

A REVIEW OF THE ORIGINAL NHB CRITERIA AND THE INTRODUCTION OF A NHB MICROGRANT SCHEME FROM SEPTEMBER 2017

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Cabinet Member for Finance Resources and Compliance

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To seek the Cabinet view on whether any changes should be made to the original NHB Funding Scheme criteria for parish and town councils and for Cabinet approval for the expansion of the criteria to include a Microgrant scheme open to voluntary and community sector organisations.

2 Recommendation

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| 2.1 | That Cabinet review the original NHB Funding Scheme criteria and decide if the Advisory Grants Panel should make any changes, taking account of the view of Cabinet. |
| 2.2 | That Cabinet approve the expansion of the existing New Homes Bonus Funding Scheme criteria to include a Microgrant Scheme as outlined in this report, taking into account any refinements they wish to see made. |

3. Background

- 3.1 The government introduced the New Homes Bonus (NHB) in April 2011. The scheme was designed to ensure that the economic benefits of housing growth are returned to the councils and communities where that growth has taken place.
- 3.2 Under the original government scheme, for every new home built and occupied in Aylesbury Vale, and every long-term empty home brought back into use, the Government would give the council a non-ring fenced New Homes Bonus grant each year for six years. However, following concerns as to the affordability of the national scheme the Government has reviewed and now reduced the number of years of which payments are made to five years in 2017/18 and to four years in 2018/19.
- 3.3 The decision to reduce the number of years of which payments are made affects that amount that the Council receives and therefore the amount that the Council is able to pass on to communities under its NHB Funding Scheme.
- 3.4 The changes to the New Homes Bonus at a national level present an opportunity to review the Parish New Homes Bonus Funding Scheme. Having now been operational for 4 bidding rounds, any announcement to parishes about the continuation of this scheme has been delayed pending the outcome of the Government's review.
- 3.5 Cabinet therefore agreed to a separate paper being brought to them reviewing whether the scheme has achieved its objectives thus far, whether it needs to be re-focused and whether the resources allocated to it are

appropriate given the future reductions in national funding for the Bonus. A table of allocations to date and Advisory Grants Panel's reasons for them is attached at Appendix A.

4. Original NHB Criteria

- 4.1 The original criteria were determined by the NHB Advisory Grants Panel, made up of three district councillors appointed on a politically proportionate basis, and two parish councillors nominated by the Aylesbury Vale Association of Local Councils (AVALC).
- 4.2 The scheme is designed to fund projects where there is a demonstrable need for significant capital investment or revenue to help with the provision of community amenities that are needed because of growth and that have tangible benefits to the community.
- 4.3 The Panel agreed that applications must be accompanied by a business case which as a minimum would demonstrate:
 - The impact of growth on the relevant area – although applications need not necessarily be from the area in which the growth has occurred, in recognition of the fact that those affected are not always within the area taking the growth.
 - The need and community support for the proposed investment
 - A clear budget and funding details
 - A delivery plan
- 4.4 It was decided that the scheme would not fund:
 - Retrospective projects (i.e. project that will start before a funding decision has been reached or projects already completed).
 - Expenditure already incurred/committed.
 - Fundraising activities.
 - Political or religious activities.
 - The preparation of community or feasibility plans.

And that the scheme would not *normally* fund:

 - Initiatives that are the responsibility of another statutory body.
 - Street lighting or street furniture
 - Facilities/services which would be funded by developer contributions or CIL.
 - Initiatives where the asset for which the funding is sought is not within the ownership of the parish council.
- 4.5 The Panel also agreed that the scheme should not be too prescriptive and that all applications would be considered on their own merit.

