

RECORD OF EXECUTIVE DECISION TAKEN BY AN EXECUTIVE MEMBER

This form **MUST** be used to record any decision taken by the Elected Mayor or an individual Executive Member (Portfolio Holder).

The form must be completed and passed to the Service Manager (Committee & Administrative Services) no later than NOON on the second working day after the day on which the decision is taken. No action may be taken to implement the decision(s) recorded on this form until 7 days have passed and the Service Manager (Committee & Administrative Services) has confirmed the decision has not been called in.

1. Description of decision

To award a grant of £4,050 to Wilstead Village Hall Management Committee toward the cost of major repairs to the village hall floor that are over and above the usual maintenance requirements.

2. Date of decision

14 August 2023

3. Reasons for decision

To ensure that the village hall can continue to be used for a wide range of community events and services in the rural village of Wilstead.

4. Alternatives considered and rejected

The alternatives of not award the grant was consider and rejected as this could result in the village hall being closed for a protracted time whilst alternative sources of funding were sought.

5. How decision is to be funded

The decision will be funded from the approved budget/reserve for the provision of rural grants.

6. Conflicts of interest

Name of all Executive members who were consulted AND declared a conflict of interest.	Nature of interest	Did Standards Committee give a dispensation for that conflict of interest? (If yes, give details and date of dispensation)	Did the Chief Executive give a dispensation for that conflict of interest? (If yes, give details and the date of the dispensation).

The Mayor has been consulted on this decision

Not Applicable

Signed: Tom Wootton

Date: 14 August 2023

Name of Decision Taker: Tom Wootton

This is a public document. A copy of it must be given to the Service Manager (Committee & Administrative Services) as soon as it is completed.

Date decision published:15August2023.....

Date decision can be implemented if not called in:24August2023.....

(Decision to be made exempt from call in.....NO.....)

Bedford Borough Council – Report to the Mayor

14 August 2023

Report by the Chief Officer for Assessment, Application & Business Support

Subject: GRANT REQUESTS FROM RURAL ORGANISATIONS

1. Executive Summary

This report invites the Mayor to consider a request for financial assistance towards capital expenditure projects from a rural organisation.

2. Recommendation

The Mayor is requested to consider one application for financial assistance on this occasion and to determine the amount, if any, to be awarded.

3. Reason for Recommendation

To support rural parishes in the provision of local facilities that benefit rural communities through capital expenditure.

4. Key Issues

a) Legal Issues

The Council must have the power to provide grant funding to the organisation concerned. A source of power for payments to “voluntary organisations” (which are defined to be “a body which is not a public body but whose activities are carried on otherwise than for profit”) and to charitable bodies (in furtherance of their work in the United Kingdom) is s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972. A further source of power is the Localism Act 2011.

Financial regulations enable the Council to capitalise grants given to organisations for purposes that constitute capital expenditure.

b) Policy Issues

The Rural Affairs Committee has previously agreed guidelines which will be used in the evaluation of applications for rural grants. The current guidelines are shown at **Appendix A**.

c) Resource Issues

The Council's has established a reserve for the purposes of awarding Rural Grants. Whilst the award of grants will be funded from the Council's revenue budget, the agreed guidelines for awards require that grants may only be awarded to assist with funding for capital projects.

There is one application for funding for consideration set out in this report for a total sum of **£4,050**. There are sufficient funds remaining in the reserve to fund this request.

d) Risk Implications

In awarding any grant there is a small risk that funding may be used for purposes other than that for which the award is made. To safeguard against this risk, rural grant awards are only released to the applicant upon receipt of evidence that the work for which the award was made has been completed.

e) Environmental Issues

No adverse environmental implications have been identified as arising from the projects for which funding is sought.

f) Equality Impact

In preparing this report, due consideration has been given to the Borough Council's statutory Equality Duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, as set out in Section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010.

A relevance test for equality has been completed. The equality test determined that the activity has no relevance to Bedford Borough Council's statutory duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. An equality analysis is not needed.

5. Details

- 5.1 The Mayor is requested to consider the application shown at Appendix B having regard to the approved criteria attached at Appendix A to assist the Mayor in reaching a decision, details in respect of the following are also attached:

Appendix A

The criteria and guidelines previously agreed by the Committee for the award of rural grants.

Appendix B

Details of the applications for consideration.

Appendix C – for each parish:

- (a) the Council Tax Base (number of band D equivalent properties);
- (b) the total precept;
- (c) the precept charged for a Band D property;
- (d) the additional Band D precept required to raise a total of £1,000.

