

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

From: Head of Community Development

Report Number: **L51**

To: **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
(COMMUNITY SERVICES) COMMITTEE**

Date of Meeting: 19 July 2011

REVIEW OF BABERGH'S COMMUNITY GRANTS SCHEME 2010/2011

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This annual report provides an overview of the activity funded under the Council's Community Grant Scheme in 2010/2011 and sets out future plans for the Scheme in broad terms.
- 1.2 Speakers from a small selection of the groups that have been supported by Babergh's Community Grant Scheme in 2011/12 (the Quay Theatre, the Sudbury CAB, the Kernos Centre and Great Cornard Sports Centre) will make brief presentations to the meeting.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the content of the report be noted, subject to any comments which the Committee may wish to make as a result of its consideration.
- 2.2 That the proposals for the allocation of Community Revenue Grant funding in 2012/13, as detailed in Para 7.11 of this report, be endorsed.

The Committee is able to resolve this matter

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report, which is a description of activity that was funded within the Council's budgeted expenditure for 2010/2011.

4. Risk Management

- 4.1 This report is most closely linked with the Council's Significant Business Risk No. 9, Management of Major Programmes and Projects. Key risks are set out below:

Risk Description	Likelihood	Seriousness or Impact	Mitigation Measures
Risks are associated with not having adequate monitoring in place to ensure that all grants are made in accordance with agreed criteria, meet the council's strategic priorities and represent value for money.	LOW	MEDIUM – poor targeting of scarce resources of the Council	Adoption of an adequate policy, keeping tight budget control, close monitoring, and reporting of activity and outcomes to Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Any future reduction in grant aid has unintended and serious consequences for the organisations concerned.	Medium	Medium	Close consultation with recipients and targeted approach to cuts.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 There has been close and ongoing consultation with existing grant recipients about the reduction in the Community Grants Scheme in both 2011/12 and 2010/11. Consultation with groups that are not currently funded and who would benefit from funding to provide services in line with the Council's strategic themes has also been undertaken; but on a low-key, word of mouth basis in order not to stimulate demand that cannot be met.

6. Equality and Diversity Impact

- 6.1 In terms of impact, a number of the equality groups were adversely affected by the reduction in grant aid to voluntary and community groups in both 2011/12 and 2010/11. The impact of the reducing grant funding programme is monitored on an ongoing basis. The main mitigation measures have been around supporting the development and fundraising efforts of the groups concerned. While this has helped to reduce the impact of the Council's grant reductions it cannot entirely replace the confidence and security that ongoing financial support from their local council provides.

7. Shared Service/Partnership Implications

- 7.1 The two existing grants and community development teams of BDC and MSDC will combine into a new, single, unified team in the proposed integration arrangements from April 2012. During the year 2012/13 it is anticipated that the new single Grants Team will manage two separate grant pots (one for BDC and one for MSDC) and will allocate funds in line with the two existing and different grant policies. MSDC continues to invest more than BDC in this service area.

7.2 One of the first tasks for the new BDC and MSDC Grants Team will be to develop a joint Grants Policy and allocation process and to seek approval from both Councils to run the new arrangement from 2013/14. It is expected that the new Grants Scheme will change the way that community groups are supported in their development across both districts to reflect the requirements of the Localism Bill. Reductions in support from funding agencies and revenue reduction issues will also impact upon the way community and voluntary groups operate and deliver services within both BDC and MSDC. The focus needs to be on supporting volunteers and creating the conditions within which active communities can thrive. Suffolk benefits from over 67,000 volunteers but there are costs associated with their involvement. They need co-ordination, professional advice, training, materials, insurance and transport. They need to be inspired and encouraged to give their time to benefit their communities. A co-ordinated approach to dealing with this by both BDC and MSDC will help further enable the enormous contribution that individuals and organisations make to their communities.