5. Award History and Scheme Performance

- 5.1 The list attached as Appendix A shows that awards have been made for a variety of schemes to a variety of parishes in that time. The smallest award was for £2,600 and the largest was for £500,000.
- 5.2 There are three significant observations from the awards made so far. Firstly, for the most part, applications have tended to be from the larger parishes. Given that the process of compiling a business case is resource intensive and the evidence requirements are stringent, it is perhaps not surprising that applications tend to mainly be received from towns and parishes that have taken the most growth and have the greatest volunteer or paid resources.
- 5.3 Secondly, the impact of growth on an individual community is often difficult to objectively determine. Given the scale of growth in the Vale most communities have been impacted to some extent. However, there is no proportionality test that has been applied in assessing the impact of growth versus the value of award. Essentially, this is because each scheme is individual and it would be very difficult to formulate a measure for determining what level of growth would warrant what level of award. The Panel has agonised over this issue on several occasions.
- 5.5 Thirdly, the issue of funding schemes which are the responsibility of another statutory body has also arisen on several occasions. Specifically, transport schemes, which have proven popular. The initiative has funded 7 schemes to date, which would normally have been the responsibility of Buckinghamshire County Council, as the Transport authority. However, the County has prioritised its resources primarily to essential schemes and so minor schemes, such as those funded here, have tended to receive little or no priority. Thus far, the Panel (endorsed by Cabinet) has taken the view that whilst it is the responsibility of the Transport authority, and it would have been within the rules of the scheme to reject these applications, with no realistic prospect of the County allocating funding to these schemes in the medium term, the people who would have suffered would be the parish residents. Weighing the balance of these factors the Panel has agreed to fund transport schemes, thus far.

6. Introduction of a new NHB Microgrant Scheme

- 6.1 After 10 years of operation, the Community Chest scheme has recently ended. This was a successful and valued initiative that provided funding for the voluntary and community sector over this time. However, there is no successor scheme.
- 6.2 As part of this review exercise, it has been identified that the NHB grants programme needs to be more inclusive for all parishes and not only the largest. Part of the solution to this, and with the demise of the Community Chest scheme, is that it should be more inclusive of voluntary and community

sector organisations. In smaller parishes, much of the community infrastructure is provided through these bodies and so by providing a means to help these organisations, they are also helping all residents of the parishes.

It is therefore proposed that:

- 6.3 A NHB Microgrant Scheme for smaller projects with **total** project costs ranging from £500-£10,000 is introduced. The scheme would be designed to be more inclusive of smaller parishes and voluntary and community sector organisations operating with a parish, who have found it difficult to benefit from the current scheme.
- 6.4 That easily accessible Microgrants up to £1,000 are made available for a variety of purposes such as the refurbishment of village halls, buying new equipment, running costs, rent etc.,
- 6.5 That the budget is met from the existing 20% NHB allocation set aside for Town and Parish Councils – expected to be in the region of £800,000 in 2017/18.
- 6.6 That 10% of this total is allocated to a NHB Microgrant Scheme – circa £80,000 in 2017/18. If, in future the total fund increases or diminishes, then the Microgrant Scheme should grow or diminish in proportion.
- 6.7 That applications should continue to demonstrate a link to growth or the impact of growth from a surrounding or nearby area, but that the application requirements are considerably simplified and are proportionate to the award.
- 6.8 That proposed projects to be put forward for funding **must** evidence consultation at Parish level and that the application form is endorsed by the relevant town or parish council prior to submission.
- 6.9 That applications may be submitted at any time and that the closing date for applications should be the 15th of each month from 15th September 2017, thus allowing for the publicising of the scheme and the completion of application forms to be available from mid July/ August 2017.
- 6.10 The proposed timescales, to fit in with the management of the VCS grant funding application and decision making process which takes place from the end of September to the end of November, are:

July 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NHB project grant funding scheme and new microgrant scheme advertised to parish and town councils and the voluntary and community sector. • Microgrant application forms available • Project grant application forms available
September 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Microgrant round closes on 15th September and on 15th of each month thereafter. • Microgrant applications assessed by the Grants Officer and ratified by the Cabinet Member responsible and a nominated AVALC representative on a monthly basis.
December 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NHB project grant funding round closes on 15th of the month*.
December/January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of applications and paperwork for the Panel prepared.
January 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NHB Advisory Grants Panel meets. • Report for Cabinet prepared.
March 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report considered by Cabinet. • Applicants notified of the outcome.