Appendix D – for each Parish:

The sums previously awarded under the current scheme to each Parish Council.

Appendix E

A list of the current band D parish precepts ranked from highest to lowest.

Appendix F

A list of the rural parishes ranked from highest to lowest by their Council Tax base.

6. Summary of Consultations and Outcome

The following Council Units or Officers and/or other organisations have been consulted in preparing this report:

None

No adverse comments have been received.

Report Contact Officers: Lee Phanco, Chief Officer Chief Officer for Assessment, Application & Business Support
E-mail: lee.phanco@bedford.gov.uk

File Reference: LP/rural grants

Previous Relevant Minutes: None

Background Papers: Applications from the Rural Organisations

Appendices:
A – Criteria for Rural Grants
B – List of Grant Requests
C – Council Tax Precepts etc.
D – Rural Grants Approved to Date
E – Parish Band D Council Tax (charges ranked high to low)
F – Parishes ranked by size of the Council Tax base

CRITERIA – RURAL GRANTS

Agreed by the Rural Affairs Committee 9 February 2016

- (a) An application can be made by a rural organisation or a rural Parish Council. The Borough Council must be satisfied that the Rural Parish Council considers the application to be in the interests of their local inhabitants. An application will not be accepted unless it has been signed by the Chairman or Clerk to the Parish Council stating it to be in the interests of their local inhabitants.
- (b) Applications can be made at any time, although they will only be considered by the Committee three times a year (normally, in April, September and January). To ensure an application is considered applicants should ensure that it is submitted six weeks before the date of the meeting. The Mayor may consider urgent applications at other times where it is considered appropriate that the application be considered outside of the normal committee cycle.
- (c) Grants may only be made for capital projects.*
- (d) Applicants seeking funding towards building projects valued at £100,000 or more are required to submit a Business Plan in support of the project and may be required to make a presentation to the Rural Affairs Committee.
- (e) Applicants seeking funding towards a project of £20,000 or more may be required to make a presentation to the Rural Affairs Committee at the first meeting that will consider the application.
- (f) The Borough Council must have the statutory power to make a grant for the purpose applied for (for example, community premises improvements/refurbishments to such premises and provision of recreational facilities).
- (g) Applicants are required to demonstrate that their projects meet one or more of the Council's Corporate Plan objectives as set out in the application form.
- (h) Projects which would normally be funded by statutory agencies, are unlikely to be eligible for a grant (e.g. improvements to street lighting, improvements to educational premises (unless to facilitate community use)).
- (i) Funding for projects on land not directly in the ownership of the organisation concerned will ordinarily only be considered if the organisation can demonstrate that the land will be available for use for the purpose of the grant for a period of at least 10 years (e.g. the construction of a multi-use sports area on third party land leased to an organisation for a period of over 10 years).

- (j) The Borough Council wishes to see its assistance maximised and, in any event, it may not have sufficient resources to assist all the requests put forward by a rural organisation or a rural Parish Council. The Borough Council would prefer to give assistance to a Rural Parish Council or an organisation approved by the Parish Council that has made efforts to provide a reasonable contribution from its own resources or other sources. Therefore, the Council's contribution to a project in the form of a rural grant will normally be limited to 50% of the cost of the project and applicants should be able to demonstrate that at least 50% of the cost of the project will be met from sources other than the Borough Council such as:
- (i) Fundraising generally;
 - (ii) Grant applications from other bodies;
 - (iii) Seeking loan assistance from the Association of Local Councils;
 - (iv) Loan from the Public Works Loan Board;
 - (v) Fundraising from the Parish Precept; and
 - (vi) Contribution by the Parish Council.
- (k) In determining the grant application due regard will be given to the level of contribution proposed by the Parish Council, the level of non-earmarked reserves held by the Parish Council and level of Council Tax Precept. Capital projects in rural parishes generally provide benefit mainly to the immediate community of the parish. The rural grants scheme recognises that parishes may experience difficulty in raising finance for capital projects, however, it is expected that local residents should contribute towards the cost of projects which will directly benefit the local community. Therefore, normally applications where the Parish Council is contributing towards the cost of a project will be viewed more favourably than applications where the Parish Council is not contributing.
- (l) In determining the grant application from organisations other than Parish Councils due regard will also be given to the level of financial reserves held by the organisation, the annual income and expenditure, and the ability or otherwise to generate additional income.
- (m) Levels of past funding by the Borough to individual Parish Council areas and parish precepts may be taken into account in assessing new grant requests.
- (n) Where funding is awarded the Borough Council will not be responsible for meeting any ongoing revenue costs. Applicants may be required to demonstrate that arrangements are in place to meet any ongoing costs arising from the project. Evidence may be requested that the project and/or its ongoing operation will meet any legislative requirements (for example health and safety requirements).
- (o) Where funding is awarded the recipient organisation will, if considered appropriate by Bedford Borough Council, be required to display a plaque provided by Bedford Borough Council recognising the grant awarded or otherwise will be required to recognise the funding on their letter heads/publicity material.