8. Key Information

Background

- 8.1 Babergh's existing Community Grant Scheme is a discretionary funding area made up of a wide range of grants from £150 to over £50,000, with over 40 organisations being assisted each year. These recipients are very varied; from a village Community Coffee Centre to the CAB. Revenue funding falls into two categories, core funding for ongoing services and grants towards annual activity. Babergh has funded, for example, arts projects, a theatre, lunch clubs for older people, umbrella organisations providing funding and development advice to local groups, two CABx, one project providing support for ethnic minorities, youth projects, projects that support and sustain the countryside and bio-diversity, services for vulnerable groups in the community and sports activities and inclusion projects.
- 8.2 The arrangements for our grant aid range from a simple small annual donation to three-year funding agreements. Purchasing community activity through grant funding is a cost effective and socially useful way of providing services and Babergh has a strong record on this. The grants scheme is linked in to the strong community development focus of the Council and closely interwoven with the developmental roles of other key services such as sport, leisure, arts, young people's activities, rural protection and development, economic development and tourism. As such, grant funding is a part of the complete community development offering of the council.
- 8.3 Babergh's current grants scheme was launched in 2008/2009. It was significant because, for the first time, the new policy directly linked the allocation of discretionary funding with the Council's Strategic Plan. It also streamlined the application process and simplified the allocation process for recipients, who previously had up to 16 different ways of applying for grant aid in Babergh. In these respects it has been a success. However, the present grant system had been built on the premise of budget growth so the process of reducing the grants budget by large amounts over the last two years has been difficult.

The current grants policy

- 8.4 Babergh`s Grants Policy applies to grant funding partners and voluntary and community groups for undertaking work, activity or provision of services that are not seen as strictly statutory activities of the Council. The fundamental objective of the policy is that activity funded should support the Council's Strategic Plan and that activities and services provided should be shown to produce benefits that assist the Council in delivering the plan. Additionally, grant funded projects and services must be seen to deliver benefits within the Babergh area to local residents and to provide match funding for Babergh's contribution. The policy is supported by standard application and monitoring forms and guidance notes for applicants. All groups in receipt of grant aid are assessed, as a result of information given on a standard form, as contributing towards one or more strategic objective, as being capable of delivering and recording outputs, as bringing considerable additional match funding into Babergh, as having an open access policy and as being properly constituted and run on a sound financial basis.

Revenue Funding 2011/12

- 8.5 Details of all the recipient organisations and the activity for which funding was granted in 2010/11 are shown on Appendix 2. This expenditure matched with other finance raised by the organisations concerned, helped to attract a further £6,596,648 of activity
- 8.6 All our funding went towards activity within the Babergh area, provided for the benefit of Babergh residents, though some projects are rolled out over a wider area and also serve residents from other Districts. Much of the revenue funding was for long standing commitments to local agencies and partnerships that continue to deliver activities that support the Council's Strategic Themes. The funding list shown in Appendix 2 demonstrates a good spread of activity across the councils themes.
- 8.7 There were no new groups or organisations funded this year due to the reduced overall allocation and the need for funding of all existing recipients. It is not intended to seek applications for 2012/13 from new groups unless funding becomes available from external sources or an existing beneficiary is found to no longer meet the necessary standards or require their grant.
- 8.8 Babergh`s Community Grants policy needs to develop in response to a complicated regional and national environment. This means an increase in capacity building and partnership facilitation and, this year, has led to a corresponding re-allocation of a small amount of revenue funding away from infrastructure groups and towards local partnership initiatives for vulnerable communities and communities that have been affected by cuts from other sources. This approach has been a response to the increasing problems facing new groups or agencies attempting to increase or adapt their services to the current environment.

- 8.9 The current environment has led to an increase in the demand for many crucial community facilities and services and also in the severity of the circumstances facing potential service users. Speakers from a small selection of the groups that have received funding this year will make brief presentations to Overview and Scrutiny Committee to give some background relating to the outputs achieved and problems faced by funded organisations. Mini case studies from five of our funding recipients are also provided in Appendix 1 to help give a flavour of the work being undertaken.
- 8.10 Information relating to the total amount allocated to the number of different areas of activity, all of which relate to the Strategic Themes, is shown In Appendix 3.