* This gives town and parish councils time to work up a robust application and fitting in the VCS application and decision making process which takes place between the end of September to the end of November.

- 6.11 That applications are assessed by the Grants Officer, using a scoring system to be developed in conjunction with the Advisory Panel members, who will then make funding recommendations to be ratified by the Cabinet Member responsible and a nominated AVALC representative, on a monthly basis.
- 6.12 That applicants are notified of the outcome within four weeks of the closing date.
- 6.13 That the grant is claimed in full within three months of the award and paid by bank transfer within two weeks of receipt of the signed funding agreement.
- 6.14 That successful applicants complete a monitoring form when the project is complete, which the Grants Officer forwards to Advisory Grants Panel members to evidence the benefit that the project has made to local people.
- 6.15 It would be a condition of each grant that the contribution made by the NHB Microgrant Funding Scheme should be clearly identified to the local community in all publicity about the project and by displaying a plaque, where appropriate, highlighting the contribution by both AVDC and AVALC. (A form of words to be agreed by AVDC and AVALC)
- 6.16 That only one Microgrant Scheme application per organisation per financial year may be made and each organisation may only receive up to three Microgrants throughout the life of the fund.

- 6.17 That the success of the scheme and the availability of funds be reviewed after the first year, by a joint group of AVDC and AVALC, using information gained during the year.
- 6.18 This parish NHB initiative has been strongly supported by the parishes thus far and so the proposal to change the scheme was put to AVALC at a recent liaison meeting. AVALC consulted with its members and, subject to a few minor amendments, were happy to endorse the changes proposed here.

7.0 Conclusion

- 7.1 The Government's review of the NHB scheme presents the Cabinet with an opportunity to review the operation of the local scheme.
- 7.2 This review has found that the parish initiative scheme has mostly been valued and appreciated by the parishes, but access to the scheme has not been even, nor has it necessarily accurately reflected the distribution of growth across the Vale.
- 7.3 There have been dilemmas faced by the Panel in agreeing awards. However, the function of the Panel is partially to recognise the complexity of the issues faced and that the value of many schemes is often subjective. The cross party and independent mix of Panel members is therefore considered valuable in forming a view on the merits of these schemes and in making a considered recommendation to the Cabinet. The Panel are thanked for their efforts and diligence in tackling these issues.
- 7.4 To increase access to this initiative by all parishes, a micro grant element could be created within the existing scheme with fewer access requirements. This could encompass bids from the voluntary and community sector where supported by the appropriate parish council.
- 7.5 Cabinet might wish to consider the detail of the micro Grant scheme set out in the previous section and decide whether any refinements are necessary.
- 7.6 In particular, Cabinet might wish to determine whether;
- there should be a limit on the number of maximum awards given under the Micro Grant scheme in order to ensure the greatest number of successful applications;
 - whether the two schemes should be contiguous, or whether they should overlap (i.e. should applications by parishes under £10,000 automatically be classed as Micro Grant applications).
- 7.7 There are no proposals for re-determining the formula for the overall allocation of Council resources to the initiative. So, whilst resources for the New Homes Bonus scheme are reducing, following the Government's review,

the impact of the reductions will continue to be evenly felt by those that benefit from it.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1 That Cabinet consider whether the current criteria (point 4 of this report) are appropriate or whether they should be reconsidered by the NHB Advisory Grants Panel taking into account Cabinet's view.
- 8.2 That Cabinet approve the expansion of the existing New Homes Bonus Funding Scheme criteria to include a Microgrant Scheme as outlined in point 5 of this report.

9. Options considered

- 9.1 To maintain the status quo. However, the changes to the New Homes Bonus at a national level present an opportunity to review the Parish New Homes Bonus Funding Scheme.

