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**Castle and Priory, St. James's and St. Thomas's Community Forum 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2013**

**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 Thomas's Community Network**

4. An application has been received from the St Thomas's Network for funding of up to **£2,688**. The specific purpose for which funding is requested is to;  
  
purchase a number of 'stacking suite' trolleys to enhance storage space and reduce health and safety risks to staff/volunteers with the aim of maximising furniture distribution to those in need.
5. St Thomas's Network last received funding from Dudley Central Area Committee in January 2011. See finance section for more information.
6. It is proposed that Members consider whether a grant should be approved, in accord with the guidelines for considering funding applications attached to this report.

**Finance**

7. St Thomas's Network last received funding of £3518 from Dudley Central Area Committee in January 2011 for improvements to toilet facilities at the Kids United out of school club.

8. It is proposed that each Community Forum will receive £10,000 per ward to allocate annually .
9. The total sum currently available to spend in each ward for **2013/14**:-

<u>Ward</u>	<u>Amount (£)</u>
Castle & Priory	19762.67
St. James's	28135.82
St. Thomas's	20142.83

10. This amount includes unspent balances from **2012/13** which also accounts for resources allocated to the former Area Committees.

### **Law**

11. The Localism Act 2011 gives the Council a power of general competence to act in the interests of the Community.
12. 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**

- 13 The awarding of a capital grant to community and voluntary organisations is specifically intended to assist in improving well being; and creating general benefits across all community groups.

### **Recommendation**

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

M. Bowsher .

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### **Matt Bowsher**

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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.