

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive

GRANT AID REQUESTS FROM PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS1. Purpose of report

To consider requests for grant assistance in accordance with the protocol for the consideration of grant aid to parish and town councils.

2. Grant aid applications

Two grant aid requests have been received from parish and town councils for consideration:

- A capital grant request from Awsworth Parish Council towards the cost of its play area improvement project at the Shilo Recreation Ground. Awsworth has requested financial support of up to £7,000 towards the cost of the works which are anticipated to be around £19,000 in total.
- A request from Stapleford Town Council towards the cost of its Remembrance Sunday event. Stapleford has asked the Council for grant aid of £1,994 towards the cost of the event.

Details of the applications are included in appendix 1. The agreed protocol for assessing grant aid to parish and town councils is provided in appendix 2 with the grants previously awarded under this scheme listed in appendix 3.

3. Financial position

No budgetary provision exists for capital grants to parish councils and the overall capital contingencies budget has been fully committed in 2021/22. If Members wished to support this request from Awsworth, an award could be made from the £20,000 provision for grants to parish councils included in the 2021/22 revenue budget.

Similarly, if Members wished to support the request from Stapleford, an award could be made from the grants to parish councils revenue budget.

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to CONSIDER the request and RESOLVE accordingly.

Background papers

Nil

APPENDIX 1

Revenue and Capital Grants1. **Awsorth Parish Council – Play Area Improvement Project**

Awsorth Parish Council has submitted a grant aid request for up to £7,000 towards its play area improvement project.

There are two recreation grounds within the Parish of Awsorth that are fully maintained by the parish council. Following an annual safety inspection last year, a number of items of play equipment were identified as needing to be replaced within 12 months. Since then, Awsorth has completed a scheme at The Lane Recreation Ground that included the removal and replacement of a slide, replacing damaged surfacing and removing rotten wooden logs. The total cost of the refurbishment was around £6,900.

In the meantime, the play equipment at the other site, the Shilo Recreation Ground, has deteriorated further and the Parish Council now receives regular complaints from park users. Awsorth has identified this as an urgent health and safety project but requires some funding support to ensure that the project can be fully completed at the earliest opportunity.

The Parish Council needs to remove the old climbing frame and would like to replace with a new unit; remove the bark under the climbing frame and replace with 'wet-pour'; remove the damaged mound and tunnel and replace with a new fully inclusive basket swing. Awsorth received three quotations for the scheme, with the preferred bid being for a total cost of £19,000 (plus VAT).

Awsorth had budgeted £14,500 within its precept for playground improvements in 2021/22 of which £6,900 has already spent on safety improvements to The Lane Recreation Ground. Awsorth has also spent around £3,500 on other unexpected health and safety repairs that was not included in the annual precept. Due to the urgency of the project, Awsorth has not been able to apply for funding via the regular channels (e.g. National Lottery, Sport England etc.) but has allocated some of the funds within its precept. This unfortunately still leaves Awsorth short by around £9,600. Awsorth has approached its two local County Councillors for financial support and is currently awaiting confirmation of any awards.

Awsorth Parish Council had closing reserve balance of £27,209 as at 31 March 2021. The Awsorth annual precept for 2021/22 was £79,522.

2. **Stapleford Town Council – Remembrance Sunday Event**

Stapleford Town Council has requested grant aid of £1,994 towards the cost of its recent Remembrance Sunday event.

This annual event is run by the Town Council and is one of the most important events in the town's calendar. The planned event will comprise of a procession through the town centre, followed by a service, two-minute silence

and the laying of wreaths with the service being led by the Reverend of St. Helen's Parish Church.

The Town Council is keen to attract new visitors into Stapleford to help local businesses and believe that the Remembrance event has achieved this in the past. Whilst clearly not its focus, the Town Council recognises the opportunity this event presents for businesses with the growing number of people that the event attracts.

In addition to extending invitations to local Veterans, Stapleford Town Council includes a number of local community organisations in its commemorations, which include Stapleford and Bramcote Combined Services; Equalized Club; Bramcote and Stapleford Conservative Club; and The Salvation Army. Youth groups are also involved including 1360 (Stapleford and Sandiacre) Squadron Air Cadets; local scouts and guides; boys brigade; and various sporting clubs. The event is also attended by the Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service and Nottinghamshire Police wherever possible. Involving young people in Remembrance, is helping to foster a sense of belonging and pride in the community, through connecting younger generations with local history and engendering a sense of commonality with fellow residents.

In planning this event, Stapleford Town Council will look further at ways in which community cohesion can be strengthened with a view to contributing further to the aims and objectives of Community Safety, Children and Young People, and Community Relations within the Sustainable Community Strategy. As well as this, we will consider the sustainability and growth of local business.

The main cost of the event will be incurred from the need for road closures and stewards to facilitate the procession through the town prior to the service. The roads are closed for around four hours and the stewards are contracted for the full period of closures. Stapleford also hires a PA system for the service which requires the use of the electricity box in Walter Parker VC Square (kindly provided by Broxtowe Borough Council). The total cost is expected to be around £2,750. There is £2,500 ring-fenced in the 2021/22 budget for Remembrance events this year, which would provide cover for any shortfalls. No further pledges of funding have been requested or received for the Remembrance event.

Stapleford Town Council has requested grant aid of £1,994 towards the cost of road closures, stewards and additional security at the Remembrance Sunday 2021 event.