Revenue Funding 2012/13

- 8.11 The plan for 2012/13 is to follow Babergh`s grants policy and allocate the grants budget (the size of which to be determined by the business planning and budget process) in accordance with the existing criteria; which is outlined in Para 7.4 above. As no new applications are being invited this approach will mean that the current recipients of revenue grant, providing they continue to fulfil the criteria outlined in Para. 7.4, will receive a grant allocation in 2012/13 (the size of which will depend on the agreed budget). During the course of that year, BDC and MSDC Members will be presented with proposals for a new joint BDC/MSDC Grants Policy; with the expectation that this will be in operation for the year 2013/14 onwards. Effectively, this means that Babergh`s current grants policy will continue for one further year only.
- 8.12 Babergh`s Community Grant Scheme has been reduced each year for the past two financial years (this is illustrated in graph form at Appendices 5 and 6). Many long standing partner organisations and many community services have been adversely affected by these significant budget reductions in grant aid. It is hoped that this continuing downward trend in the grants budget can be halted if the necessary savings in the year 2012/13 are achieved by the rationalisation of community development staffing structures and processes as part of Babergh/Mid Suffolk integration. If this is the case, the proposal to maintain the community grants budget for 2012/13 at this years` level will be made during the coming annual business planning and budget process.

The Quay Theatre

- 8.13 Following a detailed review of the financial stability and management of the Quay Theatre last year and the subsequent reduction in the level of grant funding from Babergh (from £51,000 to £36,000) some dramatic changes have taken place. A new voluntary management structure has been established, which has been closely supported and monitored by Babergh officers. The success of the new structure is still hard to gauge but an enormous amount of enthusiasm and energy is evident and serious attempts to address public relations, advertising, fund raising and programming issues have been made.

8.14 It is proposed, strictly subject to continued proven progress and providing the budget for Community Grants is not reduced next year, to award a further single year's funding to the Quay Theatre of £36,000 in the financial year 2012/13, which is at the same level as this year. This would be made on the understanding that the Theatre needs a further year of development before it is in a position to make a long term judgement about the future. If that development year in 2012/13 is successful, we could consider entering into a three year Service Level Agreement with the theatre in order to offer some future stability for forward planning.

Capital Funding

8.15 A total of £128,200 capital funding was allocated during 2010/11, including £25,000 towards the new joint use community hall at Monks Eleigh and £20,000 towards the new facilities at Brantham Leisure centre. Details of all these organisations and projects are shown on Appendix 4. This expenditure put together with the £1,397,000 of monies raised by the organisations themselves funded a total of £1,525,200 of capital projects in the Babergh area.

8.16 We have funded five village and community hall improvements, playgroup equipment, young peoples activity group equipment, play area equipment, hedge and tree planting and information boards for a nature reserve and tools and equipment for countryside management groups. There are several projects this year that requested and gained funds for cricket based activity and money allocated toward IT equipment for volunteer use. All of these projects fall under the Councils Strategic themes.

9. Appendices

Title	Location
1. Mini case studies about how grant monies were spent in 2011/12 to meet Babergh's corporate objective	Attached
2. Details of all the recipient organisations and the activity for which revenue funding was granted in 2010/11.	Attached
3. Chart illustrating the total amount allocated to the Council's Strategic Themes	Attached
4. Capital funding allocations in 2010/11	Attached
5. Reductions in the revenue grants budget by individual funding categories	Attached
6. Overall total reductions in the revenue grants budget	Attached

10. Background Documents

Babergh Discretionary Grants Policy agreed by Strategy Committee on 18 September 2008.

Authorship:

Name Sara Jackson

Job Title Community Partnership Manager Email: sara.jackson@babergh.gov.uk

H:\DOCS\Committee\REPORTS\Overview&Scrutiny\Community\2011\190711-Review of Grants Report.doc

SUDBURY AND DISTRICT CAB

We dealt with 4647 issues on behalf of clients during 2010/11, with an additional 987 clients not being able to access advice on their first visit to the bureau due to an excess in demand over available volunteer advisers. In the last 6 months, there has been a rise of 9% in issues that clients are seeking advice and support for.

