



Application for Grant

Dear Members of the Sittingbourne Area Committee

Summary

Kemsley Community Centre Trust (KCCT) would like to apply for a grant from the Sittingbourne Area Committee (SAC) of Swale Borough Council (SBC) as a contribution towards purchase and installation of 7 HVAC split units for heating & cooling in order to replace fossil fuel (kerosene) heating boilers. The estimated cost is £44,000 (inc. VAT).

Background

Kemsley Mill owners built a housing estate for their workers in the early twentieth century, together with a community centre (which became the Kemsley Arms in the 1960s) and a concert hall (now Kemsley Community Centre). SBC subsequently purchased the housing and the concert hall. The housing was later transferred to a Housing Association but the concert hall was retained by SBC as Kemsley Village Hall. KCCT took on a 125 year lease of Kemsley Village Hall in 2014 and now market it as Kemsley Community Centre for hire and as a facility for community groups. SBC retain rights to use the premises as a polling station and as a relief/service centre in case of civil emergencies.

The current boilers were installed in the 1960s and are now obsolete. No company will take on a maintenance contract; no parts are available in Europe; and repairs are dependent on making purpose manufactured parts. The heating is therefore very expensive to run and the risk of losing it altogether is very high. The efficiency level of the boilers is very poor and analogue control systems are very basic which does not allow targeting/zoning of heating.

The Trust has kept hire fees low for charities and public/community groups albeit charging higher rates for private/commercial use. However, if heating was no longer available, most if not all private and commercial hires would be lost during the Autumn/Winter. Viability of the hall remaining open to serve the community would then be highly questionable.

Reasons for Replacement (references to SBC Corporate Plan Priorities in Appendix 1)

- Remove risk of premises becoming unviable through permanent loss of heating (2.3, 3.1, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5);
- Remove fossil fuels – current usage approximately 8k litres kerosene per year (2.1, 2.3, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5) ;
- Providing heating and cooling – current system is heating only;
- By use of R32 refrigerant, reduction of electricity consumption, global warming potential (GWP) at 675 two thirds lower than other refrigerants, ozone deleting potential (ODP) of zero; less refrigerant volume per Kw; low-toxic so safer than other refrigerants (2.1);
- Improved control and targeting/zoning by for maximum efficiency of energy and avoiding waste (2.1).

We would very much appreciate any contribution towards this project for removal of fossil fuel and ensuring continuing viability of Kemsley Community Centre. A contribution of £11,000 would enable KCCT to apply for match funding from various other sources.

Yours sincerely

David Gawler,
Trustee On behalf of Trustee Board

Appendix I – Relevant Swale Borough Council Priorities

Priority 2: Investing in our environment and responding positively to global challenges

- 2.1 Develop a coherent strategy to address the climate and ecological emergencies, aiming for carbon neutrality in the council's own operations by 2025 and in the whole borough by 2030, and pursue all opportunities to enhance biodiversity across the borough.
- 2.3 Establish a special projects fund to provide much-needed investment in the borough's public realm and open spaces

Priority 3: Tackling deprivation and creating equal opportunities for everyone

- 3.1 Undertake targeted interventions to identify our most disadvantaged families and communities, improve our understanding of the issues they face, and develop new ways of working to reduce social exclusion and enhance opportunities and quality of life.
- 3.3 Develop a communitarian approach to partnership working based on shared objectives with like-minded agencies in the voluntary and community sectors.
- 3.4 Ensure that the council plays a proactive role in reducing crime and antisocial behaviour, including through the modernisation of CCTV provision.
- 3.5 Promote wellbeing and enjoyment of life by signposting and encouraging a wide range of sporting, cultural and other leisure activities appropriate and accessible to each age group.