

WILTSHIRE PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD – PRG Panel Meeting (outstanding issues)

10th August 2010

Present: Bill Dowling, Steve Richards, John Thomson; supported by Sharon Britton, Karen Spence and Niki Lewis

Apologies: Steve Hedley

Notes of Last meeting and matters arising

1. The notes of the previous meeting of 22nd July were agreed.

Matters Arising

2. Karen Spence circulated an updated agenda and total bids amount sheet, and explained how much money was available for allocation at this meeting.

BIDS FOR DISCUSSION

3. The first 3 bids (No's 39, 43 and 44) were initially taken at the meeting of the 22nd July when the Panel felt that they needed more information before they could make a final decision on them. The last 2 bids (No's 13 and 14) were initially discussed at the 1st Tranche and they have recently come back with further information asked for by the Panel.

Application No. 39 Trowbridge Area Board Bid: £9,040	<p><u>Studley Green Resource Centre</u></p> <p>Decision at last meeting:</p> <p>The Panel felt that this was a worthwhile scheme to have in the community. It appears to be an outstation which provides necessary resources to the local community. However it was felt that money could be saved by looking at re-using furniture and ICT equipment which is no longer in use from Wiltshire Council and/or other partners for this scheme (and possibly others like it). Whilst there may be information security or other issues with this option, we would like to fully explore it before making a decision on this bid.</p> <p>It was also suggested that some of the remainder of the money asked for (£3,440) could come from contributions from/collaborative working with Jobcentre Plus and Housing Associations. This would potentially add value to the scheme.</p> <p>Comments at this meeting:</p> <p>Karen Spence has had discussions with Deborah Farrow (Service Director, Business Transformation, ICT & IM) and Mandy Doolan (Facilities Officer, Wiltshire Council) about the possibility of using IT equipment and office property no longer used by the Council.</p> <p>In preparation for Workplace Transformation, both areas of business are currently drafting policies for the re-allocation of equipment and in the longer-term there will be an official policy for communities and groups to access this kind of equipment. In respect of this bid, initial findings indicate that there is currently some office furniture ready for reallocation. With regard to IT equipment, this is more complex because of data protection regulations, but the issues are not insurmountable. Deborah Farrow will notify the</p>
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	<p>performance team about whether there is anything currently available and ready to be reallocated.</p> <p>An email had been received from the centre requesting that we reconsider and allocate sufficient money to purchase these items new. It was felt by the panel that as long as the items we are offering are fit for purpose this should not be an issue.</p> <p>We need to find out exactly what the Centre needs in terms of furniture and what it intends to use the IT equipment for. The Performance team will then establish whether what we are able to offer is fit for purpose.</p> <p>It is still felt that they need closer links with Jobcentre Plus.</p> <p>It was thought that it would be useful to have a strategy/policy in place on who should be entitled to receive equipment previously owned by the Council.</p> <p>Decision: Approved.</p> <p>The Panel would like to empower the Performance Team agree with the Centre what we can offer by way of furniture and IT equipment. The panel have approved payment of grant for all items we are not able to re-allocate from Council Sources (e.g. licences, money for training schemes etc). The Performance Team is authorised to decide what it is appropriate to pay in grant and what proportion can be in the form of re-allocated equipment. If re-allocating equipment becomes complex, then the panel are happy for the full amount to be paid in grant funding.</p> <p>Total to be offered: See above – Amount to be confirmed.</p>
<p>Application No. 43</p> <p>Salisbury Area Board</p> <p>Bid: £40,000</p>	<p><u>St Michael’s Community Centre ‘Warm-up’ Project</u></p> <p>Decision at last meeting:</p> <p>This bid had some support from panel members who recognised the need for provision in Bemerton Heath and also the fact that the bid gives good evidence that it is well used by a wide variety of groups. However, the Panel had a few concerns about this bid. It was difficult to understand from the bid whether the refurbishment of the centre would be sustainable. Also, this bid seemed to be competing with the larger bid for improvements to Bemerton Heath Community Centre (below).</p> <p>The Panel suggested that it may be possible for the scheme to seek funding from the Community First Village Hall Fund, or even with the Area Board who have a pot for ‘hard to reach’ groups.</p> <p>In any event, the panel felt that it was difficult for them to make a decision on the Bemerton Heath bids without further information about the links with/requirements of the Think Family initiative and a better understanding of whether there is a need for both of these facilities in the community (particularly if one of the facilities is being expanded)/</p> <p>Comments at this meeting:</p> <p>Karen Spence hadn’t yet been able to speak to Carolyn Godfrey about the Think Family aspect, due to annual leave. But she did manage to have a meeting with Cllr Ricky Rogers to get a better understanding about what Salisbury City Council are doing, and other issues surrounding Bemerton</p>

