

STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL

Moorlands Partnership Board

21 March 2023

TITLE:	Financial Summary and Proposed Grant Awards
PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Councillor Flunder - Portfolio Holder for Tourism
CONTACT OFFICER:	Joanne Brooks - Regeneration Officer
WARDS INVOLVED:	(All Wards);

1. Reason for the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Member's approval to allocate grant funding from the Moorlands Partnership Board (MPB) in 2022/23. The budget for this year is £60,000.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 Note the financial summary in 3.1.

- 2.2 Members of the Board are recommended to approve a maximum grant £8,000 towards the cost of the repair and restoration of 28 historic arched windows at Bank House, Leek against eligible works totalling £13,830 (exc VAT). The work will be subject to the standard grant scheme conditions and the following technical conditions:

- All new joinery or repaired joinery details must match the existing exactly.
- Decoration scheme/paint colour to be agreed with the Regeneration Officer.

- 2.3 Members of the Board are recommended to approve a grant of £5962 towards the cost of the reinstatement of a timber bay window at 6 Sheep Market, Leek against the eligible works totalling £7949 (inc VAT). The work will be subject to the standard grant scheme conditions and the following technical conditions:

- The reinstatement of the bay and window is subject to planning approval prior to manufacture and commencement of the works.
- Any replacement joinery details to the window shall be in timber with a painted finish to a decoration scheme to be agreed with the either the Regeneration or Conservation Officer.
- Leaded lights shall be retained.

- Replacement glazing shall be either single glazed or double glazed using a slimlite unit or similar.

2.4 Members of the Board are recommended to approve a grant of £5250 towards the reinstatement of historically correct casement windows at 35 St Edwards Street, Leek against the cost of eligible works totalling £7000 (VAT na). The work will be subject to the standard grant scheme conditions and the following technical conditions:

- The windows must be constructed in accordance with planning approval SMD/2022/0594 and any conditions attached.
- The new frames and opening mechanism must match exactly the traditional ground floor frame.
- Windows shall be glazed internally.

2.5 Members of the Board are requested to consider the merits of the application at Consall Station and consider if a maximum grant of £8,000 towards the reinstatement of a GRP decking would be appropriate for grant assistance.

2.6 Members of the Board are recommended to approve a maximum grant of £8,000 towards the repair and reinstatement of the conservatory roof at the Foxlowe Arts Centre against the cost of eligible works totalling £19,680 (VAT inc). The work will be subject to the standard grant scheme conditions.

2.7 Members of the Board are requested to consider the merits of the application for roof and window repairs at Rock House, Rudyard and consider if a maximum grant of £8,000 against the cost of the works totalling £13,000 would be appropriate for grant assistance on a recently purchased privately owned residential property.

2.8 Members of the Board are recommended to approve a 75% grant of £1,500 towards the repair of the existing metal entrance gates to the Brown Edge paying fields against the cost of eligible works totalling £2,000 (exc VAT). The work will be subject to the standard grant scheme conditions and the following technical conditions:

- Decoration scheme to match existing.

3. **Executive Summary**

3.1 This report allows members to consider applications for environmental enhancement and heritage grants under the MPB for funding toward suitable projects within the district.

3.2 Members will recall that given the impact of the pandemic unallocated funds from 2020/21 were rolled forward to the subsequent 4 years funding of the MPB. This resulted in an enhanced budget of £60,350 in 2021/22 followed by a further 3 years with a £60,000 budget. Members should note however that the usual budget rules apply and there is no ability to carry forward any unused allocation. If members recommend approval of all the grant applications on this report then the table below represents the current financial

position at the end of this financial year.

Scheme	Budget £60,000 2022/23
Grant offers to date:	£34,403
Remaining grants budget	£25,597
Potential grant offers from this report	
Bank House Leek	£8,000
6 Sheep Market Leek	£5962
35 St Edwards St Leek	£5250
Consall Station	£8,000
Foxlowe Arts Centre Leek	£8,000
Rock House Rudyard	£8,000
Brown Edge playing fields	£1,500
Total of potential grant offers from this report	£44,712
Remaining grant budget for 2022/23	£0
Advanced allocation from 2023/24	£19,115
Remaining Allocation for 2023/24	£40,885

- 3.3 The Council has received more grant applications than available budget. As a result, there are insufficient funds to offer grants to all projects within this financial year. However, in agreement with the Council's finance section, the Board can offer grants to all projects, with any overspend being met from next year's budget of £60,000. As a result, when we hold the Board's first meeting of the year (July 2023) £19,115 will already have been allocated. Given previous difficulties in allocating grants this will prove a significant step in grant allocation for 2023/24.

