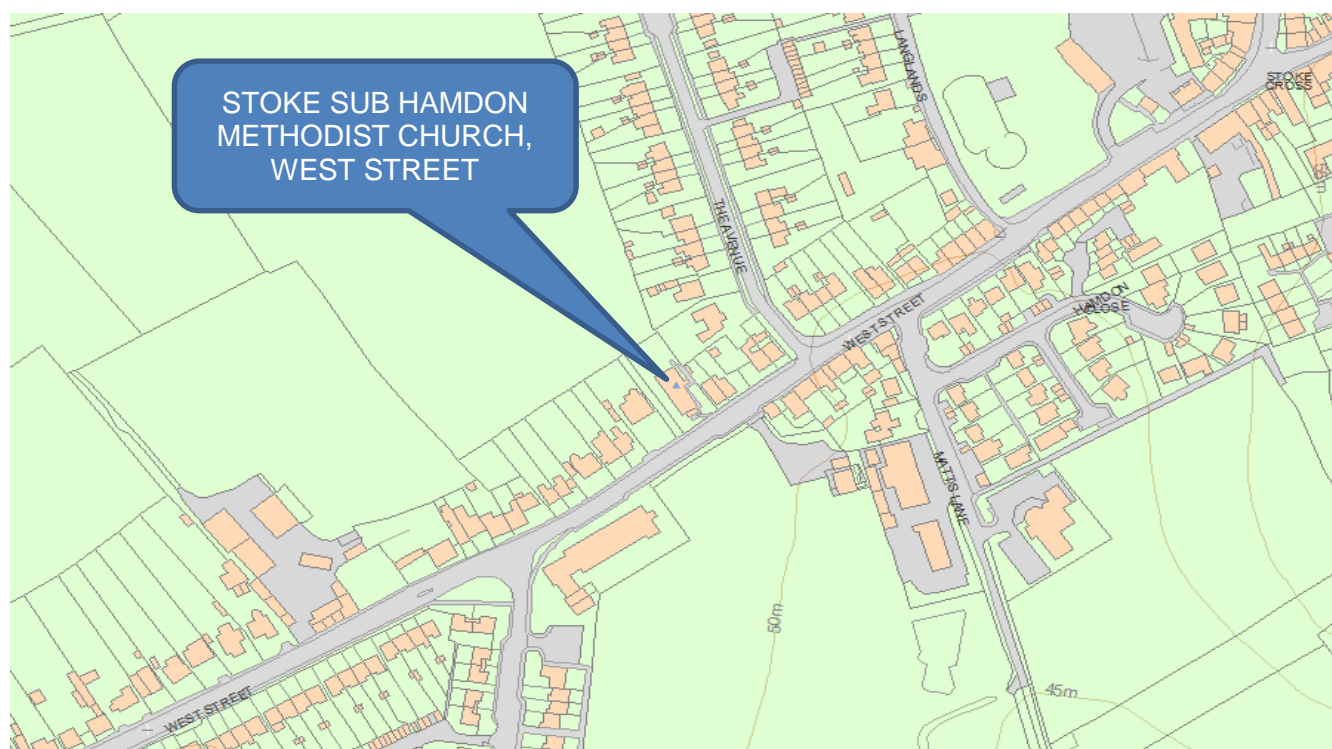
Background

Heritage Category: Listed Building Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1116987

Date first listed: 27-Oct-1987

Statutory Address: STOKE SUB HAMDON METHODIST CHURCH, WEST STREET



Stoke sub Hamdon Parish Council manages village services and through the Community Right to Bid process in 2016 went on to buy, with a Public Works Loan Board loan, the Old Methodist Church which closed for religious worship in 2012. The Parish Council purchased the property in November 2018 for £130,000 on behalf of the village and the building is now known as the Hamdon Youth & Family Centre.