- (p) Where funding is awarded, payment will be made to the Parish Council upon completion of the project and receipt of evidence of the completion and the costs incurred (for example receipts for payments and a copy of the supplier's invoice). Where the funding is a contribution to a larger or more complex project consideration may be given to the release of funding on a phased basis as elements of the project are completed, subject to the whole project being fully funded and scheduled for completion (applicants requesting release of part or all of the funding prior to completion of the whole project should contact the Borough Council prior to commencement of the project).
- (q) Support for any project will normally be limited to £20,000 and the maximum amount awarded in respect of projects in any parish area should not normally exceed £20,000 in any period of two financial years.
- (r) Applications in excess of £1,000 will not normally be considered unless three independent quotations are provided for each aspect of the works, goods or services, costing in excess of £1,000 for which the grant is sought. Awards will be based on the lowest quote provided except where the applicant can demonstrate that this option does not represent the best value for money. The Borough Council may seek independent corroboration of any costs/quotes set out in the application.
- (s) Release of funding will be dependent upon the whole project being fully funded unless otherwise explicitly stated in the award letter.
- (t) Awards must be claimed within two years of the award being approved. Where unavoidable delays arise in respect of the project, and it is not possible for the award to be claimed within two years, the applicant should contact the Borough Council to request an extension to the claim period setting out the reasons for the delay. Where the Borough Council is satisfied that the delays are unavoidable an extension of up to one year will be allowed to the claim period. Normally only one extension will be allowed after which time a new application will be required.
- (u) Awards must be used only for the purposes set out in the application and as specified in the award letter. Where a change is proposed to the project, for any reason, the applicant must seek confirmation from the Committee that the offer of funding remains valid.
- (v) In the event that the cost of either the project as a whole or specific items for which a grant has been awarded are less than set out in the application, the Council may reduce the award accordingly. Applicants are advised to seek confirmation of the final award in these circumstances
- (w) It is expected that VAT will be reclaimed wherever possible where the applicant is a Parish Council. Applications should clearly set out the VAT element of any costs and state the position regarding the reclaiming of VAT. Where, in the opinion of the Borough Council, VAT may be reclaimed any award will be based on costs net of VAT.

- * Capital expenditure is generally expenditure on the acquisition or enhancement of an asset. Expenditure on routine maintenance and repair cannot normally be classed as capital expenditure.

GRANTS REQUESTS

<u>PARISH</u>	<u>DETAILS OF SCHEME</u>	<u>AMOUNT REQUESTED</u>												
<p>Wilstead Village Hall Management Committee</p>	<p>The application is submitted by Wilstead Village Hall Management Committee.</p> <p>The organisation is requesting £4,050 towards the major repair of the Village Hall floor.</p> <p>The Village Hall is 18 years old and the concrete on which the floor is laid when it was built has cracked in places, which is causing a Health and Safety risk. The application mentions that some minor accidents have already happened due to this much-needed repair.</p> <p>This major repair to the floor falls outside the usual maintenance and development of the hall that the committee does plan and undertake as part of a regular maintenance schedule to keep the hall in good working order. If these repairs are not undertaken, there is a possibility of the hall having to close for a protracted period, which will affect the local community.</p> <p>The project does not need planning permission and the organisation manage the hall on behalf of the Parish Council who own the premises.</p>	<p>£4,050</p>												
	<p>Three quotations have been provided for the repair work and noted in the table below. Quote 1 is the preferred option due to the fact that this is the only contractor that came to visit the property to give a quote for the works needed which inspired confidence along with good reviews of their workmanship and guarantee</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="465 1026 1451 1173"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th></th> <th>Cost (excl VAT)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Quote 1</td> <td>Repair, supply and install of flooring</td> <td>£8,100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Quote 2</td> <td>Repair, supply and install of flooring</td> <td>£10,500</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Quote 3</td> <td>Repair, supply and install of flooring</td> <td>£7,550</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Cost (excl VAT)	Quote 1	Repair, supply and install of flooring	£8,100	Quote 2	Repair, supply and install of flooring	£10,500	Quote 3	Repair, supply and install of flooring	£7,550	
		Cost (excl VAT)												
Quote 1	Repair, supply and install of flooring	£8,100												
Quote 2	Repair, supply and install of flooring	£10,500												
Quote 3	Repair, supply and install of flooring	£7,550												

The total cost of this project is estimated to be **£9,720** and the request is for **£4,050**, which is 50% of the total cost excluding VAT.