	<p>Heath and Salisbury.</p> <p>The church owns the building and charge rent for any organisation who wishes to use it, there are no preferential rates for the community. There is a feeling that its main successes stems from the presence on its premises of an organization called the Trussell Trust who rent the ground floor from the church and organize and run many of the activities. The Trussell Trust recently received £5K from the Area Board.</p> <p>The church owns St Michaels and charges rent for it – so discussion took place about why aren't they managing the facilities and conducting improvements/maintenance in order to secure the income it brings in. The Panel raised the question about whether we would be subsidising a Church of England building. We would need to find out more about the Centre's income and running costs.</p> <p>This bid remains inextricably linked with the Bemerton Heath Community Centre bid (no 44) due to the proximity of the two facilities and the similarity in the kind of service provided by the centre. The panel feels it is essential to speak to Carolyn Godfrey regarding this before any final decision can be made.</p> <p>Decision: Deferred to next meeting on 13th October 2010.</p> <p>Action: Karen Spence to meet with Carolyn Godfrey and to explore with the Area Board further details about the income and running costs of the building.</p>
<p>Application No. 44</p> <p>Salisbury Area Board</p> <p>Bid: £130,600</p>	<p><u>Bemerton Heath Community Centre Expansion</u></p> <p>Decision at last meeting:</p> <p>The Panel appreciate that Bemerton Heath is a central area in Salisbury and is an area of high deprivation. They were supportive of the need for this kind of provision in Bemerton Heath but did not feel that this was a particularly well thought out bid, which was still in the early stages, and it was noted that they don't yet have planning permission.</p> <p>The panel would have liked to have seen more evidence of support from the community and the City Council. It was suggested that they contact the City Council for funding for developing a better plan and beginning the process of obtaining planning permission and moving the project forward to a more detailed stage. The panel would also be keen to see evidence of applications to other sources of funding. The bidders should be encouraged to develop better, fully costed, plans and explore other sources of funding before submitting any further bid to this source of funding.</p> <p>In addition, this bid seemed to be competing with the smaller bid for improvements to St Michael's Community Centre (above).</p> <p>The panel felt that it was difficult for them to make a decision on the Bemerton Heath bids without further information about links with/requirements of the Think Family initiative and a better understanding of whether there is a need for both of these facilities in the community (particularly if one of the facilities is being expanded).</p>