10. Reasons for recommendations

- 10.1 The changes to the New Homes Bonus at a national level present an opportunity to review the Parish New Homes Bonus Funding Scheme and for Cabinet to decide whether it needs to be re-focused and whether the resources allocated to it are appropriate given the future reductions in national funding for the Bonus.
- 10.2 The need for the NHB grants programme to be more inclusive of voluntary and community sector organisations operating within a parish, who have found it difficult to benefit from the current scheme, has also been identified.

11. Resource implications

There are no additional resource implications as a result of the recommendations within this report. The recommendation is that the total level of NHB grant funding for 2017/18, including any allocation for the microgrant scheme, be met within the NHB grants budget.

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Background Documents: Council Budget Proposals Report. Andrew Small. February 2017

Notes of the Inaugural Meeting of the NHB Advisory Grants Panel. Jan Roffe. May 2013

New Homes Bonus Funding Scheme - Agreed Principles and Process. Jan Roffe. May 2013

Table of New Homes Bonus allocations to date (2013-2017)
Appendix A

Name of Town/Parish Council	Project description and current status	Total cost of project	Amount Requested	Grant Panel's recommendation	Reasons for recommendation
Grants awarded 2013/14					
Buckingham	Multi-use games area (MUGA) at Bourton Park Meadow (Project completed)	35,905	35,905	35,905	The Panel was very supportive of both applications from Buckingham Town Council, which both fully met the criteria by clearly evidencing the impact of growth in Buckingham, the need and community desire for the projects and firm costings with delivery plans. Panel Members were unanimous in recommending to award the requested amount of funding for both projects.
Buckingham	Trim Trail at Bourton Park Meadow (Project completed)	7,418	2,608	2,608	
Waddesdon	Controlled pedestrian crossing at A41/Goss Avenue crossing (Project completed)	100,000	90,000	90,000	The Panel members were unanimous in supporting the application for a pedestrian controlled crossing on the A41 at Goss Avenue in Waddesdon. The application evidences that the large amount of housing growth in Bicester and Aylesbury has increased the amount of traffic through the village. Community consultation has taken place and a feasibility study and costings have been produced. The Panel noted the apparent high cost of the scheme was due to the additional safety measures required in this location. The Parish Council has pledged £10,000 from its reserves towards the project. The Panel agreed that there was a strong need for the project and recommended an award for the requested amount.
Winslow	Acquisition of land at The Paddock, Winslow upon which to eventually build a Community Centre and provide a Town Park at Phase II (Phase I completed)	237,000	200,000	200,000	The Panel considered the application from Winslow Town Council to be exceptional in its project development and forward planning for the town as identified in Winslow's Neighbourhood Plan. The impact of growth on the town, widespread community consultation, firm costings and delivery plan are clearly evidenced in the application. The Panel members were unanimous in their support for the project and recommended NHB funding for the requested amount, subject to there being a covenant on the land to ensure that it is held in perpetuity as a community asset, and that any future buildings erected are solely for the delivery of community and recreational activities.
Aylesbury	Aylesbury's Paralympic Legacy - new community festival 2014 and 2016 (Project completed)	450,000	100,000	50,000	The Panel supported the application in principle but whilst the impact of growth on the town and community support for the events was evident, the detail of the event programme and costings was lacking. The Panel's recommendation was therefore to award £50,000 to support the first festival in March 2014. A decision about funding the second festival in 2016 was deferred pending receipt of a detailed breakdown of expenditure following the first festival. The Panel also noted that a charitable organisation will be established to apply for wider income streams in the future and that this should negate the need to apply for NHB support beyond 2016.
Total amount awarded 2013/14				378,513	
Total amount in fund 2013/14				491,000	
Uncommitted budget carried over into next round				112,487	
Grants awarded 2014/15					
Weston Turville	Relocation of play area and extension to car park (Project completed)	£132,863	£122,863	£122,863	The Panel was supportive of this application, which fully met the criteria by clearly evidencing the impact of growth in Weston Turville, the need and community desire for better and safer play and parking facilities in the vicinity of the community centre, together with firm costings. The Panel agreed that there was a need for the project and recommend an award up to the requested amount.

