

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

10th September 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 Funding budget for the 2015/16 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. The guidelines have been updated to take account of the additional funding relating to the High Street Innovation and Empty Shops Grant funding.
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 Considered under Delegated Powers

Dudley Al-Karim Foundation (St Thomas's)

5. An application was received from Dudley Al-Karim Foundation for funding of up to £2,800 towards the purchase of Information Technology (IT) equipment, sports equipment and to cover volunteer expenses and refreshments.

The organisation are a not for profit grass roots community organisation which offers support, information guidance and a range of activities, workshops, social activities and volunteering opportunities.

The application was submitted to the previous meeting of the Forum and Members agreed to defer the application pending consultation with the St Thomas's Ward Members.

Subsequently the application was considered under urgency powers and in consultation with the Chair/Vice-Chair and Ward Members it was agreed to recommend approval of a contribution in the sum of £1,500.

African Caribbean Community Network (ACCN) (St Thomas's)

6. An application was received from ACCN for funding of up to £8,829.50 towards the purchase and installation of cooking equipment as part of an overall kitchen refurbishment suitable for community use.

ACCN aims to be a leading agency for redressing social and economic exclusion by developing a facility that harbours social innovation promoting support and recovery for marginalised groups; and other charitable activity across local community groups.

The application was submitted to the previous meeting of the Forum and Members agreed to defer the application pending the applicant's decision as to whether to accept a contribution towards the overall project costs.

Subsequently the application was considered under urgency powers and in consultation with the Chair/Vice-Chair and Ward Members it was agreed to recommend approval of a contribution in the sum of £2,000.

New Applications for Consideration at this Meeting

Meadow Road Youth Centre (Castle and Priory)

7. An application has been received from Meadow Road Youth Centre for funding of up to £3,000 to relocate a recording studio, install appropriate software/resources enabling local young people to access these facilities and to hire the resources out to other organisations, enabling the youth centre to gain an income. The organisation work directly with young people to develop their social education and they encourage the active involvement of young people in the development of services for them.

The intention was to deliver music workshops during the six weeks summer holiday and it was requested whether the application could be considered under delegated powers to allow this to happen. However, in the interests of transparency, Members were of the opinion that the application be considered at the next Forum.

The applicant has confirmed that the organisation still wish for their application to be considered. If approved, Meadow Road Youth Centre will have another facility to enable young people to develop their musical abilities and it would also encourage more young people to attend. Meadow Road will also deliver regular music workshops.

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.

Dudley District Citizens Advice Bureaux (St Thomas's Ward)

8. An application has been received from Dudley District Citizens Advice Bureaux for funding of up to £4,110.40 to deliver weekly outreach advice sessions at Roseland House, Wheatcroft Grove, Kates Hill to support some of the most isolated and excluded people in the area. The organisation will provide access to qualified advice professionals to cope with a varied range of topics.

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.

Dudley MBC, ICT Services (St James's)

9. An application has been received from the Council's ICT Services for funding from the High Street Innovation Fund of up to £13,000 to provide free-to-use public wi-fi service in Dudley marketplace and Stone Street Square. This will entail installation of five wireless access points connected to the Council's existing public wi-fi service provided from Council buildings.

The project is being delivered in conjunction with the company Wi-Fi Spark, who have provided the existing public wi-fi facility in the main Council buildings.

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.

Dudley MBC – Environmental Services Division (St James Ward)

10. An application has been received from Dudley MBC – Environmental Services Division for funding of up to £1,400.30 towards the purchase, erection and removal of a Christmas tree located at Stone Street Square and to cover associated energy costs. Similar funding requests have also been made to the other Community Forums for Christmas tree provision in their areas.

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.

Lunch on the Run (St James Ward)

11. An application has been received from Lunch on the Run for funding of up to £1,623.70 for financial support to assist with set up costs for a new cafe to be based in Stafford Street, Dudley. The applicant is also looking to purchase a new commercial dishwasher, washing machine and a tumble drier.

The organisation is a social business which operates a commercial enterprise providing quality goods and services within a competitive catering market, as well as adapting their working practices to maximise the potential of those who work within the business and have a learning disability. The organisation aim to provide time limited employment training that will support individual's progression to move on and attain further independent opportunities and offer encouragement back into

work. The organisation works effectively with the trainees, families and carers to achieve full independence in the community.

The application is also being considered by the Brierley Hill and Brockmoor and Pensnett Community Forum on 9th September, 2015 as they also have an existing cafe on the Pensnett Trading Estate and the transferrable skills obtained at the new premises will also be used by the trainees at the main premises.

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.

Finance

12. Community Forums receive £10,000 per ward to allocate annually.

13. Current balance to award across wards:-

<u>Ward</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Castle and Priory	£11,629.01
St James's	£28,280.28
St Thomas's	£5,952.45
Total	£24,796.18

14. The following have previously been recommended for approval but remain unclaimed/or there has been an underspend and agreement is sought for these amounts to be allocated back to the respective ward budgets:-

St James's Road Neighbourhood Watch – 15th February 2013 – £500

Wrens Nest Community Centre – 8th November 2013 – £2,500

Dudley Senior Citizen's Forum – 31st January 2014 - £22.50

The High Street Innovation/Empty Shops Grant allocation is as follows:-

<u>Ward</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Castle and Priory	£6,473.38
St James's	£2,473.38
St Thomas's	£6,473.38
Total	£15,820.13

Law

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

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

16. The awarding of a grant to community and voluntary organisations is specifically intended to secure general social benefits and improved well-being across community groups.

Recommendation

17. That the Forum considers the applications referred to in the report and make recommendations to the Strategic Director (Resources and Transformation) on each individual application.



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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.

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.