	<p>Comments at this meeting:</p> <p>Karen Spence hadn't yet been able to speak to Carolyn Godfrey about the Think Family aspect, due to annual leave. But she did manage to have a meeting with Cllr Ricky Rogers to get a better understanding about what Salisbury City Council are doing, and other issues surrounding Bemerton Heath and Salisbury.</p> <p>At the Community Centre much of this is down to some very driven people who run the centre and its activities. This is a good facility and a lot of good work goes on from it but there was some question about meeting the costs of running it and how it would remain sustainable into the future. The centre manager is employed by the city council and they meet the running costs too. But concerns expressed about how long they will commit to this in economically difficult times when they have to continue to justify this to their local tax payers. However the city council has committed to investing in Bemerton Heath and the Community centre itself does feature in the city plan. This facility does seem to have the support of the community and has brought people together. Other partners operate out of here – community policing team. This centre is apparently more central to the neighbourhood than St Michaels.</p> <p>Discussion took place around the commitment of the City Council to continue this facility and there was some concern about what the level of commitment of the City Council was to this centre. The panel would be reluctant to grant PRG unless there is some kind of commitment from Salisbury City Council around the long term future of this facility.</p> <p>The Panel do feel that this bid is justified, being in a high deprivation area.</p> <p>This bid remains inextricably linked with the St. Michael's Community Centre (no 43) due to the proximity of the two facilities and the similarity in the kind of service provided by the centre. The panel feels it is essential to speak to Carolyn Godfrey regarding this before any final decision can be made.</p> <p>Decision: Deferred to next meeting on 13th October 2010.</p> <p>Action: Karen Spence to meet with Carolyn Godfrey and to explore with the Area Board the best way to get further information about Salisbury City Councils' long term commitment to the centre.</p>
<p>Application No. 13 Tidworth Area Board Bid: £14,627</p>	<p><u>Ludgershall Scouts Hall</u></p> <p>Decision at last meeting:</p> <p>The Panel would like to support this bid but felt that the Area Board should first explore other sources of potential funding, such as the Landfill Tax scheme (administered by Community First); Grass roots funding and Sustain the Plain (now Plain Action). Contact details will be provided for these funds.</p> <p>If there is a shortfall following those bids the Panel would be happy to consider a bid for the remaining funding required.</p> <p>Comments at this meeting:</p> <p>The Panel were previously supportive of this bid and remain so. They were</p>

	<p>impressed that the bidders had gone away and investigated other sources of funding as requested, and this has resulted in the Landfill Tax Credit scheme offering £10,000 (subject to a 3rd party contribution).</p> <p>It was also taken into consideration by the Panel that they had used the least expensive quotes. The Panel expressed their appreciation of the efforts made by the group in exploring the other sources of funding and securing the Landfill tax grant.</p> <p>Decision: Approved</p> <p>Total to be offered: £14,627 (£13,500 plus 3rd party contribution of £1127)</p>
<p>Application No. 14</p> <p>Tidworth Area Board</p> <p>Bid: £8,000</p>	<p><u>Collingbourne Ducis Church Toilet Provision</u></p> <p>Decision at last meeting:</p> <p>This is a capital bid to build a toilet facility at Collingbourne Ducis church. The Panel suggested that this may qualify for a village hall grant from Community First, and contact details will be provided to the Area Board.</p> <p>If after this is option is explored, if the Area Boards wishes to make a further bid to the PRG Panel then the Panel requests that the bid should include additional information about:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The extent to which this would be a community facility (e.g. the types of events and usage anticipated, including the amount of time it would be available for general community events) 2. The costs in the bid. These appear high and the Panel would wish to have information about the procurement processes used, and whether some of the work could be provided by the community. <p>This would also indicate community support for the initiative.</p> <p>Comments at this meeting:</p> <p>A letter was received by the bidders to back their bid with answers to the above.</p> <p>It was noted that they have taken out a loan to make a start on the work, and that the community have made the effort to raise a considerable amount of money towards the costs.</p> <p>The panel were minded to support this bid, given the considerable amount of effort that the local community have put into raising a large sum of money themselves for this. Collingbourne Ducis church is an important grade 2* listed building and, as such, the community have had to face a lot of restrictions placed on them by English Heritage, planning regulations etc. Given the importance of the building, the panel felt it would like to make a contribution to this project but would make the point that they would not usually see the PRG as a suitable source of funding for public toilets.</p> <p>Decision: Approved contribution to costs</p> <p>Total to be offered: £4,000</p>

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

4. Countywide Bids Process

It has been raised in previous meetings that the process for bids from more than one community area would benefit from being more streamlined so that the timescales involved could be reduced. The ‘fast track’ process suggested in the May meeting had not been approved by the Area Board Chair but there was some discussion that this may have been due to a misunderstanding about the proposal which was being put to them at their last meeting. This will now be put back on the agenda for the next Area Board Chairs meeting and John Thomson will re-iterate how the process will work (see below).

