

BRECKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of: Lynda Turner, Executive Member for Place

To: Cabinet, 3 January 2017.

Author: Clive Rayner, Grant Officer, Norfolk Community Foundation

Subject: Match Funding (large) applications

Purpose: To consider the decision to award funding to three projects

Recommendation:

- 1) That the Executive Member for Place approves the following grant awards:
 - £8,086 (or 30% of the project costs, whichever is the lower amount) to the Benjamin Foundation to contribute to the costs of re-roofing the Meet Up Community Centre on the Redcastle Furze Estate and insulating the Sports Hall ceiling.
 - £14,000 (or 18.7% of the project costs, whichever is the lower amount) to Swaffham Town Council to contribute towards a new multi-use games area on the Recreation Ground.
 - £7,920 (or 30% of the project costs, whichever is the lower amount) to Beeston Playing Field to provide a range of new play equipment.

BACKGROUND – the Benjamin Foundation

- 1.1 The Benjamin Foundation is a registered charity working across the county providing services for children, young people and families. One of its services is the provision of the Meet Up Community Centre, a grass roots youth and community project, situated on the Redcastle Furze housing estate in Thetford. The Centre hosts a youth club, youth drop-in, young persons' support group, parents' support group, school holiday activities, counselling services, parent and toddler groups and a senior citizen lunch group.
- 1.2 Meet Up provides a safe and supportive environment for local young people to meet friends and take part in activities including art and music workshops and accredited learning such as food hygiene and AQA certificates. These help local young people to learn skills, gain confidence and increase their commitment towards learning in order to pursue a successful future.
- 1.3 Registered membership of the Meet Up exceeds 240 with over 130 people per week accessing activities. A recent survey following the 2016 Summer Activity Programme showed the impact that the Centre can have. 92% of participants reported increased confidence, 90% stated engagement with Meet Up had helped them stay out of trouble and 90% said that they now cared more about their community. A further recent consultation exercise with parents showed that 90% of respondents stated that Meet Up had helped their child avoid anti-social behaviour and 85% said that their child had improved social skills as a result of attendance at the Centre.

- 1.4 The grant is requested to contribute towards the costs of re-roofing the building and insulating the roof of the Sports Hall. These two items are the most pressing of a range of identified repairs which total around £44,000.
- 1.5 Ownership of the building was transferred from Breckland District Council to the Benjamin Foundation in 2014.
- 1.6 The application requested a grant of £13,161 representing 30% of the total cost of all of the identified repairs. However at present the plan is to carry out only the first two items which have an evidenced cost of £26,956. Consequently the maximum grant for which the application can be considered is £8,086. To date £11,769 has been raised towards these works including a grant of £6,000 from the Geoffrey Watling Charity.
- 1.7 The Benjamin Foundation has provided copies of three quotes. The preferred supplier's work on the roof will come with a 25 year guarantee.
- 1.8 The Centre's revenue costs are currently funded by the Big Lottery Fund until September 2018 and the Benjamin Foundation intends to re-apply for further lottery or alternative funding to ensure the continuation of service delivery from the building. An investment in the fabric of the building is therefore likely to provide an ongoing benefit in this community.
- 1.9 As evidenced in 1.1 above the application aligns with the Breckland Council objectives of "support groups and organisations to provide a range of local facilities within their communities which further improve learning opportunities, community health and community wellbeing," and "work with partners on supporting older people to remain active, participate and live independently within the community."
- 1.10 Councillor Dennis Crawford has written in support of the application as follows: "The meet up cafe have programmes for the youth and elderly populations of Redcastle. They also have very strong ties with the residents' association and the local school. They have assisted the residents' association in allowing them to use their facilities for fundraising events. This culminated in £6,000 being raised by the residents' association for the local play area which led to further funding for the play area project. I feel the meet up cafe is the heart of the community and if it closes the community will be a much poorer place."

BACKGROUND – Swaffham Town Council

- 1.11 Swaffham Town Council is seeking a match funding grant of £14,000 towards the cost of developing a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) on the Recreation Ground. The site is currently an unused hard court area which is described as being unsightly and of no benefit to users of the park. The new MUGA will have markings for various sports such as football, cricket, netball and basketball as well as a range of facilities which may include street snooker games wall, pool games wall, five-a-side goals, target square, cricket wicket, lollipop style target hoops. The work will also involve resurfacing the area and installing fencing. The area will not have floodlighting.
- 1.12 There has been very strong local consultation to inform the development of the project. A consultation event was held at the site of the existing skatepark. This was a joint venture between the Town Council and SK8 Mob - a group that was established by local young people with the aims of developing the skate park and a MUGA. The event was attended by local residents and families as well as potential suppliers of equipment. Attendees helped to develop a specification with preferred

options. Recent further consultation has been undertaken, led by the Sk8 Mob. A questionnaire was developed asking about the potential use of the site and what facilities young people would like to see on the Recreation Ground. 239 people between the ages of 6 and 20 completed the survey. Of these 173 said they would use the MUGA. The consultation also generated lots of ideas about the sports to include.

- 1.13 The Town Council expects that the main beneficiaries will be children, young people and young adults aged from 8 to 25 but the site will be freely available to all who wish to use it.
- 1.14 The project has a total estimated cost of £75,000 and the Town Council has already secured £61,000 of this with £12,000 coming from the Breckland Council Outdoor Sport and Play Fund and £49,000 recently secured from WREN. With a match funding grant at the requested level of £14,000 the project would be fully funded. A £14,000 grant would represent 18.7% of the total project cost and is therefore well within the 30% match funding limit.
- 1.15 The completed MUGA will be inspected by the Town Council on a daily basis and will have an annual specialist inspection to ensure safety of users.
- 1.16 The application aligns with the Breckland Council objectives of “support groups and organisations to provide a range of local facilities within their communities which further improve learning opportunities, community health and community wellbeing,” and “work with our partners to reduce and prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and protect the community and environment.”

