

NEW HOMES BONUS GRANT FUNDING APPLICATIONS
Councillor N Blake
Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Major Projects

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To make a decision on the allocation of New Homes Bonus (NHB) grant funding to Haddenham Parish Council, based on the recommendation of the Advisory NHB Grants Panel.

2 Recommendation

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| 2.1 That Cabinet approve the recommendation of the NHB Advisory Grants Panel to award a grant of £102,225 to Haddenham Parish Council for a Community Path as described below. |
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3 Background

- 3.1 The Advisory NHB Grants Panel met on Wednesday 7 September 2016 to consider applications for funding from parish and town councils under the NHB grant funding scheme and the recommendations of the Panel were approved by Cabinet on 11 October 2016.
- 3.2 In considering an application from Haddenham Parish Council for a cycleway linking Haddenham to Aylesbury, the Panel was sympathetic to the amount of housing growth in Haddenham but felt that the level of information in the application was inadequate to make a judgement. The Panel therefore recommended that funds of £150,000 be ring fenced and that the Parish Council be invited to re-submit a fuller application with a clear project and delivery plan and costings by the end of the 2016/17 financial year. A more detailed application and delivery plan were received and considered by the Panel, together with other supporting documents.
- 3.3 The scope of the project has now been revised to a Community Path and the route shortened, reducing expenditure. Funding is requested for a stand alone project to improve the hard surface of an existing section of bridleway to provide a 1km useable community path. This would be utilised by pedestrians, wheelchair users and cyclists to encourage walking, exercise and a healthy lifestyle for Haddenham's growing community. The path would also provide a safe route for the residents of Stone and Dinton to get to Haddenham's medical centre.
- 3.4 The BCC Rights of Way Officer has advised that cycleways can be made on bridleways without the need to get the riparian owners' permission. All except one riparian owner are in favour of the path.
- 3.5 BCC's Highways Development Manager has confirmed that there are currently no developments at a stage to secure any financial contributions from S106 and the timing of any future applications is out of BCC's control. If NHB funding is not forthcoming, the project would therefore be delayed.

4. Recommendation of the Advisory NHB Grants Panel

In light of the above the Panel has recommended an award of up to the requested amount of £102,225 for the provision of the community path.

5. Options considered

- 5.1 The options considered by the Panel were whether to fund, the level of funding and whether any conditions should be attached to the funding, (above those included in the standard funding agreement: that a plaque or equivalent acknowledgment of AVDC's New Homes Bonus is displayed at an appropriate location, that there is recognition of New Homes Bonus support in all publicity and that funding will be released upon the production of invoices for work completed).
- 5.2 The reason for the Panel's recommendation is included in this report.

6. Resource implications

- 6.1 All funding for parish and town councils under the NHB grant funding scheme will be drawn from the 20% of the Government allocation set aside and ring fenced for the scheme in 2016/17, and the underspend carried forward from 2015/16.
- 6.2 If the Panel recommendation is approved a total of £1,012,892 will have been committed in the 2016/17 round, representing 78% of the budget available. £284,686 would be carried forward and made available to support future applications.

7. Response to Key Aims and Objectives

- 7.1 The allocation of New Homes Bonus funding to parish and town councils helps support the council's corporate plan priorities of protecting and improving the living experience in the Vale and improving our interaction with parish councils.

Contact Officer
Background Documents

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Previous Cabinet and Council reports relating to the New Homes Bonus.
Notes of the Informal Panel meeting