4 steps for countywide bids:

Step 1: The Bid which will be based on issues coming from a number of Area Boards will go to an Area Board Chairs meeting for provisional approval.

Step 2: If approved, the bid will then be taken to the PRG Panel for consideration.

Step 3: If the Panel are supportive of the bid they can approve it subject to approval by all Area Boards identified in the bid.

Step 4: The grant will be released once all the individual Area Boards approve the bid. If, however, not all Area Boards approve the bid after this process the grant will not be paid. The proposer may then wish to make a revised bid.

5. The following 3 countywide bids were discussed again:

<p>Application Ref. No. 52 All Area Boards Bid: £55,694</p>	<p><u>Volunteer Centre Wiltshire</u></p> <p>Comments at last meeting:</p> <p>The Panel were supportive of this bid and can see the need, but they would like to see the option of a shared service model with Swindon.</p> <p>Other thoughts they shared were how many volunteers would this need, where will they reach, and who are they going to engage in this? Also, some volunteers need motivation to do this sort of thing. How can they be confident that they can maintain their volunteers?</p> <p>Comments at this meeting:</p> <p>Niki Lewis stated that they weren't keen to join Swindon Volunteer Centre. Having worked with them previously she felt that the service Wiltshire was receiving was not what we would hope to provide and this is why Wiltshire is keen to set up its own Accredited Wiltshire Volunteer Centre.</p> <p>The panel are keen to support this bid and would ideally like this resolved prior to the next panel meeting in October.</p> <p>To enable this to happen, the panel empowered Sharon Britton and Niki Lewis make a decision about the level of award that could be made once queries are resolved about the costs of the scheme and whether it is appropriate for all costs included in ‘full cost recovery’ to be charged to this scheme. Also, there are some queries to be resolved about the level of the management fee.</p> <p>Decision: Provisionally approved providing all queries are resolved</p>
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	<p>and support for this approach is given by the two panel members who were not present at this point. Release of funds is additionally dependant on the bid being approved by all Area Boards. Any objections or unresolved queries to be brought back to the next Panel in October.</p>
<p>Application Ref. No. 53 All Area Boards Bid: £29,930</p>	<p><u>On-line Community Led Planning Resource</u></p> <p>Comments at last meeting</p> <p>The panel were not supportive of this bid</p> <p>Decision at this meeting</p> <p>Niki Lewis confirmed that this bid has been withdrawn and will be funded in another way.</p>
<p>Application Ref. No. 54 All Area Boards Bid: £54,000</p>	<p><u>Wiltshire Voices (Hard to Reach Groups)</u></p> <p>Comments at last meeting:</p> <p>The panel were supportive of this initiative feeling the need for active, wider engagement, especially from the hard to reach groups. However, it was felt that each Area Board should be able to demonstrate how their individual projects would widen participation by giving a brief description of what they plan to do with the money before a decision can be made whether or not to allocate it to them.</p> <p>Comments at this meeting:</p> <p>Niki Lewis brought with her a document with projects drawn up from each Area Board on how they would use the £3,000. She will e-mail it to the Performance Team who will then forward it onto panel members asking for their views on each separate Area Board project.</p> <p>The panel are keen to support this bid and would ideally like this resolved prior to the next panel meeting in October.</p> <p>To enable this to happen, the panel suggested that provisional approval be given to this bid subject to receipt of suitable proposals from each Area Board. The grant can be released on all projects deemed by the panel to be worthwhile and provided the Area Board subsequently approves the bid.</p> <p>Decision: Each project to be looked at individually</p> <p>Total to be offered: £3,000 x the number of worthwhile projects approved by individual Area Boards.</p>

- Karen Spence is to write to Stephen Hedley and Steve Richards about the discussions regarding countywide bids (as they were both absent from these discussions) to seek their support on the decisions made.

Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 13th October 2010 at 10.00am – 11.30am, in the Sarum Meeting Room, County Hall, Trowbridge.