

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

12th May 2010

Present: Bill Dowling, Steve Hedley, John Thomson; Steve Milton; supported by Sharon Britton and Karen Spence

Apologies: Steve Richards, Niki Lewis

Notes of Last meeting and matters arising

1. The notes of the previous meeting of 17th March were agreed.

Matters Arising

2. Karen circulated a spreadsheet showing current and pending bids. It was noted that there was in excess of £200,000 remaining from the current and previous tranche and available for allocation today if the panel deem bids to be suitable. Submission of bids for the next tranche has already begun with a closing date of 21st May 2010.
3. It was agreed that the Bid Pack on the website needs to have extra questions and clearer guidelines to help applicants provide better quality and more comprehensive applications, and to assist Area Boards in deciding whether to support a bid. During this discussion, it was questioned whether there should be any 'right to appeal' against the decision of the panel, it was agreed to discuss this during item 4.

Action: Performance Team to update Bid Pack and Guidance

4. **Chippenham Riverside Improvement** – Several letters have been received expressing concern over the decision not to approve this bid. There was one in particular which needed to be addressed due to the political nature of it. John Thomson will draft a response, covering all the queries raised, and will circulate it to panel members for clearance.
5. The panel made it clear that their decision at the previous panel was unanimous, based on the information they had in front of them, and that they stand by this decision. It was felt that there may have been some misunderstanding of the reasons given for the panel's decision and these will be clarified in the responses to the letters.
6. The panel decided that for future bids there would be no right of appeal and the decision of the panel will be final. The only circumstances in which this will be considered would be:
 - If there is some vital information that the panel was not provided with at the original meeting
 - If the content or context of the bid has substantially changed since the decision was taken.
7. There is no reason why an improved bid cannot be resubmitted at a later date with material changes, or if they asked for a lower amount of money. This will be made clear in the response. The response will also clarify the suggestions about Section 106 monies (lobbying for future funds rather than historical S106).

Action: John Thomson/Karen Spence to respond to letters

BIDS REVISITED

8. The following 3 bids were first taken at the meeting of the 17th March. The Panel were inclined to approve the bids but asked for more information before making a final decision.

<p>Application Ref. No. 25 All Area Boards Bid: £73,050 (£53,050 Capital, £20,000 Revenue)</p>	<p><u>Wiltshire Community Payback</u></p> <p>Decision at last meeting:</p> <p>Await decision from remaining Area Boards and in the meantime more information should be obtained via the Area Board manager about the issues requiring clarification. Karen was to feedback to the Area Board Manager.</p> <p>Comments at this meeting:</p> <p>A significant amount of further information had been received from the scheme in answer to the questions raised by the panel.</p> <p>It was noted that there was a lot of enthusiasm about this scheme from Area Boards. If this is benefitting the whole county then it's a good thing.</p> <p>The panel approved in full the capital costs to provide 3 utilities vehicles and equipment as outlined in the bid.</p> <p>However, it was felt that the marketing costs weren't essential for this scheme and should not be approved. There are other sources existing communications sources which could be used including the 'Wiltshire Mag'. The Panel agreed to contribute £10,000 to the cost of a co-ordinator.</p> <p>Decision: Approved</p> <p>Total to be offered: £63,050 (£53,050 capital costs plus £10,000 revenue)</p>
<p>Application Ref. No. 27 Amesbury Area Board Revised Bid: £11,530 (less £3,500 already agreed)</p>	<p><u>Larkhill Rejuvenation and Road Safety Project</u></p> <p>Decision at last meeting:</p> <p>It was felt that that this bid was underdeveloped and lacked clarity on some aspects and that as a result the project might be missing an opportunity. The element of this bid relating to implementation of the speed limit was approved (£3,500). The remainder was not approved. Karen was to feedback to the Area Board Manager. Nicky Lewis to request that the Area manager works with the project team to develop a more suitable bid.</p> <p>Comments at this meeting:</p> <p>The Panel were sent more information with added new equipment to the bid. The bidders had considered the use of flashing signs but, following advice from the Transport team Wiltshire Council, did not consider these to be appropriate as the current levels of traffic on the road did not justify it. The panel have pointed out that once the Stonehenge road (A344) is closed, there is considerable potential the roads through Larkhill be used more (as a rat run). It was agreed that the letter we sent could include an offer to put aside £5,000 for this,</p>

