

Agenda Item No.3

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**CABINET MEMBER FOR STRATEGIC POLICY, ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT AND BUDGET**

25 October 2016

Report of the Chief Executive

**COMMUNITY PRIORITIES PROGRAMME – APPLICATION FOR FUNDING
FOR THE CHATSWORTH ARTS CENTRE, LONG EATON**

1. Purpose of the Report

To approve an application from Councillor Roland Hosker for Community Priority Programme funding of £33,000 for the Chatsworth Arts Centre, Long Eaton.

2. Information and Analysis

Background

At Cabinet on 24 May 2016, Members agreed to establish a £2.271 million Community Priorities Programme using one off resources identified from General Reserves. It was agreed at the meeting that any projects requiring funding of £20,000 or above will need to seek approval by the Cabinet Member for Strategic Policy, Economic Development and Budget.

The Community Priorities Programme aims to support the development of projects which meets real identified needs, supports communities and families, build community capacity and are sustainable. All projects need to meet the following criteria:

- Support activity benefiting the designated Lower Super Output Area (LSOA).
- Support the aims and objectives of the Thriving Communities programme.
- Link into Thriving Communities activity in areas where work is currently being piloted where possible.
- Be time limited and not require ongoing funding from the Council.
- Complement, not duplicate other funding sources such as the Public Health Locality Fund, the members Community Leadership Scheme etc.
- Show how activity can be sustained beyond the life of the funding.

- Meet an identified need which can be evidenced through for example, English Indices of Deprivation, the Derbyshire Quilt etc.
- Be delivered within agreed timescales.
- Show how local people have helped in the design of identified activity or have been consulted or engaged.
- Show what difference will be made.

An application for funding under the Communities Priorities Programme has been submitted by Cllr Roland Hosker for a grant of £33,000 to support the Chatsworth Arts Centre in the centre of Long Eaton. Cllr Hosker has an allocation of £43,000 to support 4 LSOAs in the Long Eaton area. This proposal benefits all the eligible LSOAs in this Electoral Division.

The Chatsworth Arts Centre, in Long Eaton is a community based arts centre, which enjoys charitable status. The centre comprises a 180 seat theatre which is regularly converted into a multi-purpose space for other community activities and events.

Theatrical events which range from musical shows to drama, from dance to pop concerts, from Shakespeare to Gilbert & Sullivan are performed in the Duchess Theatre. These productions are carried out by youth groups to more senior groups, and form the main activity of the centre. 99% of theatrical performances are organised by local amateur youth and other performing groups, virtually all from within the Derbyshire area. In the year 2014/2015 the premises were in use for 46 weeks, with a local audience turnover in excess of 20,000, not including the many participants at other community based and social events.

The conversion of a former derelict church hall on the site to a highly successful venue was carried out totally by a team of local volunteers, using their unique understanding of the specific needs of a theatre and community venue. Alongside a small grant from Erewash Borough Council, all work was enabled by the fundraising efforts and dedication of the volunteers. The space has been creatively designed to an extremely high standard, creating a professional and welcoming environment for the range of performances and activities which take place at the centre. Every activity in the running and management of this successful community facility is undertaken by local volunteers. The Centre is governed by trustees, but is operated and managed by elected members, all of whom are volunteers.

The high number of visitors to the activities run out of centre demonstrates the value the local community place on the Chatsworth Centre. The success of these activities however, has highlighted difficulties within the building. These challenges relate to:

- Safe circulation of visitors during performances
- Limited space for refreshments

- Positioning of the toilets
- Some necessary structural improvements
- Limited spaces for regular, ongoing community and social activities and events.

These challenges, if not addressed, potentially limit the future success of the centre, which continues to grow and expand its turnover and usage both in terms of theatre productions and other social activities. The Trustees recognise the potential of the centre to host a range of more regular community based activities (and private functions which would help to provide income to sustain the use of the building in the future). However this is difficult to maintain when the space is set up for productions, which are increasing in number as the reputation of the centre grows.

Addressing the problems stated above would enable the centre to open up the space for more community based activity alongside theatrical performances, and generate valuable income which would be re-circulated back into the centre to ensure its longevity as a vital community asset for the local area.

The Trustees, using their knowledge of the needs, current usage and future potential of the building, have designed alterations which will bring about a transformation of the current space. The funding from the Community Priorities Programme will galvanise and enable the Trustees to embark upon an ambitious extension to the existing building. This work will create an additional self-contained modern, multi-purpose community space which will stand alone from the current theatre area. It will greatly enhance both the existing physical and social aspects of the centre, turning it into a genuine community hub to serve the needs of a wide range of users. The re-configured space will also allow generation of additional income for the running of the centre as a whole.

The proposed new self-contained community space presents the opportunity to cater for outside groups using the space on a regular basis and to ensure the building is used to its maximum potential. It also allows for the expansion of valuable social interactions for the many existing volunteers and regular visitors. The centre has a massive potential to grow the already thriving volunteer base and encourage new community members to get involved. Many local young people utilise the centre, through their involvement in preparing for and delivering performances, and work together with the older volunteers who have now retired from performing. This type of working is a feature of the centre, strengthening intergenerational links and encouraging the sharing of interests and skills.

The building work will ensure that the valuable contribution the centre makes to the local community will continue to sustain itself many years to come. The trustees see this extension as being vital in keeping the Chatsworth Arts

Centre as the cultural centre for the area, and at the same time create a hub for community based activities and events.

The total cost of the project is anticipated to be in the region £180,000. This is based on an estimate for the works planned whilst this proposal is being developed. Discussions are ongoing with the local Planning Department and Conservation Officers as planning approval is sought, which may affect the final plans. Competitive quotes will be gained at the appropriate stage.

The £33,000 funding requested from the Community Priorities Programme will enable the Trustees to realise their ambitious plan for this important community asset. Additional funding required for this work can be met from fundraising (£35,000 has already been secured and further £5,000 is expected from planned fundraising activity over the coming months), contributions from local performing groups in the region of £3,000 and a commercial loan (already secured).

Being located in the middle of town, the Chatsworth Centre is easily accessible to people from all the LSOAs which have attracted the Community Priorities Programme funding in this area. The information contained in the application, meets the selection criteria as set out above.

3. Financial Considerations

The total cost of £33,000 can be met from the Community Priorities Programme budget. To ensure that there is compliance with the Council's Financial Regulations, all approved projects will be issued with standard conditions of grant and will be subject to monitoring and evaluation.

4. Equality and Diversity Considerations

The Community Priorities Programme will ensure that the funding set aside will be targeted to the most deprived and disadvantaged areas of the county.

5. Social Value Considerations

The Community Priorities Programme will support the development of projects in the 50% most deprived LSOAs in the county, engaging with local people and supporting the improvement of the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the communities concerned. Any procurement or commissioning activities undertaken in relation to the Programme will consider the economic, environmental and social benefits of activity, seeking to maximise social value where appropriate.

6. Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered; legal, prevention of crime and disorder, environmental, human resources, health, property and transport considerations.

7. Background Papers

- Community Priorities Programme application for Creswell Heritage and Wellbeing Centre – August 2016
- Reserves Position report to Cabinet - 26 January 2016
- The English Indices of Deprivation - Report to Cabinet - 3 November 2015
- Community Priorities Programme report to Cabinet – 24 May 2016

8. Key Decision

No

9. Call-in

Is it required that call-in be waived for any decision on this report? **No**

10. Officer's Recommendations

That the Cabinet Member for Strategic Policy, Economic Development and Budget approves the application for £33,000 for the Chatsworth Arts Centre as set out above.

Ian Stephenson
CHIEF EXECUTIVE