Ann Furlonger- Sudbury CAB

KERNOS COUNSELLING CENTRE, SUDBURY

We have received 84 referrals so far this year. We currently have 49 people on our ever increasing waiting list. Despite a major expansion in the number of client hours provided by the centre, demand is not being met and referrals of younger, more complex and more urgent cases keep flooding in from across Babergh.

No of sessions in the last 6 months = 1230
No of sessions in the previous corresponding period = 972
Increase 27%

No of referrals in the last 3 months = 67
No of referrals in the previous 3 months = 49

This means that our waiting list is growing with a 128% increase on the figure of 21 this time last year.

We are also observing an increase in the complexity of referrals and vulnerability of clients we see.

The extra pressure on the core capacity of the service is therefore constantly under pressure and cannot realistically be sustained without additional support.

Chris Boatwright - Kernos Centre.

HOME START BABERGH

Home-Start Babergh is extremely grateful for the funding it receives from Babergh District Council. However, if there were to be any further reduction to the amount of funds provided, it would prove extremely detrimental to the support which Home-Start Babergh is able to offer. Due to the recent reduction in funding from both Suffolk County Council and Babergh District Council, the Board of Directors took appropriate action to curtail expenditure. If further cuts were made staffing would have to again be reduced, thus having an impact on the number of volunteers the scheme could operate with, and consequently the number of families which Home-Start Babergh is able to support would be greatly reduced.

Over the previous 3 years referrals have increased by approximately 7 % year on year, and more noticeably in recent months the number of referrals has grown with those families needing additional support for more complex problems. Home-Start Babergh supported 98 families last year, reaching over 250 children, through a network of fully trained volunteers. If the current funding were to remain the same it is hoped to be able to support a similar number of families during 2011/2012 and 2012/2013.

Sarah Mann- Homestart Babergh.

SUFFOLK ARTLINK

Suffolk Artlink delivers a programme of work to encourage disadvantaged people to enjoy and participate in high quality arts activities. Babergh's funding has helped support our work with older people, young people with complex needs and young carers in the district.

We continued our work with older people - partnering with Gainsborough's House, Babergh's sheltered housing schemes and DanceEast to deliver a programme of Museum outreach talks and visits, dance and movement workshops and a performance at Lavenham Village Hall.

We also worked with young people at Hillside Special School, using soundbeam to help pupils take part in group music-making. Young carers were involved in developing and making a film to express how caring for a family member impacts on their lives. The film was screened at a special event at The Cut in Halesworth and is also available to view on-line.