The provision of a MUGA will provide improved opportunities for exercise which will improve community health and wellbeing. There are said to be no other free to access and use facilities in Swaffham for young people in this age group. The application states that the town has a number of challenges including an estimated 1,630 young people living with a mental health problem and an estimated 40% of young people aged 10/11 years who are overweight. A MUGA will be particularly beneficial for those young people who do not want to join an organised club.

The application reports that there have been a number of incidents of anti-social behaviour and vandalism in the Town Centre and on the Recreation Ground over the last few months. It is hoped that by providing a sports and recreation facility that is fit for purpose and attractive to users this might divert some people from these types of behaviour.

- 1.17 Councillor Shirley Matthews has written in support of the project as follows: “We in Swaffham are now awaiting a final amount from your organisation to complete our plans for our Haspall’s Road Playground by putting a MUGA in. It has been on our agenda for about 4 years so the relief to all here, who have been working toward it, will be tremendous and we shall be eternally grateful.”

BACKGROUND – Beeston Playing Field

- 1.18 Beeston Playing Field is a registered charity responsible for the village hall and playing fields in the village.
- 1.19 The project would see a range of improvements made to play equipment comprising the the installation of a 30m zip wire, a nest swing, midi hex climber, toddler tower climber incorporating a slide, zig zag balance beam and a stepping log snake plus

safety matting and all delivery and installation costs. The equipment will be sited at the playing field at Back Lane in Beeston.

- 1.20 There has been good consultation to inform the project. Initial consultation was via the school with year 6 pupils designing a questionnaire and feeding back results. A village wide questionnaire was also distributed and a public consultation meeting was held at the playground. Feedback from all of these avenues contributed to the current proposals.
- 1.21 The project has a total estimated cost of £26,366.84 based on a quote from NGF Play of Gressenhall. To date the charity has secured £11,230 of this as follows: Breckland Outdoor Sport and Play Fund £2,050, the Dudgeon Community Fund £5,280, Norfolk Playing Fields Association £2,000, The Dulverton Trust £1,000 and £1,900 from local fundraising. Two further grant applications are in progress – The Geoffrey Watling Charity (£3,000) and The John Jarrold Trust (£3,000). A grant at the requested level would represent 30% of the total project cost and would leave Beeston needing to secure a further £7,216 to be able to proceed. Any match funding grant awarded would be retained by Norfolk Community Foundation until the charity has evidenced that it has all of the necessary funds to be able to proceed.
- 1.22 The application aligns with the Breckland Council objectives of “support groups and organisations to provide a range of local facilities within their communities which further improve learning opportunities, community health and community wellbeing,” and “work with partners and local communities to make public spaces cleaner, greener and safe.”

The application states that the project will increase the opportunity for children to benefit from the physical, mental and social effects of outdoor play. The planned facility will be free to use and accessible at all times. The applicant also anticipates that the project will improve social cohesion by providing a meeting place for families. The facility will also be developed in an, environmentally sustainable way. The chosen equipment is said to be ethically produced and to enhance the grassy, natural and rural aspect of the site. It will provide a safe and secure area for children of all ages to play, in contrast to the many hazardous areas in Beeston which include working farms, industrialised areas, open quarries and busy roads.

- 1.23 Councillor Elizabeth Gould has written in support of the project as follows: “I fully support the actions of the team that are trying to improve the much needed play equipment on Beeston Playing field. There is very little for youngsters to do in rural villages, and so such an application can only provide pride in the area and encourage outdoor activity for youngsters. It also helps promote community spirit within the village, as parents of younger children get to interact with each other.”

2) **OPTIONS**

- 2.1 Fully fund the applications set out in the report
2.2 Part fund the application set out in the report
2.3 Do nothing

3) **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 3.1 The grant applications meet the criteria of the scheme.

4) **EXPECTED BENEFITS**

- 4.1 The Benjamin Foundation – enable a range of community activities, particularly those aimed at young people to continue;
Swaffham Town Council – provide opportunities for recreation and exercise;
Beeston Playing Field - provide opportunities for play and recreation.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 **Carbon Footprint / Environmental Issues**

- 5.1.1 It is of the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

5.2 **Constitution & Legal**

- 5.2.1 It is of the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

5.3 **Contracts**

- 5.3.1 It is of the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

5.4 **Corporate Priorities**

- 5.4.1 The project aligns with corporate priorities as set out in section 1.

5.5 **Crime and Disorder**

- 5.5.1 It is of the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

5.6 **Equality and Diversity / Human Rights**

- 5.6.1 It is of the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

5.7 **Financial**

- 5.7.1 The grant requests total £30,006. There are adequate funds in the Match Funding reserves held by the NCF for 2016/17 to cover this grant expenditure.

5.8 **Health & Wellbeing**

- 5.8.1 It is of the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

5.9 **Risk Management**

- 5.9.1 It is of the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications

5.10 **Safeguarding**

- 5.10.1 It is of the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

5.11 **Staffing**

- 5.11.1 It is of the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

5.12 **Stakeholders / Consultation / Timescales**

5.12.1 It is of the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

5.13 **Other**

5.13.1 Any offer letters made should reflect the conditions applied by the grant panel members.

6.0 **WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED**

6.1 Thetford, Swaffham and Beeston.

7.0 **ACRONYMS**

7.1 NCF – Norfolk Community Foundation

Lead Contact Officer

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Key Decision: No

Exempt Decision: No

This report refers to a Discretionary Service

Appendices attached to this report:

Appendix 1 – Benjamin Foundation Application
Appendix 2 – Swaffham Town Council Application
Appendix 3 – Beeston Playing Field Application