

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

19 November 2008

Joint Report of the Director of Finance and the Chief Leisure Officer

Part 1- Public

Executive Non Key Decisions

1 REALLOCATION OF GRANT

This report follows on from a request from Hadlow Parish Council to use a capital grant to finance an alternative scheme. The request was presented to the meeting of the Finance & Property Advisory Board on 1 October. However, Members felt that they needed further information prior to making a decision.

1.1 Request from Hadlow Parish Council

- 1.1.1 Hadlow Parish Council were awarded a grant of £7,606 to help finance a scheme to improve and upgrade the Hadlow Old School Annexe.
- 1.1.2 The project was cancelled because a structural engineers report indicated that the work would be significantly more complex than originally planned.
- 1.1.3 Hadlow Parish Council requested that the grant saved by the above cancelled project be reallocated to a new alternative capital scheme to improve Hadlow Cemetery. This scheme aims to improve the access to the cemetery so that users of all abilities can attend funerals, tend to graves and pay their respects. The scheme aims to replace and re-edge the gravel paths, carry out ground and tree-works where required to improve access for mourners and retile the roof of the cemetery shelter. A quote for £19,205 has been provided. A special works project grant for this scheme is calculated to be £7,555.
- 1.1.4 **This request was put to the Finance and Property Advisory Board at a meeting held on 1 October 2008** and consequently, the Cabinet Member for Finance resolved that:
- 1.1.5 *Before determining the application from Hadlow Parish Council, clarification be sought from the Parish Council regarding:*
- *the respective works funded by the annual revenue grant for maintenance of churchyards and the current request to use the 2007/08 capital grant to help finance the cost of Cemetery improvements;*

- *its intentions concerning graveyard memorial testing and an assurance that if this virement were allowed, there would not be a separate application for monies towards such testing.*

1.1.6 This was put to Hadlow Parish Council in a letter dated 10 October 2008 - see [ANNEX1].

1.1.7 Hadlow Parish Council responded by letter dated 15 October 2008 - see [ANNEX2].

1.2 Response

1.2.1 Hadlow Parish Council state that their £9,781 revenue grant for maintenance of churchyards was fully employed by the £15,000 annual cost of mowing grass, trimming hedges and generally keeping the cemetery and churchyard tidy. They also detailed the cemetery improvement works as:

- Complete edging on all paths and drives where necessary, take up existing gravel, lay fabric and relay original gravel and lay approximately 2" of new gravel.
- Tidy shrubs behind Memorial wall, remove foreign growth from all yew trees, cut back trees around main gate, dig out and clear borders leading up to the Memorial Wall, apply fabric and bark mulch to borders, and cut down dead tree by the Memorial wall. All cuttings to be burned on site
- Remove all peg tiles from roof of shelter, make good underneath roof and renew roof with new tiles.

1.2.2 Members will, therefore, see that the Parish Council confirms that the annual revenue grant for maintenance of churchyards and cemeteries is already fully committed.

1.2.3 Further, the Parish Council also confirms that it will not be making a separate application for financial support towards Memorial Testing.

1.3 Legal Implications

1.3.1 None

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.4.1 As noted in the report

1.5 Risk Assessment

1.5.1 There is a risk that, having committed a grant, the project may not proceed. Given that the funding package may involve bodies other than the Borough Council and the applicants this risk is unavoidable. However, unused budget can be recycled

to fund future applications. Payment of grant is made in arrears either after the completion of a project or after completion of interim stages. There is a risk that a project, once started, may not be complete; however experience shows this risk to be low. On occasions the scope of the project may be reduced and less work undertaken; in these cases the amount of grant paid can be reduced proportionately.

1.6 Recommendations

- 1.6.1 Members are asked to note the reply received from Hadlow Parish Council in response to the questions posed by Members of the Finance & Property Advisory Board
- 1.6.2 In the light of these responses, Members are **RECOMMENDED** to approve the proposed virement.

Background papers:

contact: Francis Gahan

Correspondence held on file

Sharon Shelton
Director of Finance

Robert Styles
Chief Leisure Officer