Hayley Field - Suffolk Artlink

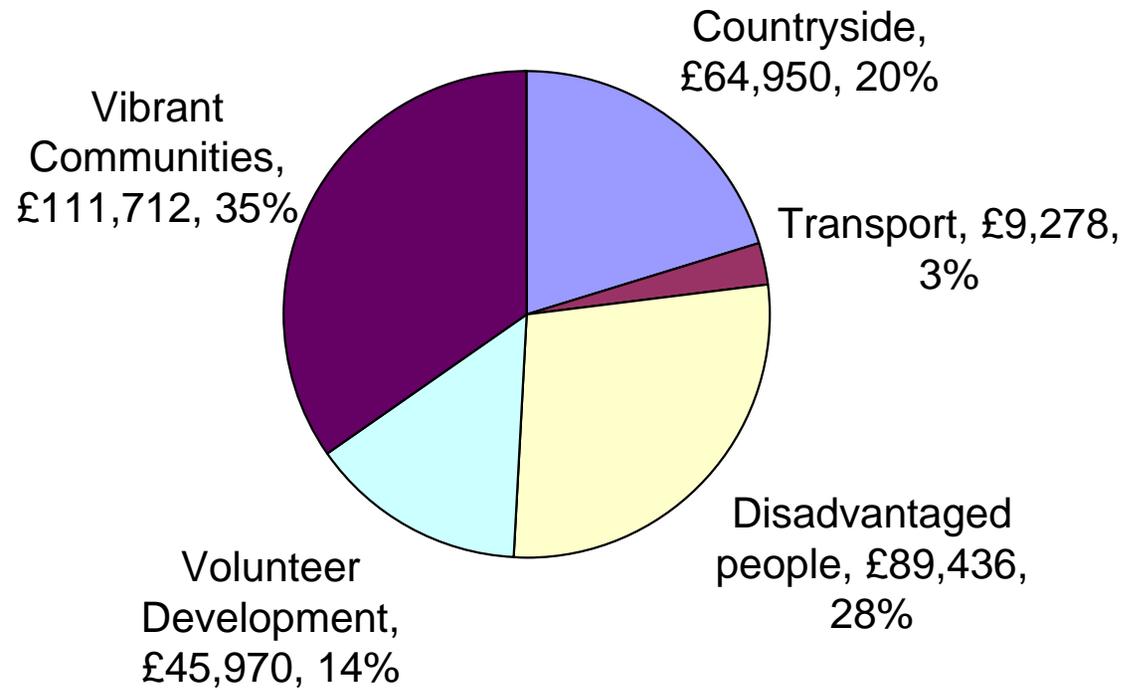
SUDBURY COMMONLANDS

On behalf of the Trustees of the Sudbury Common Lands Charity and myself I would like to let you know how important Babergh's capital grant support of £395 is to a small organisation like ours.

As grants become increasingly difficult to come by, Babergh Council has continued to be very supportive of our work. The recent grant towards the purchase of hand tools for our the Riverside Projects Team volunteers and materials for improving access surfaces demonstrates that Babergh Council is committed to supporting local charities to maintain high standards. This in turn has enormous social benefits, particularly for those volunteering or enjoying Sudbury's riverside environment.

Group Name	Grant Purpose	Grant Amount 2010/11
Bridge Project	Supports adults with learning disabilities, provides lunch club - core funding	£ 4,500
Edens Project	Supports young people with horticultural, music, information, IT activities core funding	£ 10,000
Home Start Babergh	Support for parents of young children through referrals from GPs, midwives, health visitors - core funding	£ 10,000
Kernos Centre	Counselling support for younger people - core funding	£ 3,000
DanceEast	Young People - engagement using dance; project specific	£ 4,500
Eastern Angles	Drama productions to Babergh at established venues.	£ 400
Suffolk Artlink	Gainsboroughs House -artist led workshops; Sheltered Housing Scheme dance workshop - re falls. Film making for adult young carers - core funding	£ 1,500
Dedham Vale AONB & Stour Valley Project	Core fund (part of long term agreement)	£ 23,452
Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB Unit	Continuation of works at SC&H AONB	£ 18,251
Greenways Countryside Project	Continuation of Project works in green areas on Babergh/Ipswich BC border	£ 6,470
Managing a Mastepiece	Project works in Stour valley; landscape history; building skills; archeological field walking, hopper bus; restoration of Stour Lighter - Core funding	£ 3,800
Suffolk Biological Records Centre	Provides ecological information to BDC regarding planning applications - Core Funding	£ 7,877
Suffolk Wildlife Trust	Provides wildlife information for planning - core funding	£ 1,500
Hadleigh Elderly Peoples Welfare Committee	Monthly meetings for elderly - core funding	£ 678
Harwich Foot Ferry	Seasonal foot ferry support - Shotley/Harwich/ Felixstowe - core funding	£ 2,500
Hadleigh Community Transport Group	Recruitment & Training Additional drivers for increasing use of vehicles during evenings and weekends	£ 500
Sudbury Town Area Rural Transport	Providing dial a ride service in and around Sudbury core funding	£ 1,500
Ipswich Citizens Advice Bureau	Core funding	£ 7,673
Sudbury & District Citizens Advice Bureau	Core funding	£ 51,900
Ipswich and Suffolk Council for Racial Equality	Supports minority groups, race issues - core funding	£ 1,500
Solo Housing	Support for single homeless people within Babergh - core funding	£ 3,570
Ipswich Womens Aid	Support for abused women - core funding	£ 1,500
Suffolk Hate Crime	Racial issues - core funding	£ 3,500
Rural Development Managers	Support for community groups across the district, funding seminars and fundraising advice	£ 6,000
Suffolk Safeguarding Children Board	BDC contribution to countywide board	£ 10,000
Orchestras Live	Music project work with all age ranges - project specific in Babergh	£ 2,760
Suffolk Digital Cinema Network	Enables Babergh communities to hire equipment and digital film at very low cost	£ 300
Suffolk Museums Partnership	Provides information and education for museums in the district - Core funding	£ 500
Haven Gateway Partnership	Core Funding/Membership of strategic group	£ 6,000
Suffolk Chamber of Commerce	Membership - provides valuable input from chamber	£ 920
Quay Theatre	Local live theatre and entertainment - Core Funding (incls. cost of feasibility study).	£ 52,500
East Bergholt High Leisure Centre	Deficit funding	£ 11,330
Hadleigh High Leisure Centre	Deficit funding	£ 11,330
Gt Cornard Sports Centre - Swimming Pool	Deficit funding	£ 2,275
Ipswich Council for Voluntary Services	Voluntary sector support - funding advice and form filling, advice about constitutions etc	£ 12,000
Gt Cornard Sports Centre	Continued project funding for five identified areas	£ 10,000
East Bergholt Leisure Centre	Support for three project areas: 1. GP referral scheme, 2. Increase range of equipment for those with limited mobility. 3. support for concessionary, unemployed and benefit recipients	£ 13,260
Hadleigh High Leisure Centre	Support for four project areas: 1. GP referral scheme, 2. increase access for wheelchair users and sight impairments, 3. Support for concessionary scheme for the retired and unemployed, 4. Defibrillator training for staff.	£ 9,600
Suffolk ACRE	Support for Village Hall Advisor Suffolk-wide.	£ 2,000
	TOTAL	£ 320,846

