

Strategy Committee

13 December 2018

Request for grant from Beaminster Museum

For Decision

Portfolio Holder:

Cllr Mary Penfold – Enabling

Senior Leadership Team Contact:

M Hamilton, Strategic Director

Report Author:

T. Hurley, Leisure Commissioning Manager

Statutory Authority:

Localism Act 2011 – ‘general power of competence’.

Purpose of Report

1. To present to the committee a request for funding from Beaminster Museum Trust for improvements to the museum and to help secure a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Officer Recommendations

2. That the Committee approves request for a grant of £15,000 from the Beaminster Museum Trust (charity no. 299616) for the project to build a two-storey extension to Beaminster Museum (planning reference WD/D/18/001824).

Reason for Decision

3. To enable the committee to respond to a funding request from the Beaminster Museum Trust.

Background and Reason Decision Needed

4. Beaminster Museum is a volunteer-run facility that is owned and operated by Beaminster Museum Trust – a registered charity and accredited museum (via the national accreditation system operated by Arts Council England).
5. The Trust is now pursuing a project to build a two-storey extension in the courtyard of the museum that will be attached to the main building. This extension will provide an increased floor area to enable the Trust to expand its exhibition space.
6. The greater floor area will allow an expansion of the heritage and history displays and exhibits, to further enhance the Trust’s reputation as a tourist

attraction. There is also an increased demand for using the museum's services as a family and local history 'hub', but currently the limited space prevents the Trust from being able to offer this at a satisfactory level. The main beneficiaries will be groups of local school children and students in full time education as well as groups of retired adults and the general public who wish to learn more about their local history.

7. The total cost of the project is estimated to be £155,000 (including VAT). The Trust is currently in the process of applying for a grant of £50,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund and lesser amounts from trusts and funds, including the LEADER programme. As part of its fund-raising efforts, the Trust has asked the district council if it would consider awarding a grant to this project of £15,000.
8. It should be noted that the Trust does not receive any regular funding from the district council apart from small grants from the council's Leisure Development Fund and from Section 106 money for specific one-off projects.
9. The Committee is, therefore, invited to consider this request from the Trust for a one-off grant of £15,000. A grant of this amount could be accommodated with the remaining funds in the council's Leisure Development Fund budget but requires committee approval.

Implications

10. **Corporate Plan.** *Empowering Thriving and Inclusive Communities.*
11. **Financial.** Any grant to the Beaminster Museum Trust will need to be derived from the council's Leisure Development Fund budget. The Fund has now closed but sufficient budget remains to accommodate this request.
12. **Equalities.** It is important to health and wellbeing that cultural and community facilities are sufficient to meet the needs of the local community and are in accessible locations.
13. **Economic Development.** Cultural facilities make a significant contribution to the local economy. The enhancement of these facilities can, therefore, benefit the community not only in terms of education and wellbeing, but also from an economic perspective.
14. **Risk Management (including Health & Safety).** Any grant to the Trust will be subject to a grant agreement (drawn up by Legal services) and funding will only be released once evidence of expenditure has been provided.

Consultation and Engagement

15. The portfolio holder for Enabling (Cllr Mary Penfold), the ward members and the council's member representative to the Trust (Cllr Alford) have all been consulted on the proposals set out in this report. Beaminster Town Council has confirmed its support for the Museum's project.

Appendices

16. None.

Background Papers

17. None.

Footnote

18. Issues relating to financial, environmental, economic and equalities implications have been considered and any information relevant to the decision is included within the report.

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