The organisation has secured **£2,025** from the Parish Council towards the project and will fund the remainder of the balance using their own funds.

Accounts have been provided for year-end 31st March 2022 and summarised in the table below:

	Total
Income	£29,685
Expenditure	£14,572
Surplus	£15,113

The total fund balance brought forward in their account at 01 April 2022 was **£41,715**. This is mostly represented by **£33,676** in the reserves account and **£8,743** in the current account.

The most recent rural grant awarded to Wilstead Parish Council was £9,083 in 2018/19

APPENDIX C**COUNCIL TAX 2023/24**

Parish	Total Precept	Tax Base	Band D Precept	Precept to Raise Additional £1,000
	£	Band D Equivalents	£	£
Biddenham	56,092.00	1,717.93	32.65	0.58
Bletsoe	12,335.00	121.24	101.74	8.25
Bolnhurst & Keysoe	16,005.00	364.97	43.85	2.74
Bromham	163,060.00	2,171.86	75.08	0.46
Cardington	8,606.12	142.25	60.50	7.03
Carlton & Chellington	21,500.00	397.89	54.04	2.51
Clapham	70,000.00	1,502.95	46.58	0.67
Colmworth	16,280.00	197.62	82.38	5.06
Cople	22,419.00	320.94	69.85	3.12
Cotton End	23,000.00	277.41	82.91	3.60
Dean & Shelton	6,128.00	198.72	30.84	5.03
Elstow	25,000.00	1,001.17	24.97	1.00
Felmersham & Radwell	19,700.00	363.76	54.16	2.75
Great Barford	94,650.00	921.73	102.69	1.08
Great Denham	42,607.00	1,756.27	24.26	0.57
Harrold	89,173.00	697.68	127.81	1.43
Kempston Rural	33,086.00	968.72	34.15	1.03
Knotting & Souldrop	5,400.00	123.00	43.90	8.13
Little Barford	0	18.30	0.00	54.64

Little Staughton	7,992.27	237.55	33.64	4.21
Melchbourne & Yelden	8,111.00	202.76	40.00	4.93
Milton Ernest	16,457.00	331.13	49.70	3.02
Oakley	56,860.00	985.84	57.68	1.01
Odell	9,370.00	136.74	68.52	7.31
Pavenham	12,012.00	348.68	34.45	2.87
Pertenhall & Swineshead	6,975.00	169.86	41.06	5.89
Podington	13,387.00	193.09	69.33	5.18
Ravensden	8,400.00	339.81	24.72	2.94
Renhold	23,399.00	1,307.26	17.90	0.76
Riseley	27,500.00	528.29	52.05	1.89
Roxton	17,760.00	210.85	84.23	4.74
Sharnbrook	60,000.00	1,001.03	59.94	1.00
Shortstown	81,738.00	1,650.44	49.52	0.61
Stagsden	10,000.00	188.93	52.93	5.29
Staploe & Duloe	14,324.00	140.89	101.67	7.10
Stevington	16,814.70	280.32	59.98	3.57
Stewartby & Kempston Hardwick	122,000.00	900.69	135.45	1.11
Thurleigh	11,000.00	284.35	38.68	3.52
Turvey	33,211.00	563.61	58.93	1.77
Wilden	10,200.00	199.42	51.15	5.01
Willington	18,116.00	385.32	47.02	2.60
Wilshamstead	52,500.00	981.70	53.48	1.02
Wixams	71,288.00	1,851.49	38.50	0.54

Wootton	262,594.66	2,742.36	95.75	0.36
Wyboston, Chawston & Colesden	15,660.00	332.56	47.09	3.01
Wymington	25,300.00	282.67	89.50	3.54

APPENDIX D**RURAL GRANTS APPROVED TO DATE**

	2001/02 to 2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total
Biddenham	46,800						5,000				51,800
Bletsoe	11,853										11,853
Bolnhurst & Keysoe	28,263			750					1,625		30,638
Bromham	81,200			11,800				15,983			108,983
Cardington	16,604			780		840			3,790		22,014
Carlton & Chellington	25,492										25,492
Clapham	83,477										83,477
Colmworth	62,610										62,610
Cople	46,454										46,454
Dean & Shelton	16,400	10,400									26,800
Eastcotts	22,745										22,745

