

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

25th June 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 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 deferred pending confirmation of the funding allocations for the 2014/15 financial year. The Director of Corporate Resources was recommended to deal with the funding applications as matters of urgency, if appropriate, following the receipt of any necessary further information and in consultation with the Chair, Vice-Chair and ward Councillors. The Forum is now requested to confirm the recommendations on these applications:

Dudley Arts Council

6. An application has been received from Dudley Arts Council for funding of up to £5,000.

7. The specific purpose for which funding is requested is for the delivery of the Black Country Festival across the Borough; including all main townships. Applications are being submitted to all 10 Forums with the aim of maximising social benefits across all communities. At the last meeting, it was indicated that St James's ward had no objection 'in principle' to a contribution of £1,500.

It has been confirmed that the main Black Country Festival Event will be held at Stone Square, Stone Street, Dudley on Saturday 12th July, 2014 starting at 12 noon until 7.30pm. There will be a range of activities on the day and the funding will be to support the festival organisers with associated costs.

8. Members are requested to confirm it's recommendation on the previous 'in principle' allocation of £1,500 towards this event taking account of the guidelines for considering funding applications.

The Young Smiles

9. An application has been received from the Young Smiles Project for funding of up to £9,341.
10. 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.
11. It is proposed that Members consider whether a grant of up to £9,341 should be approved taking account of the guidelines for considering funding applications.

Dudley Central Mosque and Muslim Community Centre

12. An application has been received from Dudley Central Mosque and Muslim Community Centre for funding of up to £8,000 to run and manage welfare community focused projects. Following the last meeting, the organisation was asked to submit a breakdown of the total funding requested against the activities referred to in the application form. Further information has been submitted and this is being made available to Members of the Community Forum. The applicant has confirmed that the full amount of £8,000 is being requested. The organisation has also been asked to clarify if any funding has been secured in relation to this project from other sources.
13. Subject to the above, it is proposed that Members consider whether a grant of up to £8,000 should be approved taking account of the guidelines for considering funding applications.

New Applications for Consideration at this Meeting

Life Centre Debt Advice

14. An application has been received from Life Centre for funding of up to £1,230 per forum.

15. 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 from across local churches.
16. It is proposed that Members consider whether a contribution of up to £1,230 from this Forum should be approved taking account of the guidelines for considering funding applications.

Samaritans

17. An application has been received from The Samaritans (Brierley Hill Branch) for funding of up to £4,452.
18. The specific purpose for which funding requested is to contribute to:
 - to repairs a high retaining wall at Beryl House which is seen as a potential risk to safety and;
 - replacement of 3 computers essential for day to day service delivery. The current computers were purchased in 2005 and use Windows XP as their operating system. Microsoft is withdrawing support for Windows XP in April 2014 and from then on it will become increasingly susceptible to viruses and hacking. The current computers do not have the capability, even with the addition of increased memory, to run on a more up to date operating system such as Windows 7 or Windows 8 and will therefore need to be replaced.
19. In March, 2014, the Brierley Hill/Brockmoor and Pensnett Community Forum approved a grant in the sum of £180 to the Samaritans Brierley Hill Branch with a recommendation that the full application be submitted to the remaining nine Community Forums for consideration due to the Samaritans providing a Borough wide service.
20. 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.

Hill-side Herbs

21. An application has been received from Hill Side Herbs (affiliated with St Thomas's Network) Council for match funding of up to £5,000.
22. There remains a 'funding gap' until November when a second payment will be received from a charity. The project looks to ensure readiness for working with schools in 6 months time.
23. Many of the volunteers who work at Hillside Herbs are people with mental health issues, learning disabilities, or are long term unemployed.
24. The specific purpose for which funding is requested is to support the 6 month project through payment of ground rent, utilities and volunteer costs; as well as consumables and equipment in preparation for work later in the year. Funding is being sought from other sources including the Police Community Fund to meet total project costs of £12,000.

25. 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.

Dudley Community Church and Counselling Centre

26. An application has been received from Dudley Community Church for funding of up to £5,000.
27. The specific purpose for which funding is requested is to contribute to a proposed building project to extend the current premises to create additional counselling rooms dedicated to play therapy. This work is in response to increased demand and referrals from local agencies including schools and GPs. The total project cost is estimated at £45,000 however it is expected other costs will be incurred.
28. 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.

Black Country Community Radio

29. An application has been received from Black Country Community Radio (BCCR) for funding of up to £1,000 as part of a three step funding campaign. BCCR is seen as an extended service provided to localities through Dudley Hospital Radio.
30. BCCR is committed to the promotion of social and community themes including Local Arts, Health and Wellbeing, Transport and community safety.
31. The specific purpose for which funding is requested is for the installation and supply of transmission/telephony equipment and corresponding licences fees.
32. This application is being considered by 5 other forums and is subject to OFCOM licensing approval.
33. As such it is proposed that Members consider whether a grant of up to £1,000 should be approved in accordance with the guidelines for considering funding applications.

Dudley Community and Voluntary Service (DCVS)

34. An application has been received from DCVS for funding of up to £3,400 across all 10 Forums.
35. The specific purpose for which funding is requested is for the delivery of the Annual Volunteering Awards event.
36. It is proposed that Members consider whether a grant of up to £3,400 should be approved in accordance with the guidelines for considering funding applications.

2nd Dudley St Francis Brownies

37. An application has been received from 2nd Dudley St Francis Brownies for funding of up to £1,880.

38. The specific purpose for which funding is requested is to participate in specific events and activities organised to celebrate the 100th year anniversary of the Brownies.
39. It is proposed that Members consider whether a grant of up to £1,880 should be approved in accordance with the guidelines for considering funding applications

Finance

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

<u>Ward</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Castle and Priory	£10,084.90
St James's	£31,872.40
St Thomas's	£19,304.85
Total	£ 61,262.16

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

Law

43. The Localism Act 2011 gives the Council a power of general competence to act in the interests of the Community.
44. 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

45. 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

46. 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 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 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.

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.