4. **How this report links to Corporate Priorities**

- 4.1 This report concerns publicly funding the enhancement, restoration or repair of historic properties or places that are either listed or an identified heritage asset. This, in turn, is related to the Council's corporate aim 3:

- To help create a strong economy by supporting further regeneration of towns and villages.

5. **Alternative Options**

- 5.1 To not approve environmental and heritage grant awards under the Moorlands Partnership Board and not allocate the capital budget of £60,000 set aside for this grant scheme. As a result, the MPB would not be able to continue to financially assist a number of environmental and heritage projects throughout the district and secure the repair, restoration and enhancement of heritage features, places and buildings. NOT RECOMMENDED
- 5.2 To continue to approve environmental and heritage grant awards to suitable projects throughout the district and to ensure the allocation of the budget of

£60,000 this year. As a result, the MPB can financially assist with projects that secure the repair, restoration or enhancement of heritage features, places and buildings and contribute towards the further regeneration of town and villages through Staffordshire Moorlands. RECOMMENDED

6. Implications

- 6.1 Community Safety – No implications at this stage.
- 6.2 Workforce – The Moorlands Partnership Scheme is administered by an officer within the Regeneration Team with assistance when required from the council’s Conservation Officer.
- 6.3 Equality and Diversity/ Equality Impact Assessment - No implications at this stage.
- 6.4 Financial considerations - There are allocations within the capital programme for the funding of the Moorlands Partnership scheme. The current funding position is set out in section 3 above.
- 6.5 Legal - Local authorities are empowered to give grants towards improvements in conservation areas under Section 57 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- 6.6 Climate Change – No Implications at this stage.
- 6.7 Consultation – Grant offers are made in consultation with and approved by the Moorlands Partnership Board. Where required, projects that require planning permission and listed building consent are subject to the normally statutory consultations.

Neil Rodgers Executive Director (Place)

**Web Links and
Background Papers**

Location

Contact details

Joanne Brooks
Regeneration Officer
joanne.brooks@highpea
k.gov.uk

7. PROPOSED GRANT AWARDS

7.1 BANK HOUSE, LEEK

Bank House is situated at 20-22 St Edward Street, Leek. It is a fine and imposing building that falls within the Leek Conservation Area and is listed Grade 2. It was constructed in 1885 for Parrs Bank. It is constructed from red brick and ashlar stone at ground floor. It has a significant number of surviving sash windows with decorative stone mullions. The building retains a significant number of historic and architectural features and has avoided unsympathetic modernisation.

The building is currently owned by Leek Town Council and has previously been leased to a voluntary service organisation. Now that the property has been vacated, the Town Council need to bring the building back to a desirable standard and make the property attractive to a new community use tenant.

An application has been received from the Town Council for the repair and overhaul of the historic sash windows. The windows form part of the historic interest and significance of the building and their retention and repair should be encouraged.

Two estimates have been received for the works the lowest of which total £13,830 (exc VAT). Grants are offered at a rate of 75% but capped at a maximum of £8,000.

Recommendations

7.2 Members of the Board are recommended to approve a maximum grant £8,000 towards the cost of eligible works totalling £13,830 (exc VAT). The work will be subject to the standard grant scheme conditions and the following technical conditions:

- All new joinery or repaired joinery details must match the existing exactly.
- Decoration scheme/paint colour to be agreed with the Regeneration Officer.

7.3 6 SHEEP MARKET LEEK

An application has been received by the owner of the above property to reinstate a traditional timber panelled bay to the 2nd floor bay window, including the repair of the casement leaded light window. The property is not listed but is a historic building that falls within the Leek Conservation Area. It lies within one of the earlier developed parts of the town which contain a collection of 17th and 18th century buildings along with some fine Victorian shopfronts.

