

**Brierley Hill Area Committee – 28th June 2012**

**Report of the Area Liaison Officer**

**Area Committee Grants**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To consider the process for the allocation of expenditure from the delegated Area Committee grants budget for 2012/ 2013.

**Background**

2. The five Area Committees are responsible for allocating expenditure from the delegated Area Committee grants budget. In the past, this has been restricted to capital allocations.
3. As part of the revenue budget strategy and setting of the Council Tax for 2012/13, the Council agreed, on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2012, that Area Committee allocations (totalling £240,000) are to be met from revenue resources and no longer restricted to funding capital projects alone. This gives additional flexibility in respect of the schemes that can be funded, and will also enable groups to bid for funding that have previously been excluded because their activities are primarily of a revenue nature. All other criteria for allocation of these resources will continue to apply. The criteria against which applications are considered is set out in Appendix A.
4. Subject to the above, it is a matter for the Area Committee to decide on individual applications in line with any corporate guidelines and the local approach taken by individual Area Committees. It has been the practice of this Area Committee to establish a Working Group to consider applications and to make recommendations to the Area Committee. This approach will be continued in 2012/13.
5. The Council has also approved a process for dealing with matters of urgency generally and particularly in the period between Annual Council and the first cycle of meetings. This procedure is included in the Constitution as follows:-
  - The Area Liaison Officer, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair (and the relevant Ward Members as appropriate), is authorised to determine any matters of urgency that cannot reasonably be delayed until the next ordinary meeting of the Area Committee subject to details of the action being reported back to the next available meeting of the Area Committee for information.
  - In the period between the Annual Council Meeting and the election of a Chair at the first meeting of the Area Committee in the new municipal year, the Area Liaison Officer, in consultation with at least two Members of the Area Committee (being the appointed spokespersons of the political groups represented on the Committee and the relevant Ward Members as appropriate), be authorised to consider and determine any urgent matters. Details of any decisions made will be reported to the first meeting of the

Area Committee in the municipal year.

### **Finance**

6. Area Committee allocations were agreed by the Council on 5<sup>th</sup> March, 2012. This Area Committee is receiving an allocation of £50,000 for the 2012/13 municipal year.
7. A total of £27,789 remains uncommitted from 2011/12.

### **Law**

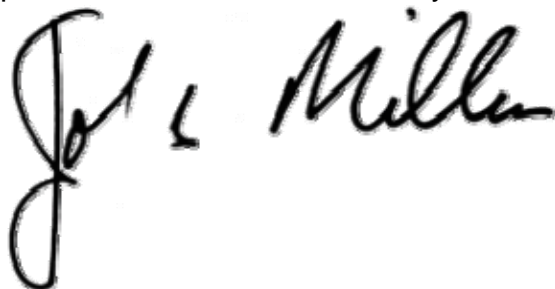
8. The Localism Act 2011 gives the Council a power of general competence to act in the interests of the community.
9. Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 enables the Council to do anything that is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive to or incidental to, the discharge of its statutory functions.

### **Equality Impact**

10. The awarding of grants to community organisations has the specific purpose of creating general benefits for the wider community.
11. Many of the organisations applying represent groups within the community who have particular needs e.g. black and ethnic minority communities, older people, young people and disabled people. Any grants awarded will help these groups and promote equality where appropriate.
12. Children and young people are often the direct beneficiaries of grant awards. There has been no specific consultation in developing the proposals in this report.

### **Recommendations**

13. That the process for dealing with Area Committee grants for 2012/13, as set out in this report, be noted.
14. The Area Liaison Officer be authorised to administer the Area Committee grants process in accordance with any decisions made by the Committee.



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## **BRIERLEY HILL AREA COMMITTEE**

### **CRITERIA FOR THE AWARDING OF FUNDING ALLOCATIONS**

#### **1.0 Criteria**

- 1.1 The allocation or grant 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.

- 1.2 Schemes should contribute to the Community Strategy and should not conflict with Council policy.
- 1.3 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.
- 1.4 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.
- 1.5 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.
- 1.6 Members will only consider supporting applications up to a maximum of £5,000 unless there are very 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.
- 1.7 Applications will not be considered from organisations who have previously applied for funding to Area Committees within the previous three years unless there are very exceptional circumstances.
- 1.8 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 re-application would be required.
- 1.9 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.

#### **2.0 Who can apply?**

- 2.1 All allocations will be made to properly constituted organisations, not to individuals.

- 2.2 The organisation must be based within or work within any or all of the wards that make up the area of the Brierley Hill Area Committee, so that the beneficiaries are the citizens of those wards. However, where an organisation provides a service to the local community that extends beyond the defined Brierley Hill wards, it may apply to other Area Committees for allocations. This must be made clear on the application form.
- 2.3 The aims and objectives of the organisation should be to primarily help or benefit in some measurable way, the citizens of Dudley and particularly those within the Brierley Hill area.

### **3.0 Application Formalities**

- 3.1 All completed application forms must be accompanied by:

- A copy of your organisation's constitution showing the length of time it has been in existence and containing the names of properly appointed officers including a named Treasurer. *(This helps provide evidence that the organisation is properly run and has some experience of development).*
- An audited copy of your accounts relating to the most recent financial year showing income/expenditure and end of year balance. In addition, a copy of your organisation's latest bank statement as at the date of your application is required whether you have audited accounts or not. *(This helps provide evidence of competent financial management).*

*Note: If the accounts have not been professionally audited, then the Treasurer of the organisation must sign them as accurate. Another officer must then independently examine them and certify them with their signature.*

- Appropriate quote(s) from a reputable supplier(s) for the items that the application request is based upon.

*Note: In order to comply with the Council's Standing Orders and to ensure value for money, the following must be provided:*

*Items to the value up to £500 – one written quote required*

*Items of value between £501 and £5,000 – three written quotes required*

- 3.2 Any allocation award will be inclusive of any chargeable VAT.
- 3.3 Failure to complete the application form in full may result in the application being either deferred or refused.
- 3.4 Formal approval will be sent to the organisation's principal contact following the decision made by members at Area Committee that will set out the procurement arrangements. Under no circumstances must any financial agreements be entered into without the approval of the Council.