

Castle and Priory, St. James's and St. Thomas's Community Forum

17th March 2014

Report of the Lead Officer

Community Forum Funding

Purpose of Report

1. To consider the allocation of expenditure from the Community Forum Funding budget for the remainder of the 2013/14 municipal year.

Background

2. The ten Community Forums are responsible for allocating expenditure from the delegated Community Forum Funding budget. The guidelines against which allocations from the delegated budget should be considered are set out in Appendix 1. These are corporate guidelines only and it is ultimately for each Community Forum to decide on individual applications.
3. Copies of the applications referred to in this report have been e-mailed to Members prior to the meeting.

Applications for Consideration at this Meeting

St Francis Parish Centre (Castle & Priory Ward)

4. An application has been received from St Francis Parish Centre for funding of up to **£6,848.80**. The specific purpose for which funding is requested is for the supply /installation of a new boiler and radiators to replace the old heating system which has developed a number of major faults.
5. It is proposed that Members consider whether a grant of up to £6,848.80 should be approved - in accordance with the guidelines for considering funding applications - attached to this report.

West Mercia Scout County (St Thomas's Ward)

6. An application has been received from West Mercia Scout County for funding of up to **£2,995** towards funding a Unit (36 Young People and 4 Adults) attending the 23rd World Scout Jamboree in Japan in 2015. The young people have been chosen after a rigorous selection process and procured a place on merit. Funding applications have been received on behalf of a number of individual young people who are Dudley residents and these have been referred to the appropriate Community Forums for individual consideration.

7. The specific purpose for which the funding is requested is to help towards the overall unit cost is £119,800. Each member of the unit has to raise £2,995 (ie: 40 attendees x £2,995 = £119,800). Although the organisation is based in Walsall, applications have been submitted on behalf of young people who are residents of the Borough. A series of sponsorship activities are also being carried out to raise money towards the overall costs.
8. It is proposed that Members consider whether a grant of up to £2,995 should be approved - in accordance with the guidelines for considering funding applications - attached to this report.

Destined to Reign Church (St Thomas's Ward)

9. This application was deferred at the last meeting for more information to be provided. The application from Destined to Reign Church is for funding of up to **£5,000** to better support immigrant and refugee families and younger people. Amongst general support it runs translation and interpretation drop-in sessions. A letter received from the organisation has been circulated to Members.
10. Funding is sought to support a project geared to tackling social isolation amongst BME and wider community groups with the particular aim of reducing anti-social behaviour and encouraging healthier lifestyles. Work elements include:
 - parental after school meetings for 5-15 year olds experiencing language barriers;
 - a range of activities focussing on developing 'skills for the future' for young people;
 - advice and support for families and adults aimed at improving social integration and widening employment opportunities.
11. Project costs include the purchase of PC equipment and internet fees.
12. It is proposed that Members consider whether a grant of up to £5,000 should be approved - in accordance with the guidelines for considering funding applications - attached to this report.

Sycamore Adventure (Castle & Priory Ward)

13. An application has been received from Sycamore Adventure for funding of up to **£1,800**.
14. The specific purpose for which funding is requested is to urgently replace items that were stolen from centre during January 2014 including: power tools used to maintain the grounds; and junior go-karts.
15. Match funding is also being sought from neighbouring Gornal, Upper Gornal & Woodsetton Community Forum in order to meet the total project cost of £3600.

Finance

16. Community Forums receive £10,000 per ward to allocate annually.
17. Current resources available across wards for **2013/14**:-

<u>Ward</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Castle and Priory	£9,133.70
St James's	£23,169.90
St Thomas's	£13,102.35
Total	£45,405.96

18. This amount includes unspent balances from 2012/13 and accounts for resources allocated to former Area Committees.

Law

19. The Localism Act 2011 gives the Council a power of general competence to act in the interests of the Community.
20. Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 enables the Council to do anything that is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive to or incidental to, the discharge of its statutory functions.

Equality Impact

21. The awarding of a capital grant to community and voluntary organisations is specifically intended to secure general social benefits and improved well-being across community groups.

Recommendation

22. That the Forum considers the applications referred to in the report and make recommendations to the Director of Corporate Resources on each individual application as appropriate.



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List of Background Papers

- The application forms on which this report is based have been emailed to Members prior to the meeting, but contain exempt information under the terms of part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.
- Appendix 1 – Corporate Guidelines for considering funding applications.

Community Forums

Guidelines for considering funding applications

Community Forums will consider every funding application on its own individual merits.

Community Forums have discretion to make recommendations on each application taking account of the funding available.

A decision on an individual application will not be seen as setting a precedent for the consideration of any other applications received by the Council or another Community Forum.

Guidelines

The following guidelines are to assist Community Forums in considering funding applications.

Community Forums reserve the right to make exceptions to these guidelines depending on the circumstances of each individual application.

1. The funding allocation may be spent on “capital” and/or “revenue” schemes:

Capital: one-off expenditure on buying, constructing or improving land, buildings, equipment or vehicles;

Revenue: expenditure on running costs of projects or activities, including staff costs and the purchase of consumables and services from third parties. Priority will be given to one-off, time-limited, or start-up spend, rather than ongoing running costs. The latter should normally be funded by the organisation itself.

2. Schemes should contribute to the Community Strategy and should not conflict with Council policy. Consideration will be given to how a scheme fits with wider community initiatives.
3. Schemes should be for the general benefit of the wider community, not just for the benefit of individuals or specific groups and should make a difference in the local area.

4. Funding applications may be submitted to more than one Community Forum depending on the area(s) of benefit. Each individual Forum shall retain discretion over its own funding allocation. A recommendation made by one Community Forum shall not create an expectation that it will be supported by another Forum.
5. Schemes should not result in any on-going revenue costs that the organisation cannot fund from its own resources – e.g. running costs and repair and maintenance of new/improved buildings and equipment.
6. All expenditure must be in accordance with Council Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, be subject to the Council's legal powers and demonstrate good value for money.
7. Individual funding applications should be for a maximum of £5,000 unless there are exceptional circumstances. Organisations will be encouraged to match fund or seek further funding through other means. Priority will be given to schemes that might generate such funding.
8. Applications will not normally be considered from organisations who have previously applied for funding to the Community Forums (or former Area Committees) within the previous three years.
9. Once an application has been approved, it will be on the condition that the commitment is spent within nine months; otherwise the allocation will be returned back into the available budget and a fresh application would be required.
10. In appropriate circumstances, it may be required that certain items of equipment funded by these allocations are to be made available for use by other organisations.