

Report of the Interim Deputy Chief Executive

CAPITAL GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS 2018/191. Purpose of report

To consider a capital request for grant aid in accordance with the provisions of the Council's grant aid policy.

2. Grant Aid Application

An application for capital funding has been received from St Helen's Church in Stapleford. The cost of the scheme to construct a Community Annexe at Stapleford Parish Church is estimated at £310,000. The Church has requested a grant of up to £5,000 towards the cost of a multi-purpose courtyard within the new Community Annexe. Details of the application are included in the appendix.

Given the nature of these schemes, any approved grant would normally be given on the basis of 25% of the actual costs incurred (given that it would relate to a non-Council owned asset) with a maximum figure specified in appropriate circumstances. The request is well within this limit.

Members should also note that the largest single grant awarded towards a capital project involving Church owned premises is £5,000.

3. Financial Position

No budgetary provision exists for capital grants to voluntary organisations. If Members were minded to approve the request from St Helen's Church, then an allocation from the Council's capital contingencies would be required from the anticipated 2018/19 budget within which £38,000 remains uncommitted subject to other reports on this agenda.

Recommendation

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

Background papers

Nil

APPENDIX**1. ST HELEN'S CHURCH, STAPLEFORD**

An application for grant aid has been received from St Helen's Church in respect of the construction of the Church Community Annexe at Stapleford Parish Church (St Helen's Church) on Frederick Road in Stapleford.

St. Helen's Church, which serves Stapleford and neighbouring communities, dates back to the 12th century and has around 280 members. Regular church activities include weekly services, weddings, baptisms and funerals. There is also more specific support provided for pastoral, bereavement, parental and children/young persons. The church produces a community magazine with 7,200 copies distributed raising the profile and promoting local groups and businesses.

The Church Hall also provides a venue for many local school visits and performances presenting concerts, plays, choirs and drama productions. The Village Venture Scheme and Stapleford Town Council have regularly used the facilities. The complex also provides facilities and a vibrant base for community groups such as parent and toddler group, fortnightly lunches and social meetings for senior citizens, slimming club, craft making group, karate club, local history club, civic services and regular pastoral training courses. The total annual footfall is estimated to be in excess of 20,000 people.

The Church is constructing a new Community Annexe building within the grounds of the ancient churchyard, with all the relevant permissions obtained.

Previously in 2008, the Church was refurbished with new flooring, lighting and electrics, heating, audio-visual system and upholstered chairs (instead of fixed pews). The space created is versatile and can be cleared for use as an exhibition space, rearranged as a cafe or for other social events. At the time it was not possible to include other hospitality features within the existing building, such as toilets, kitchen and meeting room/classroom. As the plans took shape for a connected annexe, it was agreed that the annexe must be able to operate both as providing extra facilities for the Church and as a fully independent facility available for other community groups.

The nearby Church Hall (a much larger space) is fully utilised for activities. The loss of the Maycliffe Hall and the Meeting Place community café has reduced the local provision of medium-sized social spaces and this has increased the demand for these facilities. The local MP has indicated that it would be a good place to hold her surgeries and written support has been provided by many of the local community leaders.

The Community Annexe is beginning to take shape with the piling and foundations now complete.

In this application, the Church has requested grant aid towards a multi-purpose courtyard within the new Community Annexe. The Church sees the courtyard as having great community potential. There would be free access to the courtyard via the Community Annexe allowing for a whole range of

activities to be used by the community and church for social, spiritual and educational purposes. The space will be an area for social interaction for weddings, funerals, events, school activities, nursery group activities and meetings of various community groups. The space would also allow for quiet contemplation.

The overall cost of the scheme is estimated at £310,000. This will be funded from a variety of sources including direct donations, fund raising, grants and loans. The Church has received funding from a variety of grant giving bodies including WREN; Joseph Rank Trust (£20,000); Garfield Weston Foundation (£15,000); Beatrice Laing Trust (£5,000); All Churches Trust (£3,450), Lady Hind Trust (£1,000) Council Councillors Divisional Fund (£1,000) and Stapleford Town Council (£800). Further capital funding is available through loans (including from the Diocese of Southwell), although the Church is keen to limit the reliance on loans.

The financial statements for the Parish of St. Helen, Stapleford for the year to 31 December 2016 have been provided for scrutiny. The Parish accounts consist of St Helen's Church and St Luke's Church. The accounts are separated between unrestricted and a restricted fund (Community Annex project). Total income generated amounted to £223,723, with £79,980 being unrestricted and mostly relating to donations and fundraising. Expenditure of £143,123 mainly related to the Diocesan Parish Share and other payments. Total funds as at 31 December 2016 were £157,711 (represented by cash and bank balances), which included £78,530 in the restricted fund.

The applicant has provided an updated statement of the financial position as at 31 December 2017. In summary the General Fund amounts to £66,600 including allocations for cash-flow (£21,700 based upon two-months expenditure); a youth worker (£21,000); rental of the Church Plant at Montrose Court (£12,000); restricted legacy for existing building repair (£6,000); supplementary allocation for building repair following inspection (£4,000) and a restricted legacy for music provision (£500). This leaves just £1,400 as unallocated.

This is the first application that the Council has received from St Helen's Church, Stapleford and for 2018/19 the Church has requested a grant of £5,000 towards the cost of a multi-purpose courtyard within the new Church Community Annexe at Stapleford Parish Church.

No approved capital budget exists for schemes of this nature and an allocation from capital contingencies would be required if a grant were to be awarded. Members should also note that the largest single grant awarded towards a capital project involving Church owned premises is £5,000.