

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

**3<sup>rd</sup> September 2014**

**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 Funding budget for the 2014/15 financial year.
2. The Community Forum is asked to consider making recommendations on the applications referred to below taking account of the corporately agreed guidelines for considering funding applications as attached to this report.

**Background**

3. 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.
4. This report contains only a brief summary of each application along with the amount of grant requested. Copies of the application forms referred to in this report and associated background information have been e-mailed to Members prior to the meeting.

**Deferred Applications for Consideration at this Meeting**

5. The following applications were reported to Members at the last meeting. It was recommended that these be deferred for reasons as stated below.

**The Young Smiles Project (St James Ward)**

6. An application from the Young Smiles Project for funding of up to £9,341 was deferred to pursue other funding sources.
7. The specific purpose for which funding is requested is to equip a dedicated area of a newly acquired building to run additional sessions for children with obesity, mothers and toddlers; and fitness nutrition courses.
8. The applicant confirmed that young people from St James would be participating in the project, that it was hoped to run sessions during the summer holiday and that a lesser amount would be considered.

9. In consultation with the Chair, Vice-Chair and Ward Councillors, the Director of Corporate Resources was recommended to deal with the funding application as a matter of urgency and Members are requested to confirm the allocation of £3000 made to the project.

#### Life Centre Debt Advice (Stourbridge)

10. An application from the Life Centre Debt Advice for funding of up to £1,230 per forum was deferred pending further information to ascertain take up from Wards relating to this Forum.
11. The specific purpose for which funding is requested is to contribute to first year start-up costs of a debt advisory service for local communities within a 7 mile radius of Stourbridge Town Centre. It is recognised that £6,775 match funding has been secured across local churches.
12. It is proposed that Members consider whether a contribution of up to £1,230 should be approved in the context of discussions across the other Forums; in accord with guidelines for considering funding applications.

#### **New Applications for Consideration at this Meeting**

#### Castle and Priory Regeneration Area Board (Castle and Priory Ward)

13. An application has been received from the Castle and Priory Regeneration Area Board for funding of up to £5000.
14. The specific purpose for which funding requested is to contribute towards a celebration event to be held within the Ward and funding will also be used towards paying for volunteers to obtain qualifications that are legally required.
15. It is proposed that Members consider whether an appropriate grant contribution should be approved by this Community Forum in accordance with the guidelines for considering funding applications.

#### Royal British Legion

16. An application has been received from the Royal British Legion for funding in the region of £800 based on itemised quotations provided.
17. The specific purpose for which funding requested is to contribute towards various equipment including: a projector; projector screen with tripod; and a computer with accessories. However, it merits noting that the application does not consider estimates for the following items: White Gauntlets; Union Jack Coffin Cover; and school computer.
18. It is proposed that Members consider whether an appropriate grant contribution should be approved by this Community Forum in accordance with the guidelines for considering funding applications.

## Claughton Youth Centre

19. An application has been received from the Claughton Youth Centre for funding to contribute towards the purchase of laptops, software, printers and a cabinet. It should be noted, however that the application does not specify the cost of items or total amount of funding being sought.
20. As such it is proposed that Members consider deferring this application to the next meeting; allowing opportunity to fully establish the Centre's requirements.

## Finance

21. Community Forums receive £10,000 per ward to allocate annually.
22. Current resources available across wards for 2014/15:-

| <u>Ward</u>       | <u>Amount</u>      |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| Castle and Priory | £7,091.57          |
| St James's        | £21,259.07         |
| St Thomas's       | £5,191.52          |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>£ 33,542.16</b> |

23. This amount includes unspent balances from 2013/14 and accounts for resources allocated to former Area Committees.

## Law

24. The Localism Act 2011 gives the Council a power of general competence to act in the interests of the Community.
25. 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

26. 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

27. 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.

**Steve Griffiths**

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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 funding applications

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 Director of Corporate Resources.

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 21 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.

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.
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 and to speak if they wish in support of their applications.
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.