



**REPORT OF THE TEMPORARY GROUP MANAGER SAFER AND ENGAGED
COMMUNITIES**

BASSETLAW LEARNING DISABILITY ASSOCIATION – GRANT AID

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval to make a loan of up to £17,000 for the provision of a replacement lift at Stephen House, Retford – the base of the Bassetlaw Learning Disability Association (BLDA)

Information and Advice

2. BLDA has been in existence for over thirty five years and they deliver a range of clubs and activities for adults with Learning Disabilities (LD) at Stephen House, Chapelgate, Retford and at other locations in Bassetlaw.
3. Stephen House is a Georgian town house in the centre of Retford. The building is owned by BLDA and over the years it has been developed to provide a modern well equipped facility that provides stimulating and fun activities for LD adults.
4. In addition to the opportunity to socialise Stephen House gives their users the opportunity to develop skills ranging from information technology to food preparation, all aimed at promoting independence.
5. Over 100 LD adults attend the building each week, helped to attend by the use of BLDA's mini-bus service and NCC transport services. LD adults attend from all across Bassetlaw and attendance provides important social contact for those attending and in many cases valuable respite for carers and families.
6. Many LD adults also have physical disabilities and in order for those attending Stephen House to access the first floor facilities (IT Suite/TV Lounge) the use of a lift is required.
7. The current lift is now over 10 years old. When purchased this lift cost £13,000 and over the past 3 to 4 years over £6,500 has been spent on repair and maintenance.
8. The latest call out and repair on 1 March 2013 identified major component wear at the final limits, with the likelihood of further breakdown meaning the lift would be beyond repair.

9. The current lift supply and maintenance company have provided a quote and specification for a replacement lift and this is for £17,000. A new lift would be more energy efficient and provide a number of safety features not currently incorporated in the existing lift.

Other Options Considered

10. BLDA over the past few years has seen a deficit of income against expenditure and the loss of some rental income will see this pattern repeated in 2012/13. Their current cash reserves are in the region of £25,000 which is adequate as a safety net and to cover ongoing commitments – such as mini-bus maintenance and future replacement. A bill of £17,000 would place the organisation in a very vulnerable position in terms of sustainability.
11. Given there are sufficient funds in the Grant Aid Budget and the urgent nature of this application no other option is put forward.

Reason(s) for Recommendation(s)

12. To allow the continued delivery of activities and services to Learning Disabled Adults in Bassetlaw.

Statutory and Policy Implications

13. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

14. That Members:

- Approve a loan of up to £17,000 to replace the existing lift at BLDA Stephen House Retford. On condition that a minimum of two and preferably three quotes are obtained to secure the most competitive and long term lift solution is obtained.
- A loan repayment schedule will be agreed once the BLDA financial reserves reach £40,000.

Chris Walker

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For any enquiries about this report please contact:

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Constitutional Comments (NAB 3.04.13)

Grant Aid Sub Committee has authority to approve the recommendation set out in this report.

Financial Comments (RWK 28/03/2013)

The proposed loan of up to £17,000 to BLDA can be funded from the 2013/14 budget allocation for grant aid.

Background Papers

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

Bassetlaw Divisions