Two estimates have been received for the works the lowest of which totals £7949. Grants are offered at a rate of 75% and capped at a maximum of £8,000. A 75% grant would total £ 5962.

Given the property's prominence within the conservation area and the significant enhancement this restoration would bring officers consider this a worth while project that restores a historic property and will make a significant enhancement to the townscape and conservation area.

7.4 Members of the Board are recommended to approve a grant of £5962 towards the cost of eligible works totalling £7949 (inc VAT). The work will be subject to the standard grant scheme conditions and the following technical conditions:

- The reinstatement of the bay and window is subject to planning approval prior to manufacture and commencement of the works.
- Any replacement joinery details to the window shall be in timber with a painted finish to a decoration scheme to be agreed with the either the regeneration or conservation officer.
- Leaded lights shall be retained.
- Replacement glazing shall be single glazed or double glazed using a slim unit.

7.5 **35 ST EDWARD STREET, LEEK**

35 St Edward Street (Pamper Pit) was formerly known as the Bulls Head Public House which closed in 2009. An application has been received from the current owner to restore traditional windows in the 3 bays on the front façade of the building. Historic photographs illustrate that the property never had sliding sash windows, but had simple casement windows with opening lights that operated on a hopper system (opening inwards). A visual inspection on site confirmed that it would be impossible to reinstate sash windows into the bays due to the existence of the decorative cast iron mullions.

One of the traditional windows still survives on the ground floor however, the first and second floor windows have been replaced with a similar style. Whilst similar their joinery details are very crude and use modern joinery sections.

The applicant is keen to restore the windows to match the ground floor casement and has secured planning permission.

Two estimates have been received for the works the lowest of which total £7,000. Grants are offered at a rate of 75% and capped at a maximum of £8,000. A 75% grant would total £5250.

Overall the replacement frames will not result in a significant change to the appearance of the building. However, their reinstatement will accurately reflect the traditional joinery details of the past and enhance the historic integrity of the building. As such Officers would support this grant application.

7.6 Members of the Board are recommended to approve a grant of £5250 towards the cost of eligible works totalling £7000 (VAT na). The work will be subject to the standard grant scheme conditions and the following technical conditions:

- The windows must be constructed in accordance with planning approval SMD/2022/0594 and any conditions attached.
- The new frames and opening mechanism must match exactly the traditional ground floor frame.
- Windows shall be glazed internally.

7.7 **CONSALL STATION**

An application has been received from Churnet Valley Railway for the repair of a timber platform at Consall Station, which they own. Consall Station was opened in 1902 and closed in 1965. When the Churnet Valley Railway bought the line all that was left was the iconic platform shelter which overhangs the Caldon Canal. The station is not listed and falls outside of but, adjacent to the Caldon Conservation Area.

The platform was rebuilt in 2005, with the assistance of an ERDF grant. It was refurbished in a similar fashion as the original, with a heavy timber structure bolted to concrete supports, topped with a plywood composite non-slip deck. About 4 years ago, a routine inspection showed that the decking was starting to deteriorate and holes were appearing caused by rot due to rainwater ingress. The platform was closed to the public for obvious safety reasons. In late 2022 it was decided to remove the decking to allow a detailed inspection of the whole structure. Although the timber substructure was in reasonable condition and could be repaired, the deck was found to be delaminating beyond repair and would need to be completely replaced. The total length of the platform is approximately 105 metres. All works to repair the substructure and to replace the decking will be carried out by volunteers.

4 estimates have been received for the works ranging from just under £19,000 to £69,000. The applicants are keen to use a GRP (glass reinforced plastic) material for the platform due to the lead in period (short), overall strength and resistance to deterioration at a cost of £25,769 (exc VAT). If approved, a grant offer would be capped at the maximum £8,000.

The surface material of the platform reinstated in 2005 is very standard plywood and covered with a non-slip surface. It is of no historic interest or merit.

The station lies deep in the river valley receiving limited sunshine and with the canal directly below the platform. This results in the local area having a high humidity all through the year. The original ply decking started to fail after 13 years of life and totally failed after 18 years. The applicant feels that the use of glass reinforced plastic provides a solution which is impervious to water damage and provides a surface which is visual in keeping with a heritage railway.