	<p>should the Area Board wish to put in a further bid.</p> <p>There was some confusion with the figures on Table 2 within the enhanced bid – but this has since been resolved</p> <p>Decision: Approved</p> <p>Total to be offered: £8030 (plus £5,000 to be offered for future bid for flashing signs)</p>
<p>Application Ref. No. 28 Amesbury Area Board Bid: £20,000</p>	<p><u>International Media Centre</u></p> <p>Decision at last meeting:</p> <p>It was felt that this scheme was of value and could provide benefit for a community which currently lacks any facilities of this kind. However concern was expressed about why schools capital funding was not being used to fund this facility. The panel have requested further information from the school about how much they currently have in their capital reserves before they make a decision on this bid. Karen was to feedback to the Area Board Manager</p> <p>Comments at this meeting:</p> <p>Karen circulated extra information stating that the Schools Fund money for 2010/11 is already committed to large capital projects at the moment. The Panel took this into consideration and approved the bid on the understanding that the facility will be open evenings and weekends for the whole community to be able to use.</p> <p>Decision: Approved</p> <p>Total to be offered: £20,000</p>

CONSIDERATION OF NEW BID

9. Due to an administration error there was a bid that was omitted from the Panel meeting on 17th March. It was discussed next:

<p>Application Ref. No. 30 Malmesbury Bid: £125,000</p>	<p><u>Sherston Old School</u></p> <p>Brief Description of Initiative:</p> <p>The project objective is to purchase, renovate and convert for community and commercial use the Sherston Old School. This has been unoccupied for at least 4 years and is in urgent need of restoration and renovation for gainful community use</p> <p>The conversion will provide new and expanded facilities for the Post Office (a newsagent, stores and major retail provider for the community) and help to preserve that amenity. The business currently operates in premises that are too small and, as a result, are more likely to be judged a candidate for closure under the review of such services. Without a Post Office, local residents are likely to have to travel to Malmesbury for all of the services currently provided.</p> <p>It is expected that Wiltshire Council will operate a 'Rural Hub' within</p>
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	<p>the building from which villagers can access the council's services as well as those of other organisations such as the Police, Citizens Advice and Age Concern.</p> <p>The site will also allow for new purpose built Pre-School facilities and for serviced small office facilities giving space for additional local employment.</p> <p>The community has worked to raise the money to purchase the building and is requesting this funding to enable them to undertake the first phase of the conversion work enabling the post office/village shop to begin trading in the new premises thus generating income.</p> <p>Panel Views:</p> <p>Cllr John Thompson declared that he had an interest in this bid. After giving a brief background, he left the room for the remaining panel members to discuss the bid and come to a decision.</p> <p>It was noted by the Panel that this project has the huge support of the community through surveys and the fact that they have already secured a large proportion of the money themselves to purchase the school and land behind the village hall. The community will continue to fund raise for money for the conversion if necessary, but are concerned about the amount of time this may take and would like to get the venue up and running for community benefit as soon as possible. It has taken 4 years for them to get to this point due to the complexity of the purchase. The Community Group will support the project. It was also noted that an agreement has been made that if the development had to be sold in the future it would be reserved for business use only and not for residential use.</p> <p>The Panel was generally supportive of the scheme, particularly as it could bring new employment and services into the community. They are also aware that Sherston acts as a 'hub' for other communities locally and this project is felt to be an integral part of future community cohesion.</p> <p>However, following advice from the thematic delivery partnerships, the panel have asked to see a full business case (which the Economic Partnership have offered to refer to Business Link to assess the viability of the scheme), and for the bidders to be given the opportunity to answer some of the queries raised by Thematic Delivery Partnerships before making a decision. The bid can then come back to the panel for consideration.</p> <p>Decision: Not approved at this time</p> <p>ACTION: Karen to write back asking for a Business Case and will send our checklist to them.</p>
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Any other issues

- 10. The panel agreed that in future, where a county-wide bid has been submitted that needs to go to all Area Boards, a new process should be adopted. These bids will be sent initially to Area Board chairs meetings for provisional approval prior to going to individual Area Board

meetings. The panel can then consider the bids at the first available meeting on the assumption that they will be approved by the individual boards. Subsequently, if the bid is not approved by all Area Boards, the panels decision will need to be reviewed

Date of Next Meeting – Thursday 22nd July 2010 at 1.00pm – 3.00 pm.