Name of Town/Parish Council	Project description and current status	Total cost of project	Amount Requested	Grant Panel's recommendation	Reasons for recommendation
Coldharbour	Multi-use games area (MUGA) (Project completed)	£36,945	£31,145	£31,145	The Panel was supportive of this application to address the lack of age appropriate recreational facilities for teenagers in the village, but expressed concern over the proximity of the proposed MUGA to dwellings nearby. The Panel agreed that there was a need for the project and recommend funding up to the requested amount, subject to appropriate consultation taking place with residents living within close proximity to the proposed MUGA.
Haddenham	Zebra crossing on Woodways (Project completed)	£86,000	£86,000	£86,000	The Panel members were unanimous in supporting the application for a crossing on Woodways and recognised the need to improve road safety on this busy stretch of road. The Panel also recognised the clear demonstration of growth in Haddenham and associated increase in traffic; the extensive consultation that had taken place and that Transport for Bucks had already undertaken a feasibility study supporting the need for a safer crossing. The Panel therefore recommend an award up to the full amount requested.
Aylesbury	Cemetery chapel refurbishment (Project completed)	£9,300	£9,300	£9,300	The Panel supported this application to bring an unused Grade II listed chapel back into use for the benefit of the community. The Panel also recognised that because of the continued housing growth in Aylesbury and the associated increase in population, it had been necessary to extend the town cemetery to accommodate more burial plots and that a specific need had been identified for a place for visitors to meet both before and after funerals. The Panel therefore recommend funding up to the requested amount for the internal refurbishment of the chapel.
Turweston	Traffic calming measures in village Conservation Area (Project almost complete)	£100,000	£100,000	£60,000	The Panel was impressed by the thoroughness of this application and recognised that although Turweston itself has not taken any housing growth, the village has been severely impacted upon by growth in surrounding areas, both within Aylesbury Vale and South Northants. The Panel felt unable to recommend the full amount requested as it was mindful that £40,000 of S106 money could be released when development currently underway in Brackley is complete. As the design of the scheme allows for each element to be implemented individually, the Panel recommend an award up to £60,000 to enable the installation of traffic mitigation works at the most effective locations.
Buckland	Restoration of canal tow path at Buckland Wharf (Project completed)	£13,995	£12,895	£12,895	The Panel was very supportive of this application and recognised that the canal is a unique asset to Aylesbury Vale, that attracts visitors to the area and helps connect local communities. The application demonstrated that although Buckland itself has not taken any housing growth, footfall along the canal tow path has increased significantly because of growth in the surrounding villages, particularly in Weston Turville and Aston Clinton. The Panel therefore recommend funding up to the requested amount to improve and make safe this part of the Wendover Arm Canal tow path.

Table of New Homes Bonus allocations to date (2013-2017)