In the past the Board have funded projects that utilise traditional or matching materials and the use of modern materials has been discouraged. However, there is very little difference visually in the materials, given that the GRP will be covered in a matching slip resistant material. Officers would not normally recommend offering grant aid towards schemes that utilise modern materials. However, there are environmental issues that would affect the life span of the reinstatement of a timber decking.

- 7.8 Members of the Board are requested to discuss the merits of the application and consider if a maximum grant of £8,000 towards the reinstatement of a GRP decking would be appropriate for grant assistance.

7.9 **FOXLOWE ARTS CENTRE, LEEK**

An application has been received for the repair of an existing conservatory roof at the Foxlowe Arts Centre in Leek. The building is listed and located within the Leek Conservation Area and occupies a prominent position at the head of the Market Place. It is a well used community facility and offers a café, workspace and entertainment venue.

In the past the Board have been generous in offering grant assistance to a number of repair elements to the building including; render repairs; window repairs; rainwater, roof and soffit repairs and redecoration.

To the rear of the building there is a traditionally designed timber framed conservatory. Over the years some of the glass panels have been replaced in clear plastic. This has now failed and water ingress is causing damage to the Victorian mosaic floor below and ceiling. The applicants are keen to replace the roof covering in glass.

The conservatory roof is located to the rear of the property and is not highly visible. The repair and reinstatement of a glass roof would not appear significantly different to how it appears now and therefore visually, the public benefit is limited. However, the building is listed and the reinstatement of a glass roof would preserve the historic integrity of the building along with arresting further deterioration to the historic mosaic floor and ceiling. It is vitally important to keep historic buildings in use and in good repair to avoid long term deterioration or future problems. Water ingress can cause damage and rot to a building and should be arrested as soon as possible.

Two estimates have been received for the works the lowest of which totals £19,680 (inc VAT). Grants are capped at a maximum of £8,000. Given funding difficulties, the applicant has asked that the board consider funding the works at a 100%. However, given the nature of the works, limited public benefit and grants budget available, Officers consider it appropriate to limit the award to the maximum amount of £8,000.

- 7.10 Members of the Board are recommended to approve a maximum grant of £8,000 towards the cost of eligible works totalling £19,680 (VAT na). The work will be subject to the standard grant scheme conditions.

7.11 **ROCK HOUSE, RUDYARD**

The new owner of Rock House, Rudyard has applied for grant assistance to carry out roof repairs and window reinstatement to the property. Formerly a shop and pub the property dates from 1806. The property is not listed but lies within the Rudyard Conservation Area. It is reasonably well preserved but has a number of upvc replacement windows inserted over the years.

The owner has submitted a grant application to undertake the following works:

- Clay tile roof repairs
- Reinstatement of missing coping stones on the front elevation
- Replacement of the attic dormer window (upvc) with appropriate timber window.

Two estimates have been received for the works the lowest of which totals £13,000 (VAT na).

The property is in private ownership and has recently been purchased by the new owners. There is an argument that the cost of the roof repairs should have been reflected in the purchase price. Whilst the Board have previously offered grants to roof repairs these have tended to be targeted towards buildings that are in commercial use and have public access or are listed and at risk. Officers would therefore consider this application to be of a lower priority than others on the agenda and may wish to consider a lower grant offer/percentage.

- 7.12 Members of the Board are requested to discuss the merits of the application and consider if a maximum grant of £8,000 towards the roof repairs and new timber dormer window on the recently purchased private property would be appropriate for grant assistance.

7.13 **BROWN EDGE ROAD PLAYING FIELDS**

An application has been received from Brown Edge Parish Council to carry out repairs to the existing entrance gates to the Brown Edge playing fields. The Parish Council are responsible for the playing fields which are located in the middle of the village. The gates require shot blasting and redecoration. Two quotes have been received for the work the lowest of which total £2,000. The gates have no significant historic interest (erected 1977) but are relatively simple in design and unobtrusive in appearance.

Under the terms of the grant scheme Board members can offer grants towards environmental enhancement schemes. The restoration and redecoration of the gates will enhance the appearance of the entrance to the park.

- 7.14 Members of the Board are recommended to approve a 75% grant £1,500 towards the cost of eligible works totalling £2,000 (exc VAT). The work will be subject to the standard grant scheme conditions and the following technical conditions:

- Decoration scheme to match existing.