

	AGENDA ITEM NO.
Report Cover Sheet	
Name of Meeting:	Executive
Date of Meeting:	10th December 2007
Report Title:	Progress Report on Outstanding Rural Initiatives Grants
Summary of report:	The Executive considers the progress on the outstanding Rural Initiatives Grants as detailed in the attached report and whether it concurs with the informal time limits , where appropriate, for each grant as identified in the report.
For further information please contact (report author);	Roger Wyton, Principal Accountant (01926 456808 roger.wyton@warwickdc.gov.uk)
Business Unit:	Finance
Would the recommended decision be contrary to the policy framework:	No
Would the recommended decision be contrary to the budgetary framework:	No
Wards of the District directly affected by this decision:	Budbrooke, Whitnash, Bishops Tachbrook, Cubbington, Hunningham, Barford, Norton Lindsey, Lapworth,, Hatton, Baginton, Ferncumbe, Bubbenhall.
Key Decision?	No
Included within the Forward Plan?	No
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006	No
Date and name of meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number:	N/A
Background Papers:	Correspondence with the Applicants.

Consultation Undertaken		
Below is a table of the Council's regular consultees. However not all have to be consulted on every matter and if there was no obligation to consult with a specific consultee they will be marked as n/a.		
Consultees	Yes/ No	Who
Other Committees	N/A	
Ward Councillors	N/A	
Portfolio Holders	Yes	Customer and Community Services – Felicity Bunker
Other Councillors	N/A	
Warwick District Council recognised Trades Unions	N/A	
Other Warwick District Council Service Areas	N/A	
Project partners	N/A	
Parish/Town Council	N/A	
Highways Authority	N/A	
Residents	N/A	
Citizens Panel	N/A	
Other consultees	N/A	
Officer Approval		
With regard to officer approval all reports must be approved by the report authors relevant director, Finance Services and Legal Services.		
Officer Approval	Date	Name
Relevant Director(s)	14/11/07	Mary Hawkins
Chief Executive		
CMT	19/11/07	n/a
Section 151 Officer	14/11/07	Mary Hawkins

Finance		None – report from Finance
Final Decision?		Yes
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		

1. RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 That the Executive notes the progress made on each of the schemes described below and whether it concurs with the informal time limits , where appropriate, for each grant as suggested in the relevant paragraph.

2. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To comply with the request made at the 22nd October Executive and to ensure that potentially “spare” resources are not being retained by projects which will not require them.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 3.1 The Council has only a specific capital budget to provide grants of this nature and therefore there are no alternatives if the Council is to provide funding for Rural Initiatives.
- 3.2 Members may choose to withdraw the grant offer from one, or any, of the applicants in the report or to vary the amount awarded.

4. BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK

- 4.1 The Council has a £80,000 budget for Rural Initiatives grants approved for 2007-2008, supplemented by a further £1,887 unallocated at the end of 2006 - 2007. Currently there is £32,944 available for further applications submitted during 2007/2008 which would be supplemented by any grants withdrawn as a result of this report.

5. POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 5.1 The assistance provided to applicants under this scheme contributes to the Council's Objective of targeting resources to the areas of greatest need.

6. LATEST POSITION ON GRANTS STILL OUTSTANDING

- 6.1 Each of the grant recipients with outstanding grants has been contacted to ascertain the latest progress on their scheme and provide an approximate date when they might be drawing down the Council's grant and their replies are shown below:-

6.2 Budbrooke Community Centre

The Community Centre was awarded a £20,000 grant in December 1999 towards the extension of the Community Centre. £5,900 has been paid out towards the cost of a new disabled toilet leaving a balance of £14,100 which has not been claimed to date. A progress report was received in December 2006 stating that the initial works were complete and the only remaining work to be done was to relay the floor and quotes to do this work were to be obtained in due course. Nothing further was heard and a chase up letter was sent to the Chairperson at the end of October 2007. From a conversation with former Cllr. Butler it has been learnt that the Community Centre Committee resigned en masse last Christmas. Mr. Butler took up the role of acting Chair and volunteers have been keeping the Community Centre going and trying to start up a Youth Club. They are currently sorting out the

Community Centres financial affairs and an AGM is due to be held on the 19th November at which a new Committee will be elected and the floor relaying project including this Council's grant towards it will also be discussed. Following the AGM, Mr. Butler and the new Committee will meet in order to progress the project. Until the outcome of this meeting is known it is not recommended that the grant offer be withdrawn nor an informal time limit be imposed.