The initial refurbishment itself into a Youth & Family Centre is the responsibility of the Parish Council as the Freeholder, and is led by the Chair and Vice Chair in terms of project progress. The Centre is leased to the Hamdon Youth & Family Centre Trust, a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (charity no. 1177307) who manage the Centre on a day to day basis. The Trust has a Service Management Agreement with the Parish Council and is a service user led group of Trustees. It has a peppercorn rent

under a lease with the Parish Council, with the Trust being responsible for internal maintenance and the Parish Council responsible for external maintenance as the Freeholder. The Centre opened for hire in April 2019 and re-opened again in April 2021 following the recent lockdown.

The building has become the Hamdon Youth & Family Centre the very first time the village has had a permanent meeting place in the village for their younger generation. The new Centre provides a place for groups such as the Brownies, Guides, Youth Club, Baby & Toddler Group and other children's groups, to play, compete, discuss social and moral values, have fun and learn together as they grow from babies into responsible young adults. The Centre is managed by a new village charity, with the majority of Trustees being the user group representatives themselves - very much a "by the community, for the community" project for generations of Stoke residents to come.

The Centre provides a much needed and long-awaited permanent home for organisations providing services for young people from the ages of 0 to 18yrs. It provides the opportunity for young people to learn social and moral values through all sorts of structured social and recreational activities, to be able to ask advice from Youth Workers in a supportive and non-threatening environment and to help young people to become responsible and thoughtful members of society who contribute to their local neighbourhoods. The hire fees charged by the Centre are designed to be affordable, encouraging maximum take up. There are currently four regular user groups of the Centre, but it is expected that this number will grow significantly once the Centre is fully modified with all the facilities it needs.

The Parish Council achieved Listed Building Consent for the modifications in October 2020. Phase 1 of the project modifications have been completed which included the removal of the church pews and the creation of a new sub-floor in the main church hall, together with new wood flooring. New lighting, power points and heating in each of the two halls have also been installed.

Following an access survey that was carried out in June 2017 by Access for All, it was recommended to provide a disabled toilet with full facilities and to widen one of the entrance doors to the main hall.

Parish information

Parish*	Stoke sub Hamdon
Parish population	1,968
No. of dwellings	905

*Taken from the 2011 census profile

The project

The funding request is for Phase 2 of the project which is:

- Renovation of side rooms to create new sub-floor, kitchen, office, toilets and disabled toilet
- Installation of wired Fire Alarm systems to meet fire regulations
- Installation of external CCTV to provide building security and to deter any anti-social behaviour
- Doorway alterations to enable 'All Ability Access' – Corridor to Hall

Local support / evidence of need

It had been clear for a number of years that there was a need for additional facilities in Stoke sub Hamdon that could offer availability and storage for organisations providing services for young people.

As a result of young people having no 'roots' there appeared to be increasing anti-social behaviour locally. The village now has the benefit of the support of two Youth Workers from NHS England - Children and Young People at the Hamdon Youth Group sessions which is improving matters.

SSDC's own Local Plan 2006-2028 also identified the lack of facilities for younger people in the village in the Spatial Portrait of the village. (p.121-122 at 8.73).

The Parish Council carried out a detailed Feasibility Study in 2015/16 to identify what was needed and available in the village. Two Public Consultation meetings were held in 2016 at which the Parish Council informed residents that it was proposed to take out a 20 year fixed interest Public Works Loan Board loan for £150,000 and the meetings gave a 90% vote in favour of the purchase. There is ongoing regular information on the proposals in parish newsletters and in parish council minutes. The Public Works Loan Board loan costs the parish council £9,549 per annum. The council also awards an annual grant of £2k to the Trust that manages the Centre.

Formal written support from South Somerset District Council's former Neighbourhood Development Officer and Somerset County Council's Youth & Community Service was given from the start.

