

Joint Area Committee – East - 8th July 2009

12. Revenue Grant Request – Bruton Museum (Executive Decision) (Excepted Business)

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Bruton Museum

Purpose of the Report

To request a contribution towards the 2009/10 running costs of Bruton Museum.

Recommendation:

That £3000 (45 % of eligible running costs) be awarded to Bruton Museum from the Community Grants Revenue Budget towards its running costs for 2009/10. Subject to the following conditions:

- (1) That the progress of the Museum continues to be measured through the service level agreement.
- (2) That the committee continues to work with SSDC officers to produce a business plan demonstrating gradual reduction in SSDC grant reliance.
- (3) That SSDC support is acknowledged on publicity.

Background

Previous awards from Area East

01-04	£3,600 pa	Contribution towards running costs
04/05	£3,800	Contribution towards running costs
04/05	£4,334	Security Improvements
05/06	£3,800	Contribution towards running costs
06/07	£3,800	Contribution towards running costs
07/08	£3,800	Contribution towards running costs
08/09	£3350	Contribution towards running costs

Grant aid is only one element of the support that SSDC gives to community museums. The Heritage Team based at the Community Heritage Access Centre (CHAC) provides a range of advice and resources to support community museums. Support includes site visits from the County Museum Development Officer who will give advice on standards; Exhibitions and displays; Forward planning; Governance and sustainability and coordination with regional funding opportunities. Specialist advice is also given on collections care, documentation, education and learning and bulk purchasing specialist material.

Report

Bruton Museum is a vibrant, active and well-supported community resource run by volunteers on a not for profit basis. At least one new exhibition is produced each year and entrance to the Museum is free. Alongside the exhibition, museum volunteers

organise a successful programme of lectures, work with local schools and deal with a steady stream of enquiries relating to family history managing to attract more visitors each year. The Museum committee has achieved and maintains accredited status through the Museums, Libraries & Archives Authority.

Last years exhibition of the work of Ernst Blendorf was extremely successful achieving national recognition for the quality of the content and standard of presentation. It attracted funding from a number of sources and made a modest profit which has been used to purchase a significant piece of his work, the Blendorf Crucifix which will remain on display in St Mary’s Church.

The Museum occupies space in the District Council owned Dovecote building for which the committee pays the full market rent. Running costs (rent, heating, lighting etc) continue to rise and external funding for core costs is still extremely limited. The total cost of running the Museum is expected to be approximately £8,000. However, if the contribution made by volunteers is taken into account this figure would increase to over £19,000.

Members will be aware that Officers have previously stressed the need to reduce reliance on grant aid, and some support has been given to the group through the mentoring scheme. Some progress has been made, membership continues to grow, a corporate membership scheme has been introduced and the committee continues to promote the museum by developing new uses. “Case spaces” is a new scheme offering local people and organisations the opportunity to exhibit for a period, which in turn generates new visitors. Bruton Town Council has once again increased their contribution towards the museum to £1050 for this year.

The recommended amount represents a reduction of approximately 10% of total running cost and it is suggested that the organisation plans for a similar reduction of grant reliance year on year.

A Service Level Agreement has been drafted in discussion with the Museum to specify the terms of any support offered to Bruton Museum. The agreement is essentially based on expected open times (hours), number of visitors, volunteer hours and outreach projects delivered. It will be agreed and signed as a condition of this award and monitored on a six monthly basis.

The application has been scored using the community grants assessment criteria and the following scores apply.

Category	Score	Maximum score
A Eligibility	Y	
B Target Groups	4	7
C Project	5	5
D Capacity of Organisation	13	15
E Financial need	5	7
F Innovation	3	3
Grand Total	30	37

Projects need to achieve a score of 22 or more to be eligible for SSDC funding.

Financial Implications

There is currently £6120 unallocated in the Community Grants element of the Revenue Grants Budget. If the above recommendations are approved this will leave a sum of £3120 available for delegated awards and for allocation in December.

Implications for Corporate Priorities

The work of Bruton Museum contributes towards:-

Improving the housing, health and wellbeing of our citizens. 3.27, 3.31

ensuring safe, sustainable and cohesive communities. 4.19, 4.21, 4.25, 4.26

Other Implications

Background Papers: Grant Application files.
