

UTILISATION OF NEW RIVER RETAIL FUNDS FOR THE RELOCATION OF GROUPS AFFECTED BY THE TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

REPORT OF
Contact Officer

Divisional Leader for Commercial Services and Contracts
Glen Wilkinson Leisure Contract Monitoring Officer
Email: glen.wilkinson@midsussex.gov.uk Tel: 01444 477207

Wards affected
Key decision

Purpose of Report

1. To request the release of money from the Martlets Relocation Specific Reserve for groups/organisations incurring costs in relocating to new premises as a result of the Burgess Hill town centre redevelopment programme.

Recommendation

2. It is recommended that the Cabinet Grants Panel consider each individual request and determine the financial support to be awarded to each group.
-

Background

3. Martlets Hall in Burgess Hill will close on June 30th 2018 to allow for the redevelopment of Burgess Hill Town Centre by New River Retail.
4. A comprehensive consultation exercise was undertaken throughout 2016 and 2017 with all the current users of the hall, and support has been provided in identifying potential alternative venues within the Burgess Hill area to accommodate them following the closure.
5. To support this process and the re-utilisation of the town centre, a sum of £250k was agreed by New River Retail, to meet any reasonable relocation costs for affected groups. To date we have received £125K, being the first of two agreed payments, the balance being due when the Council provide vacant possession of the hall.
6. A number of groups have now submitted bids for funding, in which they were required to:
 - a. Set out details of their proposed new location and the facilities they will be using there
 - b. Describe the assistance required to enable their club/group to relocate
 - c. Describe how this will improve the experience of their club/group in their new location
 - d. Identify the total project cost, and any match funding they have secured
7. These bids are summarised below.

Sussex Gymnastics Club / Places for People Leisure

3. Sussex Gymnastics Club (consisting of 160 gymnasts) hired the facilities at Martlets Hall, retained the subscriptions paid by club members and owned the gymnastics equipment required for the classes. Staff were paid a wage from the Subscriptions.
4. It was not possible to identify a suitable alternative venue at which the club could operate on the above basis so negotiations were eventually held with Places for People Leisure with the aim of moving the club to The Triangle and merging with the existing club at the Centre.
5. Under these new arrangements a club of over 460 gymnasts will be created, Places for People will buy and transport all of the club's equipment to The Triangle and coaching staff will be taken onto the payroll. Club gymnasts will pay PfPL their fees on a monthly basis by direct debit.
6. The new club will provide a range of gymnastic opportunities from participation through to excellence across a range of disciplines.
7. Places for People are requesting a grant of **£11,734** to reimburse them for the cost of purchasing and transporting the existing gymnastics equipment from Martlets Hall to The Triangle in order to effect the merger of the two clubs.

U3A / St. Andrews Church

8. U3A have found it difficult to relocate due to the numbers attending their monthly activities (approx.150) and their annual event (approx. 350 attendees).
9. St. Andrews Church is one of the largest venues in Burgess Hill and can accommodate up to 450 people in the main hall in addition to significant numbers in the additional three separate halls available. As such this venue was identified as the most appropriate to accommodate the group's activities. However, they will need to acquire additional seating at a cost of £20,000.
10. To facilitate the move, the Church also need to reconfigure the existing toilets to create 6 unisex toilets including a disabled toilet; create an additional 2 new male and 4 new female toilets and spend £20,000 on purchasing 350 new chairs. The cost of this is £140,000.
11. In addition the Church would also like to provide a "Changing Places" facility by fitting an existing single toilet with a ceiling mounted hoist and an adjustable height wall mounted bench to benefit existing and future users at an estimated cost of £8,000.
12. The Church has already raised a total of £100,500 towards the toilet provision leaving total funding required of £19,500 for the toilets, £8,000 for the hoist and bed together with the £20,000 for the new seats making a total grant request of **£47,500**.

Clubbercise / Wivelsfield Primary School

13. This group provides exercise classes at Martlets Hall on Monday and Wednesday evenings for up to 30 people per class.
14. Various alternative venues have been looked at but the only suitable/affordable one available at the required times is Wivelsfield Primary School.
15. The only requirement for this venue to be able to accommodate the sessions is the provision of black out blinds for the windows, including a number at high level.

16. The total cost of supplying and fitting the required blinds is £3,600.
17. A grant of **£3,600** is requested from the available fund.

HAMSVA (now MSVA- Mid Sussex Voluntary Action)

18. MSVA was based in Martlets Heights but has since moved to new premises on Church Road.
19. In moving the association incurred the following costs; solicitors fees of £2,484; IT cabling and servers £1,722; removal costs of £800 and refurbishment of room to hire out to community groups at a cost of £3,906.
20. The community room is used for art groups, family history, science, AA weekly meetings, support for abused women, training courses, 1:1 support for vulnerable adults, board meetings etc.
21. A grant of **£8,912** is requested to cover the costs of the move.

Summary of Grants Requested

Organisation	Summary of bid	Amount requested
Sussex Gymnastics Club / Places for People Leisure	Purchasing new, and transporting the existing gymnastics equipment from Martlets Hall to The Triangle.	£11,734
U3A / St. Andrews Church	Contribution towards major toilet works; and purchase of 350 new seats	£47,500
Clubbercise / Wivelsfield Primary School	Supply and installation of black out blinds for school windows.	£3,600
HAMSVA (now MSVA- Mid Sussex Voluntary Action)	Costs associated with moving from Martlets Heights to new premises on Church Road	£8,912
Total Requested		£71,746

Financial Implications

22. In July 2017, the Council received the sum of £125,000 from New River Retail Ltd as a contribution to any associated costs relating to the closure of Martlets Hall and to support the town revitalisation project. This was the first of two amounts due of a total £250,000 contribution. The Martlets Relocation Specific Reserve was created to hold these sums, as reported in the Budget Management Report to Cabinet 5th September 2017.
23. Members are now requested to release the sum of £71,746 as detailed in the table above, leaving a balance in Specific reserve of £53,254.
24. A further £125,000 will be received on vacant possession of Martlets Hall.

Risk Management Implications

25. The groups requesting financial support have had to relocate their activities to allow for the planned regeneration work and inward investment to proceed. In effecting the moves each group has incurred costs which have ensured a smooth transition.
26. If suitable alternative accommodation had not been identified then the groups would have had to cease to provide their services / activities. Costs have had to be incurred to achieve favourable outcomes for the groups concerned.
27. The costs involved are affordable within the Reserve Fund.