
**Netherton, Woodside and St Andrews, Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood
Community Forum – 16th June 2015**

Report of the Lead Officer

Community Forum – Love Your Local Community Funding

Purpose of Report

1. To consider the allocation of expenditure from the Community Forum – Love your Local Community Funding budget for the remainder of the 2015/16 municipal year.

Background

2. The ten Community Forums are responsible for allocating expenditure from the delegated Community Forum – Love Your Local Community Funding budget. The guidelines against which allocations from the delegated budget should be considered are set out in Appendix 1. This forum has decided to adopt some minor variations to the corporate guidelines published on the Council website.
3. In addition, Community Forums are also responsible for distributing the High Street Innovation / Empty Shops grant funding. Guidelines are also summarised in Appendix 1.
4. Copies of the applications referred to in this report have been e-mailed to Members prior to the meeting. Where indications of support or opposition have been received at the time of producing this report, these are noted below.

Applications for Consideration at this Meeting

5. Wallheath Prince Albert Football Club (deferred from last meeting) - An application has been received from this organisation which plays matches at Woodside to fund the purchase of goalposts which will be used by three football teams in the Woodside area.

Funding Requested: £1,000.

Of members expressing an opinion, the majority are opposed to the application due to insufficient benefits to the wider community, and that other sources of football-related funding were available.

APPLICATION REFUSED – Applicant to be referred to the ‘Football Foundation’ funding schemes available from the Football Association.

6. Age Alliance in Dudley - An application has been received from this organisation which is a partnership aiming to improve the quality of later life in the borough. This is a borough-wide application to all forums, and funding will be used to develop a street questionnaire and organise a one-day conference to celebrate International Older Peoples Day on 1st October.

Funding Requested: £250 from each forum.

Of members expressing an opinion, the majority are opposed to the application on the grounds that the forum prefers to support applications proposing actions rather than gathering information.

APPLICATION REFUSED

7. Woodhouse Court Residents Association - An application has been received from this organisation which provides support to residents of this housing scheme. The application is to support some of their events such as bingo, parties, etc.

Funding Requested: £300.

Of members expressing an opinion, the majority support the application.

APPLICATION APPROVED – funding from Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood ward.

8. Quarry Bank Musical Theatre Society - An application has been received from this organisation (formerly Quarry Bank Operatic Society). The funding will be used to provide a vinyl floor covering for the group when performing at Brierley Hill Civic Hall. The facility will also be available for other community uses.

Funding Requested: £2,080.

At the time of writing, a majority of members have yet to express an opinion.

APPLICATION TO BE DETERMINED AT THE MEETING

I am recommending that Members consider whether or not the above grants should be approved.

Finance

9. It is proposed that each Community Forum will receive £10,000 Love Your Local Community funding per ward to allocate each year.
10. The total Community Forum – Love Your Local Community funding currently available to spend in this forum area:

Wards	Amount
Netherton, Woodside & St Andrews	£14,205.94
Quarry Bank & Dudley Wood	£16,388.53
Total Amount	£30,594.47

11. This amount includes unspent balances from the resources allocated to the former Area Committees.
12. High Street Innovation / Empty Shops Grant funding available to spend in this forum area:

Wards	Amount
Netherton, Woodside & St Andrews	£6,973.38
Quarry Bank & Dudley Wood	£6,973.38
Total Amount	£13,946.76

Law

13. The Localism Act 2011 gives the Council a power of general competence to act in the interests of the Community.
14. 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

15. This report complies with the Council's policies on equality and diversity. Some of the applications include facilities, which are available to children and young people.

Recommendation

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

AG Tromans

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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, as modified by the members of this forum.

Appendix 1 – Community Forums

Guidelines for considering funding applications for the Netherton, Woodside & St Andrews / Quarry Bank & Dudley Wood Community Forum

Every funding application will be considered on its own individual merits by community forum elected members, who will take into account the funding available and make recommendations on each application to the Council's Strategic Director (Resources and Transformation).

Applications will be considered only from voluntary and community organisations that are based in the Dudley borough. Applications should be submitted through a parent organisation e.g. a sports club rather than an individual team within a club.

Applications are to be submitted at least ten working days before a community forum meeting in order to be considered at that meeting. Later applications will be considered at the next available forum meeting. Elected members can make recommendations on genuinely urgent applications between forum meetings.

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.

All expenditure must be in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, be subject to the Council's legal powers and demonstrate good value for money. Quotations must be provided in line with the Council's procedure rules. Details are set out in the application form.

Guidelines for considering applications

The following guidelines are to assist elected members in considering funding applications. Individual community forums reserve the right to make exceptions to these guidelines depending on the circumstances of each individual application. The guidelines have some minor variances from the corporate guidelines published on the Council website.

1. Funding 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 which should normally be funded by the organisation itself.)

2. Schemes should contribute to the aims of the Community Strategy and not conflict with Council policy. 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.
3. 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. Where applications are submitted to multiple forums, the applicant will be expected to provide specific details of direct benefits to the communities covered by this forum, which will be the basis on which members will consider the application.
4. Schemes should not result in any on-going revenue costs that the organisation cannot fund from its own resources e.g. running costs or repair and maintenance of buildings and equipment.
5. 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.
6. Applications will not normally be considered from organisations who have previously received funding from a community forum (or former area committee) within the previous three years.
7. Representatives of organisations submitting applications are encouraged to attend the forum meeting, but will not be allowed to speak in support of their application, though may respond to questions raised by members.
8. Once an application has been approved, it will be on the condition that the funding is spent within nine months, otherwise the funding will be returned to the Council. A fresh application would need to be submitted and approved in order for the funding to be released.
9. In appropriate circumstances, funding may be given on condition that certain items of equipment purchased with the funding are made available for use by other organisations.

High Street Innovation/Empty Shops Grant Funding Applications

10. One-off funding has been made available in the 2014/15 financial year for projects which improve the appearance or economic vitality of an area, with preference to the Borough's Centres and High Streets.

11. The Council will decide which source of funding successful applications will use, but as guidance for applicants High Street Innovation/Empty Shops Grant funding will be considered for the following:-

Eligible proposals

- Proposals will be considered either for Capital or Revenue activities.
- Proposals are preferred for projects within the Borough's defined Principal or Local Centres, but applications may be considered in any location where benefits to the local economy or environment may be demonstrated.
- Proposals that show a partnership approach (between for example business and the Community will be preferred).

Ineligible proposals

- Proposals which create ongoing revenue costs for the Council. Proposals must demonstrate how any improvements will be maintained.
- Proposals which are required as a direct result of a planning condition, enforcement action or any other statutory consent.
- Proposals that do not have the agreement of the owner or occupier of land or property affected.
- Proposals that do not have a realistic prospect of being granted planning permission.

Suggested areas of expenditure

- Proposals to improve the appearance or condition of empty commercial or retail premises.
- Proposals to improve vacant or unsightly land.
- Match funding to support funding bids for the above.
- Activities and events to support centres economic vitality.