WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCIL	**Executive – 6th April 2016**	**Agenda Item No. 12A**

Title	Rural/Urban Capital Improvement Scheme (RUCIS) Application
For further information about this report please contact	Jon Dawson Finance Administration Manager 01926 456204 email: jon.dawson@warwickdc.gov.uk
Wards of the District directly affected	Emscote and Budbrooke
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?	No
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number	N/A
Background Papers	Rural/Urban Capital Improvement Scheme details. Rural/Urban Capital Improvement Application file no. 213 to 215; correspondence with applicant.

Contrary to the policy framework:	No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	No
Key Decision?	No
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)	No
Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken	Yes

Officer/Councillor Approval		
Officer Approval	**Date**	**Name**
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive	21.3.16	Chris Elliott
Head of Service	21.3.16	Mike Snow
CMT	21.3.16	Chris Elliot, Bill Hunt and Andy Jones
Section 151 Officer	21.3.16	Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer	21.3.16	Andy Jones
Finance	21.3.16	Mike Snow
Portfolio Holder(s)	21.3.16	Cllr Whiting
Consultation & Community Engagement		
Community Partnership Team and Manoj Sonecha (Active Communities Officer); Copy of report forwarded 10th March 2016.		
Final Decision?		Yes/No
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		

1. Summary

1.1 This report provides details of two Rural/Urban Capital Improvement Scheme grant applications:

The Gap Community Centre (Warwick Percy Estate) to;

- Refurbish the men's, women's and disabled toilet facilities; new toilets and urinals, covering of pipes with bathroom units, new baby changing table, new hand driers, installation of windows to allow for natural light and ventilation, new instant lighting with timers, new sinks and taps that are self-stopping, new flooring that can be easily cleaned, replacing damaged ceiling tiles and easily cleanable paint.

- Insulate the building based on the recommendations made in an "Act on Energy" Report; treat all elevations of the original community centre building with cavity wall insulation and tidy/patch up existing loft insulation.

Budbrooke Community Association to;

- Extend the Budbrooke Community Centre to allow for a new storage facility to be built; this will be used by the community centre committee and user groups to store essential equipment required for the delivery of their sessions.

2. Recommendation

2.1 It is recommended that the Executive approves:

The Gap Community Centre

A Rural/Urban Capital Improvement Grant from the urban cost centre budget for The Gap Community Centre of 42% of the total project costs to refurbish the men's, women's and disabled toilet facilities and insulate the building, as detailed within paragraphs 1.1, 3.2 and 8.1, up to a maximum of £16,097 including vat.

As supported by appendix 1.

Budbrooke Community Association

A Rural/Urban Capital Improvement Grant from the rural cost centre budget for Budbrooke Community Association of 44% of the total project costs to extend the Budbrooke Community Centre to allow for a new storage facility to be built, as detailed within paragraphs 1.1, 3.2 and 8.2, up to a maximum of £30,000 including vat.

As supported by appendix 2.

3. Reasons for the Recommendation

3.1 The Council operates a scheme to award Capital Improvement Grants to organisations in rural and urban areas. The grant recommended is in accordance with the Council's agreed scheme and will provide funding to help the project progress.

3.2 Both projects contribute to the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy:

The Gap Community Centre

This project contributes to the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy as without the community centre there would be fewer opportunities for the community to enjoy and participate in physical, social and cultural activities which could potentially result in an increase in anti-social behaviour, an increase in obesity (including in children) and disengage and weaken the community. Whilst the centre is not located in a disadvantaged area, it is on the periphery of several pockets of deprivation and a large proportion of their users live in these areas. The project will provide refurbished toilet facilities which will remove current Health & Safety concerns and make the centre more environmentally "green" and improving the insulation will reduce the centre's running costs; this will help to ensure that the centre continues to remain viable and continues to provide activities for the community.

Budbrooke Community Association

This project contributes to the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy as without the community centre there would be fewer opportunities for the community to enjoy and participate in physical, social and cultural activities which could potentially result in an increase in anti-social behaviour, an increase in obesity (including in children) and disengage and weaken the community. The project will provide a new storage facility which will remove current Health & Safety concerns and may encourage other groups to use the centre thus increasing opportunity for the community to participate in activities.

4. Policy Framework

4.1 The Rural and Urban Capital Improvement Scheme supports the Sustainable Community Strategy and the cross cutting themes which form the priorities for funding areas as follows:-

- Community Engagement & Cohesion (including Families at Risk)
- Targeting disadvantaged rural locations
- Reducing inequalities

5. Budgetary Framework

5.1 The budget for the Rural/Urban Capital Improvement Scheme applications for 2016/17 is £150,000 (£75,000 for rural projects and £75,000 for urban projects).