Project costs

Project costs	Cost £
Renovation of side rooms to create new sub-floor, kitchen, office, toilets and disabled toilet	42,671
Installation of wired Fire Alarm systems to meet fire regulations	2,540
Installation of external CCTV to provide building security and to deter any anti-social behaviour	1,749
Doorway alterations to enable 'All Ability Access' – Corridor to Hall	438
Total	47,398

Funding plan

Funding source	Secured or pending	Amount £
Stoke sub Hamdon Parish Council	Secured	30,153
South Somerset District Council	Pending	17,245
Total		47,398

The Centre is hired out by the Trust to youth organisations each week. There are currently four groups using the facility. Only one of the two halls has been able to be used until now as the other was the church itself with pews. In the year to March 2020 income totalled £2,609 of which hire income was £2,225. Total payments out were £1,553. The Centre is also supported by an annual operating grant of £2,000 by the Parish Council.

Each year the Parish Council also puts aside £2,400 into a Hamdon Youth & Family Centre reserve towards its external building maintenance responsibilities, and £300 per annum is put aside by the Centre Trust itself into its own Maintenance Reserve.

Conclusion and Recommendation

It is recommended that a grant of £17,245 is awarded.

Financial implications

Within the District Council's scheme of delegation, capital projects seeking grant funding up to £12,500 are considered by Area Committees but District Executive is the decision making committee for amounts over £12,500.

Area North Committee is being asked to endorse this funding request for £17,245 ahead of it being referred to District Executive for a decision.

The balance in the Area North Capital programme is £103,125. If the recommended grant of £17,245 is awarded, £85,880 will remain.

Grants are awarded subject to all other funding being secured before the commencement of the project and are on a % basis of the full project costs. Payment of the grant cannot exceed the grant award and is proportionally reduced if full project costs are under budget.

Council Plan Implications

Council Plan themes and Areas of focus for 2021/22

Focus 3 – Environment

To keep South Somerset clean, green and attractive and respond to the climate and ecological emergency, we will work in partnership to:

- Continue the delivery of the Environment Strategy action plan, reducing our carbon emissions by 10% every year, to reach carbon neutrality by 2030
- Adopt and commence delivery of an Open Spaces Strategy promoting green infrastructure across the district
- Enhance the quality of the environment and its resilience and ability to adapt to climate change in partnership with our communities and businesses
- To protect South Somerset's landscape to seek to increase tree cover within our communities and the wider environment
- Support the delivery of the County wide Climate Change Emergency Strategy
- Initiate and support actions and infrastructure to encourage a shift to low carbon transport options including walking, cycling and electric mobility
- Promote and improve recycling and minimise waste through the roll out of 'Recycle More' across South Somerset from June 2021 through the Somerset Waste Partnership
- Support the development of environmental and ecological aspects within local, parish and neighbourhood plans
- Promote Nature Recovery Networks across the district, with a focus on delivery via the Ham Hill project
- Work with external partners to benefit the wider national cause in developing and generating clean energy storage to reduce renewable energy wastage in turn reducing use of fossil fuels in UK energy production.

Focus 5 – Healthy, Self-reliant Communities

To enable healthy communities which are cohesive, sustainable and enjoy a high quality of life, we will:

- Embed social value into all processes and activities to ensure we maximise the support we give to our communities
- Work with partners to keep and help our residents feel safe in their homes and communities

- Work with partners to reduce the impact of social isolation and create a feeling of community
- Work with partners to support people improving their physical and mental health and wellbeing
- Enable quality cultural, leisure and sport activities
- Proactively support residents facing hardship
- Help tackle the causes of economic and social exclusion, poverty and low social mobility
- Support older people to live and age well by increase their independence, reducing loneliness, and improving financial security.

Area Chapter Implications for 2021/22

Healthy, Self-reliant Communities

- Support a range of improvements to community facilities through S106 and Community grants

Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

None.

Equality and Diversity Implications

The project aims to provide for people across all age and interest groups in the local community.

Background Papers

None

Appendix A

Standard conditions applying to all SSDC Community Grants

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 the 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 before starting the project, if these were not already in place at the time of the application.
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.
- Complete an evaluation survey when requested after the completion of the project.
- Note that they cannot apply for another community grant for the same project within a 3 year period of this award.

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 when buildings regulations are required.
- Incorporate disabled access and provide an access statement where relevant.

Special conditions

None