Stapleford Town Council precept for 2021/22 was £97,182. Stapleford currently has confirmed reserves of £131,950, of which £84,000 is allocated for specific projects. The unrestricted reserves are set to be used to reduce the requirement to increase the precept in the coming financial year with a small contingency sum set aside for emergencies.

APPENDIX 2

Protocol for consideration of grant aid to parish and town councils

The protocol for the consideration of grant aid requests from parish and town councils was agreed by Cabinet on 8 June 2010. The key provisions are:

1. Grant aid will only be given in support of specific projects or services and not as a general grant towards the services provided by a parish/town council.
2. Revenue grant aid will only be considered towards services which act as a replacement for services which otherwise Broxtowe Borough Council would have to provide or which supplement services which the borough council provides so as to reduce the costs that Broxtowe would otherwise incur.
3. In applying for grant assistance the parish/town council will need to demonstrate how the service or project in question contributes to Broxtowe's aims and objectives as laid out in the Corporate Plan and the Sustainable Community Strategy.
4. In applying for grant aid assistance the parish/town council will need to provide evidence as to why they do not have the financial resources to provide the services or project in question and what the consequences would be for local residents and businesses if the service was withdrawn or the project not completed. This will include a requirement for the parish/town council to detail what other funding sources they have secured (or otherwise) and to provide a statement as to any reserves held and their planned use.
5. Preference will be given to support for the provision of mandatory services as compared with discretionary services.
6. Where grant aid is to cover the cost of a specified service, the parish/town council will be responsible at its own cost for providing an audited statement within six months of the end of the financial year concerned to confirm the amount of expenditure incurred and income received against which grant aid may be payable. Any grant payable would then be adjusted retrospectively if necessary following receipt of such an audited statement.
7. Grant aid will only be in respect of additional costs directly incurred by the parish/town council and will not cover the cost of any general overheads which the parish/town council would otherwise incur anyway as a result of their operations.
8. Grant aid will be cash limited in each year and the responsibility for costs increasing beyond the cash limit will normally rest with the parish/town council. Where such cost increases are considered to be unavoidable and beyond the parish/town council's control, then Broxtowe may be approached to seek a further grant award.

9. Where the parish/town council wishes to vary the service provided for which grant aid has been awarded, this should only take place after full consultation and with the agreement of Broxtowe.
10. Preference will be given towards one off capital projects rather than as a regular annual contribution towards the ongoing costs of providing services.
11. The parish/town council shall be required to provide such information as Broxtowe may reasonably request as to the actual outputs and outcomes arising from any service or project where Broxtowe makes a contribution.
12. Any grant contribution that may be awarded by Broxtowe need not be at the rate of 100% of net expenditure incurred but may be at a lesser rate to reflect such as its own corporate priorities, budgetary constraints or the availability of similar services or projects elsewhere.
13. Revenue grants will normally only be awarded for one year although an indicative amount for the following year may be given at Broxtowe's discretion. Capital grant aid will be towards the cost of a specific one-off project.
14. Requests for grant aid in respect of a particular financial year should normally be submitted by the end of October of the preceding year at the latest to assist with forward budget planning for both Broxtowe and the parish/town council. Broxtowe will endeavour to make a decision on such requests by the end of December in the year preceding that for which grant aid is requested.

APPENDIX 3

Grant Aid Awards to Parish/Town Councils

The table below lists the grants awarded under this scheme since 2014/15.

Date	Council	Amount	Purpose
01/04/14	Nuthall Parish Council	£2,000	War memorial construction (Capital)
16/10/14	Nuthall Parish Council	£2,500	Cemetery maintenance
02/06/15	Cossall Parish Council	£350	Memorial plaque
19/04/16	Eastwood Town Council	£5,000	Building refurbishment works (Capital)
04/07/16	Greasley Parish Council	£4,000	Upgraded heating system (Capital)
19/09/16	Awsorth Parish Council	£5,000	Heating system replacement (Capital)
09/01/17	Brinsley Parish Council	£4,000	Play facility repairs/replace (Capital)
03/10/17	Nuthall Parish Council	£1,820	Remembrance parade
12/10/17	Greasley Parish Council	£1,000	Christmas lights event
12/10/17	Nuthall Parish Council	£3,395	Cemetery maintenance
26/04/18	Nuthall Parish Council	£12,000	Cemetery roadway surface (Capital)
26/04/18	Nuthall Parish Council	£2,000	Summer Youth Club
11/10/18	Greasley Parish Council	£647	WW1 commemoration sculpture
15/08/19	Brinsley Parish Council	£2,070	Summer play day
10/10/19	Awsorth Parish Council	£1,250	Kitchen Refurbishment – Pavilion
10/10/19	Brinsley Parish Council	£2,300	Tree planting – commemoration
10/10/19	Nuthall Parish Council	£1,855	Remembrance parade
10/10/19	Stapleford Town Council	£2,010	Remembrance event
10/10/19	Trowell Parish Council	£3,500	Car park refurbishment
13/02/20	Brinsley Parish Council	£1,000	Festive lighting display
13/02/20	Brinsley Parish Council	£1,225	VE Day celebrations 2020
07/01/21	Kimberley Town Council	£1,200	New defibrillator
30/03/21	Kimberley Town Council	£1,200	New defibrillator
07/10/21	Nuthall Parish Council	£1,905	Remembrance parade