Elstow	57,830										57,830
Felmersham & Radwell	15,000							4,631			19,631
Great Barford	41,356										41,356
Great Denham	0										0
Harrold	74,117						10,000		3,000		87,117
Kempston Rural	12,500										12,500
Knotting & Souldrop	8,890			7,640							16,530
Little Barford	0										0
Little Staughton	30,457				3,842						34,299
Melchbourne & Yeldon	52,179										52,179
Milton Ernest	21,500										21,500
Oakley	94,941	1,074				25,000					121,015
Odell	46,975	20,000							3,085		70,060
Pavenham	19,696			5,316							25,012

Pertenhall & Swineshead	40,636										40,636
Podington	39,103										39,103
Ravensden	29,000										29,000
Renhold	23,083				3,805			10,354	25,000		62,242
Riseley	69,738		5,100				17,750				92,588
Roxton	83,500										83,500
Sharnbrook	136,023										136,023
Stagsden	22,589								16,500		39,089
Staploe	18,789										18,789
Stevington	37,488										37,488
Stewartby	16,071										16,071
Thurleigh	30,450							5,000			35,450
Turvey	22,800				20,000				7,882		50,682
Wilden	6,162										6,162

Willington	24,288										24,288
Wilshamstead	101,250				9,093	1,817					112,160
Wixams	0										0
Wootton	81,649										81,649
Wyboston, Chawston & Colesden	5,920										5,920
Wymington	9,250										9,250
	1,715,128	31,474	5,100	26,286	36,740	27,657	32,750	35,968	60,882		1,971,985

COUNCIL TAX BAND D PARISH PRECEPTS 2023/24 (RANKED HIGH TO LOW)

Parish	Total Precept £
Wootton	262,594.66
Bromham	163,060.00
Stewartby & Kempston Hardwick	122,000.00
Great Barford	94,650.00
Harrold	89,173.00
Shortstown	81,738.00
Wixams	71,288.00
Clapham	70,000.00
Sharnbrook	60,000.00
Oakley	56,860.00
Biddenham	56,092.00
Wilshamstead	52,500.00
Great Denham	42,607.00
Turvey	33,211.00
Kempston Rural	33,086.00
Riseley	27,500.00
Wymington	25,300.00
Elstow	25,000.00
Renhold	23,399.00
Cotton End	23,000.00
Cople	22,419.00
Carlton & Chellington	21,500.00

Felmersham & Radwell	19,700.00
Willington	18,116.00
Roxton	17,760.00
Stevington	16,814.70
Milton Ernest	16,457.00
Colmworth	16,280.00
Bolnhurst & Keysoe	16,005.00
Wyboston, Chawston & Colesden	15,660.00
Staploe & Duloe	14,324.00
Podington	13,387.00
Bletsoe	12,335.00
Pavenham	12,012.00
Thurleigh	11,000.00
Wilden	10,200.00
Stagsden	10,000.00
Odell	9,370.00
Cardington	8,606.12
Ravensden	8,400.00
Melchbourne & Yelden	8,111.00
Little Staughton	7,992.27
Pertenhall & Swineshead	6,975.00
Dean & Shelton	6,128.00
Knotting & Souldrop	5,400.00
Little Barford	0

Parishes Ranked by Tax Base (High to Low)

Parish	Tax Base
Wootton	2,742.36
Bromham	2,171.86
Wixams	1,851.49
Great Denham	1,756.27
Biddenham	1,717.93
Shortstown	1,650.44
Clapham	1,502.95
Renhold	1,307.26
Elstow	1,001.17
Sharnbrook	1,001.03
Oakley	985.84
Wilshamstead	981.70
Kempston Rural	968.72
Great Barford	921.73
Stewartby & Kempston Hardwick	900.69
Harrold	697.68
Turvey	563.61
Riseley	528.29
Carlton & Chellington	397.89
Willington	385.32
Bolnhurst & Keysoe	364.97
Felmersham & Radwell	363.76

Pavenham	348.68
Ravensden	339.81
Wyboston, Chawston & Colesden	332.56
Milton Ernest	331.13
Cople	320.94
Thurleigh	284.35
Wymington	282.67
Stevington	280.32
Cotton End	277.41
Little Staughton	237.55
Roxton	210.85
Melchbourne & Yelden	202.76
Wilden	199.42
Dean & Shelton	198.72
Colmworth	197.62
Podington	193.09
Stagsden	188.93
Pertenhall & Swineshead	169.86
Cardington	142.25
Staploe & Duloe	140.89
Odell	136.74
Knotting & Souldrop	123.00
Bletsoe	121.24
Little Barford	18.30