



**South Northamptonshire VCS Forum
20th April 2017 at South Northamptonshire Volunteer Bureau (snvb)**

12 people attended the meeting (see attachment), representing 10 organisations.

Apologies

David Reed Royal British Legion (Towcester Branch), Kay Baul, Scheme Manager Daventry and South Northants Home-Start, Sharon Stringer, NCC, Katie Arnold Grants Officer SNC, Brian Tomlin, Trustee Croughton Reading Room.

1 Welcome and Introductions

Roger Bradford (Chair) welcomed everyone to the Forum.

2 HS2 Ltd – Lydia Smith and Samantha Cox from Groundwork UK

Lydia explained that she is the Engagement Manager with responsibility for HS2 through South Northants (Brackley) to Southam (Warks). The purpose of today was to provide groups with further information regarding HS2 and specifically two grant programmes i.e. Community and Environment Fund (CEF) Local and Strategic and the Business and Local Economy Fund (BLEF). The funding will be available and managed throughout the 10 year construction period. Lydia added that there will be a Road Safety Fund but the details have yet to be announced.

To talk in more depth about the CEF and BLEF grant programmes Lydia was joined by Samantha Cox from Groundwork UK who gave an overview of the aforementioned programmes, as summarised below.

A total of £40 million total funding pot for the CEF and BLEF funding programmes, with the percentage split between the two to remain fluid. South Northants falls with the 'Central' area of 'Regional Allocations'. Additionally, there will be a £10 million 'floating' fund again fluid to cover any gaps. The purpose of both funds is to support communities and local economies that are demonstrably disrupted by the construction of Phase One of HS2.

Further detailed information can be found on the following website link together with contact details: - <http://www.groundwork.org.uk/Sites/hs2funds>

Email: HS2funds@groundwork.org.uk

Telephone: Funding hotline 0121 237 5880

In summary the Community and Environment Fund (CEF) has 2 strands a) Local with grants up to £75,000 and b) Strategic grants over £75,000 to £1million.

CEF Local will fund smaller projects (up to a maximum of £75,000 per project) which will benefit quality of life for individual communities. A two stage application process with an online eligibility checker before submitting an online portal application.

CEF Strategic will fund larger projects (from £75,000 up to a maximum of £1 million per project) and will provide a legacy by supporting projects which benefit multiple communities along the Phase One route. A three stage application process, stage one is an eligibility checker, stage two an Expression of Interest and stage three an online portal application.

Who can apply?

Primarily this funding programme is targeted at the voluntary/community sector, including resident's associations, constituted community groups, Community Interest Companies (CICs), social enterprises, community businesses and registered charities.

We will not directly fund individuals, limited liability partnerships, private sector company/business or any organisation that cannot demonstrate appropriate governance.

Project examples: Sports facilities, enhanced or new community facilities, improving public open space.

Matching contributions

The match contributions for both CEF funds are as follows and can be cash or in kind:-

CEF (Local) projects up to £75,000;

- For projects led by community or voluntary sector organisations (including Parish and Town Councils) there is no requirement for match contributions
- For local authority led bids, there will be minimum 25% requirement for match contributions

CEF (Strategic) projects from £75,000 to £1 million:

- 10% minimum match contribution for all applications

Business and Local Economy Fund (BLEF) of between £10,000 to £1 million

Business and Local Economy Fund (BLEF) of between £10,000 to £1 million.

This fund is not about the impact to local businesses disrupted by HS2 construction. The aim of the fund is focused on e.g. maintaining/creating employment and attracting visitors to an area in turn a boost to the local economy.

Project examples: Town / village discount cards, projects to increase tourist visits to area, events that increase footfall or promote business activity.

Who can apply?

Primarily this funding programme is targeted at organisations which have formal objectives that support the development of local business/tourism. This grant programme will not directly fund individuals, limited liability partnerships, private sector company/business or any organisation that cannot demonstrate appropriate governance.

Matching contributions

Match contributions may not be a requirement (please see above), although applicants are encouraged to include match contributions where possible. In some circumstances, for example if the funds are oversubscribed in an area, projects which have match funding will be prioritised

Assessment Criteria – CEF and BLEF programmes (equal weighting)

- Need
- Planning
- Disruption
- Sustainability/Legacy

Priority will be given to projects within 1km of the route and in some circumstances, for example if the funds are oversubscribed in an area, projects which have match funding will be prioritised.

Samantha provided details of what costs/projects would not be funded e.g. personal equipment and clothing, purchasing vehicles and overseas trips.

Questions followed:-

Q: What is the lease period for capital funding?

A: Under £10k no lease period

£10K to £75k, minimum lease period is 5 years

£75K up to £200k, minimum lease period is 10 years

£200k plus, minimum lease period is 15 years

Q: Would groups from Blisworth be able to apply to the CEF fund?

