

## BRECKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Report of:** Executive Member for Place, Paul Claussen  
**To:** Cabinet, Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2017  
**Author:** Clive Rayner, Grant Officer, Norfolk Community Foundation  
**Subject:** Match Funding (large) application  
**Purpose:** To consider the decision to award funding to Carbrooke Village Hall

### **Recommendation:**

- 1) That the Executive Member for Place approves the following grant award:
  - £14,400 (or 30% of the project costs, whichever is the lower amount) to Carbrooke Village Hall to carry out renovations to the kitchen and toilets.

### **BACKGROUND – Carbrooke Village Hall**

- 1.1 Carbrooke Village Hall is seeking a grant of £14,400 to contribute towards the cost of renovating the kitchen and toilet areas of the building.
- 1.2 The village hall has a range of issues including problems with dampness and resultant mould growth due to water penetration through the kitchen and toilet walls which is causing plaster to fall off, not currently having hot water in the toilets and difficulties with disabled access. The application comments that those with disabilities have no realistic prospect of using the toilets at present and are therefore to all intents and purposes excluded from using the hall.
- 1.3 The building work will involve stripping out all of the kitchen and toilet fittings, removing the external render from the kitchen and toilet areas, external re-rendering and repainting and insulating and plaster boarding the internal surface of the walls. New kitchen and toilet fittings will be installed along with modifications to electrics and plumbing as necessary. The plan also involves moving the kitchen to the front of the hall into the space now used as the committee room. The space currently occupied by the kitchen will become the ladies toilets and the former ladies toilets will be made into a disabled toilet incorporating baby changing facilities. New doors and external works will improve access for disabled people and those with restricted mobility.
- 1.4 The village hall committee has consulted with all village hall user groups and the wider community and there is said to be unanimous approval for the renovation project. The hall is currently used by groups including a pre-school group, a weekly coffee morning, a dance club, a kickboxing club, a weekly bar and a history club. Current user numbers are estimated at around 100 per week. The hall committee expect that with improved facilities use of the hall will grow and there have already been suggestions of starting a mother and toddler group, a lunch club for the elderly and a Women's Institute group. The main contact commented that current state of the kitchen and toilet facilities is deterring potential user groups. The committee estimate that usage could grow to 350 following the renovations.
- 1.5 The hall committee has provided copies of quotations/estimates from three contractors which range in price from £37,000 to £50,000. While all the contractors

have visited the hall and worked off a plan and specification, the village hall committee has acknowledged that the facilities to be renovated are in extremely poor condition and more work might be revealed when building work is underway and floors and walls are stripped down. As a result they have felt it prudent to build in a 20 per cent contingency figure to the second of the three quotes when assessing what budget is needed. This gives a figure of £48,000. The committee is confident that the work can be zero-rated for VAT. Both the chair and the caretaker of the hall are involved in a business that carries out a lot of property renovation work and so there should be effective control of the project and the costs.

- 1.6 The village hall has already raised £20,357 towards the cost including £15,057 from community events and fundraising, £2,800 from Carbrooke Parish Council and a £2,500 donation from a local resident. The charity is also guaranteed a minimum of £2,000 from the Tesco's Bags of Help scheme and other funding applications to the Trusthouse Charitable Foundation and The Bernard Sunley Charitable Foundation are in progress.
- 1.7 This is a strong application in terms of the need for improvements and the potential for the renovated hall to increase usage and better serve the community. Other aspects of the hall such as the roof, windows and heating are in good or reasonable condition and the planned work is an appropriate and achievable level of renovation. The only relative weakness is the uncertainty about the costs and the inclusion of a contingency allowance of £8,000. The age and structure of the building mean that there are some uncertainties about what the contractor will find once work begins and this was the committee representatives' rationale for the contingency. The committee understand that any grant from Breckland Council would reduce if the project costs less than the budgeted £48,000 and that the grant would need to be paid on receipt of invoices. The grant award would also be subject to the other necessary funding being secured.

## 2) **OPTIONS**

- 2.1 Fully fund the application 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 application meets the criteria of the scheme.

## 4) **EXPECTED BENEFITS**

- 4.1 Provide a venue that has facilities that are fit for purpose for a range of social and recreational activities for residents of all ages.  
Increase the number of user groups and the overall number of users.

## 5) **IMPLICATIONS**

In preparing this report, the report author has considered the likely implications of the decision - particularly in terms of Carbon Footprint / Environmental Issues; Constitutional & Legal; Contracts; Corporate Priorities; Crime & Disorder; Equality & Diversity/Human Rights; Financial; Health & Wellbeing; Reputation; Risk Management; Safeguarding; Staffing; Stakeholders/Consultation/Timescales; Transformation Programme; Other. Where the report author considers that there may be implications under one or more of these headings, these are identified

below.

## 5.1 **Financial**

- 5.1.1 The Match Funding reserves held by Norfolk Community Foundation have a current balance of £93,990. With two applications recommended for a total of £8,177 from an earlier round of funding awaiting decisions (Gressenhall Parish Council and Thetford Rugby Football Club). In addition there are five small match funding applications requesting £14,679 being considered at the July Informal Executive Briefing plus a further large match funding application from the Wayland Partnership requesting £19,972.60. There are therefore sufficient funds to meet the grant expenditure of £14,679 proposed in this report.

## 5.2 **Corporate Priorities**

- 5.2.1 The project aligns with the Breckland Council objectives of: 'supporting groups and organisations to provide a range of local facilities which improve learning opportunities, community health and community wellbeing' and 'supporting older people to remain active, participate and live independently within the community.' Carbrooke village hall is the only community centre in a parish that has seen considerable growth. The estate of Blenheim Grange in the south of the parish has seen more than 500 houses built in a decade but without any community meeting space being provided. In addition to existing activities, the Village Hall Committee is confident that there is great demand for other clubs to bring the community together and for shorter courses, such as internet training and craft workshops. The elderly in parish are described as being isolated. Because of the state of the toilets, the village hall is currently only able to offer limited activities for older people. Improving facilities and access will enable the offer to older people to be enhanced.

## 5.3 **Stakeholders / Consultation / Timescales**

- 5.3.1 Breckland Councillor Theresa Hewett has written in support of the project. She comments that she wholeheartedly supports for the plan to renovate Carbrooke Village Hall, "the toilets and kitchen are in a very poor state and very unpleasant to use. As a result, it is extremely difficult for the community to utilise this important facility and to maximise its potential. In addition, there are currently no facilities for disabled members of the community, and the grant would allow this to be rectified. The parish of Carbrooke has seen significant development over the past decade and the large influx of people has led to a range of issues within the community which residents are seeking to address through a variety of projects and activities. Carbrooke Village Hall is a vital centre for activities and events as it is the one place in the parish where the community can meet and relations be built. Regular coffee mornings are held there, which I have attended, and there is great interest among the residents of the village in starting up craft clubs, a weekly café and a W.I. to add to the thriving nursery which uses the hall regularly. However, the current facilities limit these ambitions and therefore work against the community's efforts to build cohesion."

## 6.0 **WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED**

- 6.1 Saham Toney ward/Carbrooke.

## 7.0 **ACRONYMS**

7.1 NCF – Norfolk Community Foundation

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**Key Decision:** No

**Exempt Decision:** No

**This report refers to a Discretionary Service**

**Appendices attached to this report:**

Appendix A – Grant Application