5.2 As part of the February 2016 Budget report it was agreed that in future the unallocated RUCIS budget would no longer be carried forward, but returned to the Council's overall finances.

5.3 There is £75,000 available to be allocated for Rural/Urban Capital Improvement Scheme Grants from the urban cost centre budget in 2016/17. If the application within this report from The Gap Community Centre of 42% of the total project costs, up to a maximum of £16,097 including vat, is approved, £58,903 will remain in the urban cost centre budget.

5.4 There is £75,000 available to be allocated for Rural/Urban Capital Improvement Scheme Grants from the rural cost centre budget in 2016/17. If the application within this report from Budbrooke Community Association of 44% of the total project costs, up to a maximum of £30,000 including vat, is approved, £45,000 will remain in the rural cost centre budget.

6. Risks

6.1 There are no main risks for this proposal.

7. Alternative Option(s) considered

7.1 The Council has only a specific capital budget to provide grants of this nature and therefore there are no alternative sources of funding if the Council is to provide funding for Rural/Urban Capital Improvement Schemes.

7.2 Members may choose not to approve the grant funding, or to vary the amount awarded.

8. Background

8.1 The Gap Community Centre:

The Gap Community Centre has submitted a RUCIS application to:

- Refurbish the men's, women's and disabled toilet facilities to make them more attractive to users, safer to use and more environmentally "green"; new toilets and urinals, covering of pipes with bathroom units, new baby changing table, new hand driers, installation of windows to allow for natural light and ventilation, new instant lighting with timers, new sinks and taps that are self-stopping, new flooring that can be easily cleaned, replacing damaged ceiling tiles and easily cleanable paint.

- Insulate the building based on the recommendations made in an "Act on Energy" Report; treat all elevations of the original community centre building with cavity wall insulation and tidy/patch up existing loft insulation.

The application is for 42% of the total project costs up to a maximum of £16,097.

The Gap Community Centre has committed £1,000 to the project from their cash reserves; these funds have been evidenced through their annual accounts and the provision of recent bank statements.

The Gap Community Centre Cash Reserves – Although the organisation has sizeable short term deposits in cash, it also has significant restricted and designated funds which reduce the amount available to cover its operating costs. In the year ended 31 August 2013 the chairman's report states; "The reserves policy is to maintain a level of reserves which covers 6 months of core delivery expenditure". In the annual accounts 2012 to 2014 that have been provided, the organisation has struggled with this policy with the reserves at year end being slightly lower than the 6 months target. This application meets the scheme criteria of cash reserves being less than 12 months operating costs.

The Gap Community Centre is not registered for vat, they will not be reclaiming vat in connection to this project; the award will therefore be inclusive of vat.

Warwick Town Council has approved a grant of £5,000 towards general costs of The Gap Community Centre; £1,000 of this contribution is to be used on this project.

Warwick Relief In Need has agreed to contribute £20,000 towards this project.

The Gap Community Centre has not previously had a RUCIS grant award.

It is therefore recommended that the Executive approves an award of a Rural / Urban Capital Improvement grant to The Gap Community Centre of 42% of the total cost of the project including vat subject to a maximum of £16,097.

8.2 **Budbrooke Community Association:**

Budbrooke Community Association has submitted a RUCIS application to extend Budbrooke Community Centre to allow for a new storage facility to be built; this will be used by the community centre committee and user groups to store essential equipment required for the delivery of their sessions.

The application is for 44% of the total project costs up to a maximum of £30,000.

Budbrooke Community Association has committed £7,845 to the project from their cash reserves. These funds have been evidenced through their annual accounts and the provision of recent bank statements.

Budbrooke Community Association is not registered for vat and therefore will not be reclaiming vat in connection to this project; the award will therefore be inclusive of vat.

Budbrooke Parish Council has approved a £30,000 contribution to the project.

Whilst Budbrooke Community Association has not previously had a RUCIS grant award, Budbrooke Community Centre has had the following successful RUCIS grants:

- £14,100 (29% of the total project costs) circa 2004 (date and reason for the grant is not recorded in the RUCIS full budget summary spreadsheet)

- £5,900 (54% of the total project costs) for a disabled toilet, circa 2004 (the date the grant was awarded is not recorded in the RUCIS full budget summary spreadsheet)

- £8,000 (73% of the total project costs) for refurbishing toilet facilities in July 2005

The application therefore meets the scheme criteria whereby after a successful grant award an organisation must wait for a minimum of 2 years before re-applying for a new grant.

It is therefore recommended that the Executive approves an award of a Rural / Urban Capital Improvement grant to Budbrooke Community Association of 44% of the total project costs, up to a maximum of £30,000 including vat.