A: Any groups which are close to the HS2 route, in South Northants the HS2 route is passing via Brackley, Radstone, Greatworth, Chipping Warden, Upper Boddington and Thorpe Mandeville would qualify. Unfortunately, as Blisworth like Towcester is much further afield then groups from this village/town would not qualify.

Q: Are Parish Councils able to apply for CEF?

A: Yes, as long as the project is not a statutory obligation. Parish and Town Councils are not classed as Local Authorities for the purposes of this funding scheme.

Q: Would a not for profit, company limited by guarantee be eligible to apply e.g. Westbury Community Café?

A: Yes. Lydia suggested that given Westbury, whilst neighbouring South Northants is actually in Bucks that the group contacts Lydia's equivalent for that Region i.e. Charlotte Hewes

Q: Has the route been decided?

A: Yes. Phase 1 route of the route decided and Royal Assent received. Phase 2 (proposed route from West Mids. to Manchester/Leeds) is at the consultation stage and due to be deposited with the Government in June. However, this may be delayed with due to the general election. Further information on the aforementioned HS2 website.

Q: Which areas from South Northants can apply to the CEF grant programme?

A: Any not for profit group or local authority led project within 1km of the route OR where a community impacted by HS2 e.g. HS2 traffic travelling through a village en-route to HS2 site(s).

Q: What is the construction period?

A: 10 years i.e. 2026

Q: The Phase 1 route in essence dissects the villages of Evenley and Westbury and Evenley Parish Council committee has a concern that a) there will be an increase in traffic through the village once construction starts as village will be used as a rat run to circumnavigate traffic hold ups and b) Families in Evenley take children to a school in Westbury.

A: Lydia suggested that the Road Fund may be more relevant for the types of support Evenley Parish Council may want to implement in terms of traffic calming measures.

Q: What are the main routes for construction traffic?

A: The Environmental Statement available via the HS2 website details the main routes, which are permissible for construction traffic. However, which main routes will be used will not be known until the main contractor is on board. Lydia added that a planning application would need to be submitted to use local roads. Consent is required when HGV's are likely to go over the 24 movements (12 in

each direction) per day. Additionally, the contractor(s) must apply for planning so this will be a second flag to local communities of which routes will be used.

Q: How will HS2 Ltd ensure contractor(s) comply and indeed contractor's employees comply with transport routes?

A: Lydia explained that there will be compounds along the route and contractors must detail how many employees and vehicles at which compounds etc. The majority of the vehicles will be marked 'HS2'. There are strict regulations governing the contractor's movements, which will be policed by HS2 Ltd and relevant Local Authorities, with spot checks being undertaken. There are financial penalties for non-compliance. Additionally, there will be a rural training programme for all HS2 HGV drivers raising awareness of cyclists and horses etc. and a 'Code of Construction Practice' with a complaints procedure and a Construction Commissioner.

Q: Which statutory body will process road planning applications related to HS2?

A: Within South Northants it will be the Highways Authority which in this case is Northamptonshire County Council, who gives consent for us to use their roads.

3 Information Exchange

Trish Dewar – Groundwork Northamptonshire

Tesco Bags of Help – a local community grant scheme, funded by the 5p per bag charge. The fund criteria have been widened from outdoor environmental projects to include any project of community benefit.

Community groups apply on-line completing a simplistic application, with 3 groups selected and Tesco customers voting for their favourite one. The monies available are £4,000 (1st), £2,000 (2nd) and £1,000 (3rd). Samantha added that she believes the fund is due to end in October 2018. You can follow this link to find out more and apply to the scheme:

<http://www.groundwork.org.uk/Sites/tescocommunityscheme/pages/Category/boh-grant-for-project-tes>

Sue Lucas - Westbury Community Café

A fairly new community café located in the heart of Westbury village which has voluntary help but also paid staff. Currently, the group is seeking a paid chef. Mel suggested that Sue contacts SNC's Economic Team (contact details available on SNC website), as they have Job Clubs in Brackley and Towcester where Sue can promote the vacancy for free.

Pauline Baine - Towcester Youth Coffee House

Pauline advised that the group is having a celebratory event tomorrow afternoon to celebrate that works will be starting on the building in due course.

Mel Bignell – snvb

Mel stated that snvb in partnership with SNC, Daventry District Council and Daventry Volunteer Centre, will be hosting another Funding Fair at Towcester Racecourse on 6th June 2017 from 9.30 am to 3.00 pm, following the success of last year's event. There will be a range of national and local funders e.g. Big Lottery Fund, Heritage Lottery Fund, South Northamptonshire Council and Northamptonshire Community Foundation exhibiting and several are giving presentation on their grant programmes. Booking is advised and further details will be issued in due course.

Mel Bignell SNVB (Minutes)