Grant Allocation 2010/11 Revenue



Group Name	Grant Purpose	Grant Approved
Tattingstone Village Hall	Replacement windows	£1,400
East Bergholt Nursery	Equipment	£730
Cockfield Little Cuties Playgroup	Equipment	£750
Elmsett Methodist Church Luncheon Club	Dishwasher	£500
1st Acton & Waldingfield Scout Group	Canoes	£750
St Peters Sudbury	Re wiring	£5,000
Bildeston Kings Pightle Park	Information board	£750
1st Long Melford Scout & Guide Group	New Scout hut	£10,000
Sudbury Rowing Club	New Boat with fitting for use by less ambulant rowers	£2,500
Lindsey Parish Council	Concrete setts	£800
RSPB - Flatford	Wildlife garden	£20,000
Monks Eleigh (MESCH)	Dual use community hall	£25,000
Shotley Peninsular Cycling Campaign	Feasibility study for cyclepath	£750
Whatfield Carpet Bowls Club	New equipment	£289
Brantham Leisure Centre	Extension and improvements to building	£20,000
Gt Waldingfield Bowls & Social Club	New ceiling	£2,600
Cockfield Parish Council	Trees for railway walk	£306
Lindsey	Hedge planting	£616
Sudbury Common Lands Association	Footpath repairs	£395
Hadleigh Cricket Club	New practice nets and matting	£5,000
Newton Green Village Hall Management Committee	New kitchen and loop system	£2,500
Kersey Parish Council	Play equipment	£3,000
Woodland BATS	Countryside management equipment	£2,000
Acton Cricket Club - batting net & matting	Batting net and matting	£750
Long Melford Cricket Club	All weather practice facilities	£6,000
Milden Pavilion	Play equipment and cricket strip	£1,840
BCT Volunteer Centre IT equipment	IT equipment for volunteer and visitor use	£2,000
Bridge Project	Level access training room	£12,000
	TOTAL	£128,226

Grant allocation by group 2008-12