Name of Town/Parish Council	Project description and current status	Total cost of project	Amount Requested	Grant Panel's recommendation	Reasons for recommendation
Stoke Mandeville	Speed limit reduction (Project completed)	£7,440	£5,000	£5,000	The Panel acknowledged that there is no longer any dedicated BCC funding for changes to speed limits and that the cost of such schemes has to be met by the local community. The application demonstrated growth in Stoke Mandeville at the hospital site and by the stadium, increasing the volume of traffic along the Risborough and Lower Roads and impacting upon the safety of residents. The Panel therefore recommend funding for the project up to the requested amount, subject to the result of the assessment required by Transport for Bucks, to determine whether the reduction is appropriate for the road under current guidelines.
Stone, Bishopstone & Hartwell	All weather car park surface on Memorial Ground (Project completed)	£14,880	£14,880	£14,880	The Panel supported this application and noted the difficulties with parking on the present grassed area, especially during wet weather. It was also noted that parking was not taken into consideration when planning the building of the new pavilion, which has attracted a large number of users who are parking in residential roads because provision is inadequate on the pavilion site. The Panel therefore recommend an award up to the requested amount to install an all year round parking surface on the Memorial Ground
Calvert Green	Extension to community hall (Project underway - turf cutting has recently taken place)	£572,880	£200,000	£200,000	The Panel was supportive of this application and the definite need for adequate infrastructure in the village that has increased in size by 32.5% in the past year. Panel members agreed that the community centre needs to be extended and modernised to facilitate the needs of the growing community and recommend an award up to the requested amount, subject to the parish's application to WREN being successful.
Westbury	Village hall rebuild (Project completed)	£782,000	£50,000	£50,000	The Panel was unanimous in its support for this project and were very impressed by the thoroughness of the application, and the work that the Parish Council had undertaken on the project plan. Panel members recognised the need to replace the current village hall, which is in a state of disrepair, to meet the needs of the community and the growing population. The panel recommend funding up to the requested amount.
Total of grant awards				£592,083	
Total fund available				£784,487	
Uncommitted budget carried over into next round				£192,404	
Grants awarded 2015/16					
Buckingham	Town Centre toilets and Shopmobility (Project underway)	229,222	229,222	229,222	The Panel deferred a decision on funding the new toilet block in the last round because of the uncertainties surrounding its location and therefore the estimated cost of the scheme. Buckingham Town Council and AVDC have now mutually agreed the location of the toilet block in a safer and more accessible area of the car park to serve the needs of Buckingham's fast growing population. The revised application and project specification, to include a permanent and much improved base for Shopmobility, alleviated the previous concerns of the Panel and also demonstrated the need for a fit-for-purpose permanent base for Shopmobility. The Panel recommended funding up to the amount requested.

Table of New Homes Bonus allocations to date (2013-2017)

Appendix A

Name of Town/Parish Council	Project description and current status	Total cost of project	Amount Requested	Grant Panel's recommendation	Reasons for recommendation
Aylesbury	2nd Paralympic Heritage Flame Lighting Ceremony ahead of Paralympic Games in Rio 2016 (Project completed)	430,000	50,000	50,000	In the 2013/14 funding round, the Panel recommended funding for the first Paralympic Heritage Flame Lighting event, held in 2014 ahead of the Sochi winter Games. A decision on funding the 2016 Heritage Flame Lighting event was deferred pending an updated application. The Panel was supportive of the updated application for the Rio 2016 Paralympic Heritage Flame Lighting event, based on the success of the previous events, the international recognition that these events brought to the town, and the increased community involvement planned for 2016. It was recognised that the scale of the event would depend upon the success of other grant applications. The Panel recommended funding up to the amount requested.
Stone with Bishopstone and Hartwell	Eythrope Road Cemetery driveway renovation (Project underway)	26,008	26,008	26,008	The Panel appreciated that the resurfacing of the cemetery driveway is the second phase of an overall strategic project to improve the cemetery – the first phase for a new Garden of Remembrance and area for the interment of ashes has recently been completed and paid for by the parish council. The panel recommended funding up to the amount requested, and to encourage the parish council to raise their precept to cover ongoing maintenance.
Wendover	Remodelling of the Manor Waste (Project completed)	250,000	213,500	213,500	The Panel was supportive of this application and recognised the need to improve the surface of the Manor Waste to be fit for purpose, now and in the future, for the growing population of Wendover. The Panel also acknowledged the parish council's financial contribution to the project and recommended funding up to the amount requested.
Aston Clinton	Aston Clinton Park Pavilion - new community hub (Project delayed because of shortfall in funds - situation is being monitored)	2,014,675	500,000	500,000	The Panel was supportive of the overall scheme for a new and fit for purpose community centre to replace the present dilapidated and outdated building which no longer meets the needs of the current and rapidly increasing population of the village. However, concern was expressed about the level of borrowing required for this £2 million scheme and whether the parish council would be able to manage such a high level of borrowing. The Panel recommended funding up to the requested amount subject to the following conditions: (i) that planning permission is granted (ii) all funding is in place before commencement of the project (iii) further information about running costs and project income (iv) agreement with the grants officer about project milestones so that funding can be phased (v) Reassurances about project management arrangements, because of the huge scale of the project (vi) The Panel reserves the right to withdraw the grant offer if the project proves to be unviable.
Buckingham	Refurbishment and extension to Embleton Way Pavilion (Project completed)	164,380	46,096	46,096	The Panel was supportive of this application to bring an unused facility back into use as a viable Scouts HQ and as a community facility and resource for Buckingham's growing population. The Panel recommended funding up to the amount requested. Funding to be subject to the application to WREN for match-funding being successful.