6.3 **Whitnash Town Council**

In December 2004, Whitnash Town Council was awarded 2 grants, the first of which was a grant of £5,800 towards the cost of roadworks around the Community Centre and also to level and pave the entrance to the Community Centre. The second grant amounted to £7,743 and related to replacement play equipment at Acre Close and Washbourne play areas. Then in July 2005, a third grant was made this time for £15,506 towards external and internal improvements to the Community Centre and also improved security. To date no payments have been made against the £5,800 grant as the works were awaiting completion of a basketball court which was due to be done in February 2007. £3,834.50 remains of the play equipment grant, the majority of which was to help fund the previously mentioned basketball court. £2,991.26 remains of the third grant and this was funding CCTV for the Community Centre. Correspondence received from Whitnash Town Council indicates that, in all three cases, it is trying to raise the balance of the cost of each project either through their current budget or external grant applications. It is the Council's intention to start the three projects as soon as possible and the matter will be discussed at the next finance meeting in January 2008. In view of these comments it is suggested that an informal time limit of March 2009 be agreed. This should give ample time for the Town Council to raise the remaining funds and commence the projects.

6.4 **Bishops Tachbrook Parish Council**

In July 2005, Bishops Tachbrook Parish Council was awarded a grant of £13,000 towards the cost of installing a new skate park. The scheme was put on hold pending the completion of a new Toddlers Play Area and a review of whether provision of a skate park was the best way of providing facilities for older children in the village.

In December 2005 the Parish Council was awarded a further grant of £2,000 towards the cost of improving public lighting along the entrance driveway to Meadow Playing Field car park and the Sports and Social Club. This work was due to be carried out in January 2007.

Correspondence has now been received from the Parish Council indicating that it is still their intention to carry out both projects during 2008/2009 with the skate park being installed ahead of the public lighting which is suffering ongoing delays. In view of these comments it is suggested that an informal time limit of March 2009 be applied. The Parish Council has been requested to let Finance know should there be likelihood of either project slipping further behind.

6.5 **Cubbington Parish Council**

In September 2006, Cubbington Parish Council was awarded £40,000 towards the provision of a new Community Pavilion. The Parish Council has now placed an order for the building and work should commence in April 2008. As the grant is

likely to be drawn down shortly afterwards, there does not seem any reason to impose an informal time limit on this project.

6.6 **Hunningham Cricket Club**

In July 2006, Hunningham Cricket Club were awarded £5,000 towards the cost of refurbishing their pavilion. This was increased by a further £9,800 in June 2007 as the club had difficulty in raising funds elsewhere. Stage payments are being made on this project and the final one of £4,800 will be made in early January 2008.

6.7 **Barford Village Shop**

The Barford Village Shop Community Interest Company is involved in a project to restore a village shop in Barford and in February 2007 was awarded £25,649 which was topped up by a further £10,000 in May 2007. The company has gone out to tender on the building and is currently negotiating detail with the lowest tenderer. The latest position is that building will start in the New Year although some funding for the building still needs to be raised. It is expected that the Councils contribution will be drawn down in February 2008.

6.8 **Norton Lindsey Play Group**

In June 2007, Norton Lindsey Play Group was awarded £15,000 towards the development of a play ground in Norton Lindsey. This award was subject to the final tender values being at variance with the original costed scheme by no more than £5,000 and clear sustainable proposals on maintenance being brought forward to the Head of Finance. The Play Group is still in negotiation with the 2 preferred companies to finalise the specification and price. They expect to have finalised these details by the 30th November and expect the contract to cost no more than £56,000 including VAT.

With regard to the revenue maintenance costs, the annual cost is expected to be between £1,300 and £2,000 and the Play Group plans to raise funds to cover this cost through a range of activities and contributions from Norton Lindsey, Wolverton and Claverdon Parish Councils. It is suggested that an informal time limit of June 2008 be applied as this should give the Play Group adequate time to satisfy the Head of Finance with regard to the capital cost and revenue funding of the project and also allow for any delays arising from adverse weather or other problems during the winter.

6.9 **Hatton Village Hall**

In July 2007, Hatton Village Hall was awarded a grant of £2,075 towards the replacement of the floor in the George Lyons room. The work is expected to start in the week commencing 19th November and the Councils contribution should be paid out shortly afterwards.

6.10 **Baginton Parish Council**

In July 2007, Baginton Parish Council was awarded £1,100 towards the refurbishment of Baginton Playground. The main work to repair worn out safety surfaces was completed in August and the work to the safety railings and gates is due to be finished shortly following specialist parts having to be made. It is expected that the Councils grant will be paid out in December.

6.11 **Ferncumbe Youth Club**

In September 2007, Ferncumbe Youth Club was awarded £2,813 towards the replacement of the Youth Club roof. The roof is on order and delivery is expected in mid November. The work to replace the old roof will then start and it is expected that the Councils grant will be drawn down by the end of December.

6.12 **Bubbenhall Spring & Village Green Restoration Project**

In October 2007, Bubbenhall Spring & Village Green Restoration project was awarded a grant of £3,000 towards its aims of restoring the Village Spring, Green, Pond and Bus shelter. Virtually all the funding is now in place and work has commenced on parts of the project. It is expected that the Councils contribution will be called upon in early 2008.