Name of Town/Parish Council	Project description and current status	Total cost of project	Amount Requested	Grant Panel's recommendation	Reasons for recommendation
Stewkley	Refurbishment of Stewkley Community and Sports Pavilion (Project completed)	135,000	50,000	50,000	The Panel supported the application to refurbish the current sports pavilion, which is in a poor state of repair, to be fit for purpose for the community. The Panel was mindful that the NHB scheme is designed to be accessible to all town and parish councils that have taken growth and not just the larger towns and villages. 19 new homes have been built in Stewkley in recent years with another 10 committed this year on land that can eventually accommodate 20 houses. The Panel considered this a well planned project and recommended funding up to the requested amount subject to planning permission for the rear spectators' "verandah" being granted.
Total of grant awards				1,114,826	
Total funds available				1,130,404	
Uncommitted budget carried over into next round				15,578	
Grants awarded 2016/17					
Wing	Redevelopment of the Recreation Ground (early stages of redevelopment - the PC has very recently encountered criticism from the community around the prioritisation of projects within the redevelopment framework, despite thorough consultation. PC in close contact with Grants Officer).	208,000	208,000	208,000	The Panel was very supportive of this application to fund a new Portakabin pavilion and the resurfacing of the football pitch at the Wing Recreation Ground. The application included a clear demonstration of growth in Wing. The Panel recognised that the pavilion and resurfacing of the football pitch are key elements of a wider project to redevelop Wing Recreation Ground. Supporting the project would provide pump priming funding which is in line with the intentions of the NHB scheme. The pavilion will be used by a large number of local sports and leisure groups, benefitting the whole community and Wing's growing population. The Panel recommended funding the project up to the amount requested.
Winslow	Town Centre Park and Arboretum (Town Park open and on-going improvements continue)	175,000	150,000	75,000	The Panel awarded £200,000 in the 2013/14 round of funding for phase one of this project to purchase land in the centre of Winslow, known as The Paddock. The intention at phase two was to build a community centre on the land as well as provide a town park. Since then further consultation with residents has taken place. It is now considered that The Paddock is too valuable a resource upon which to build a new community centre and that it should be developed solely as a town park. The Panel was mindful that AVDC is currently holding over £736,000 of S106 money for Winslow, some of which could support this project. The Parish Council advises that the money is still being held for the building of a new community centre, although a suitable location has yet to be identified and further S106 contributions are likely to be forthcoming as Winslow continues to grow. The Panel recommended that funding be awarded up to £75,000. The shortfall to be met using £75,000 of S106 money and the £25,000 of reserves already committed to the project by the Town Council. The Panel also recommended that this should not prejudice a subsequent bid to the NHB for additional work.

Name of Town/Parish Council	Project description and current status	Total cost of project	Amount Requested	Grant Panel's recommendation	Reasons for recommendation
Marsworth and Pitstone Parish Councils	Marsworth to Pitstone footway along the B489	251,320	241,820	200,000	The Panel was very supportive of this application to provide a footway alongside the B489 between Marsworth and Pitstone, providing a safe walkway for residents. The Panel was surprised by the 40% contingency built into the costings provided by Transport for Bucks, believing this to be an unnecessarily large percentage. The Panel recommended funding the project up to £200,000, representing project costs but supporting only up to 10% of the contingency figure.
Aylesbury	Replacement of Aylesbury Town Cemetery paths and driveways	41,295	41,295	41,295	The Panel discussed whether this was a maintenance issue for the Town Council, but acknowledged that the replacement of the pathways and tarmac drive is part of a much larger improvement and refurbishment plan for Aylesbury Town Cemetery. The Town Council has recently enhanced the older part of the cemetery, including improved landscaping around the pond area and has created a park setting. It was agreed that the replacement of the paths and driveway will contribute to the overall enhancement of the cemetery and make it fit for purpose for future access for burials. The Panel recommended funding up to the amount requested.
Haddenham	Green Lane Community Path (early stages of project)	102,225	102,225	102,225	Whilst sympathetic to the amount of housing growth in Haddenham, in considering the original application for a cycleway to join the existing Gemstone network of cycleways to Aylesbury, the Panel agreed that there was insufficient information upon which to make a judgement. At the time, the Panel recommended that the funds be ring fenced and the parish invited to re-submit a fuller application with a clear project and delivery plan and costings. In considering the revised application the Panel felt that its concerns had been addressed. The scope of the project has been changed to a community path providing 1km of tarmac surface along an existing section of bridleway. The path will be suitable for pedestrians, wheelchair users, buggies and cyclists to encourage walking, exercise and a healthy lifestyle for Haddenham's growing community. This is a stand alone project that could eventually be extended to link Haddenham to Stone, Dinton and Aylesbury using S106 developer contributions from future housing developments. The Panel recommended funding up to the amount requested.
Chearsley	The rebuilding of the village hall (early stages of project)	582,998	376,372	376,372	The Panel appreciated that Chearsley had submitted an extremely thorough application and that the village hall, constructed after the Second World War as a chicken shed, is no longer fit for purpose. The Panel was however divided, as whilst it appeared to be a high quality scheme, it was questioned whether the application was in keeping with the original NHB funding criteria because of the limited impact of growth in the village. The Panel discussed the original principles of the scheme, namely that applications need not necessarily be from the area directly taking the growth, but are affected by it. Also, that the funding scheme was designed not to be too prescriptive and that each application would be considered on its own merit. The Panel were unable to agree on whether or not to fund the project and recommended that Cabinet consider the application and make the decision on whether the project is in keeping with the criteria and worthy of NHB funding. After careful consideration and taking all the information into account, Cabinet agreed that the project should be supported up to the requested amount.

Name of Town/Parish Council	Project description and current status	Total cost of project	Amount Requested	Grant Panel's recommendation	Reasons for recommendation
Turweston	Traffic calming measures in village Conservation Area	77,224	10,000	10,000	In the 2014/15 round of funding, Panel members were unanimous in their support for the project to install traffic calming measures through the village. Although Turweston itself has not taken any housing growth, the village has been severely impacted by growth in surrounding areas, both within Aylesbury Vale and in South Northants, particularly in Brackley where large residential and commercial development has taken place. Turweston requested £100,000 of grant support and subsequently tried to downscale the project to work within the £60,000 NHB grant awarded. In order to meet the key objectives, the final cost is £77,224 including an unexpected 9.5% management fee imposed by the contractor Ringway Jacobs. Turweston has requested a £10,000 increase in the grant award to help cover these costs. In light of the parish council's modest reserves and financial commitment to cover the unexpected management fees, the Panel was unanimous in recommending an increase in the grant award up to the requested amount.
Total grants awarded				£1,012,892.00	
Total funds available				£1,297,578.00	
Total uncommitted budget				£284,686	