

**Kingswinford North & Wall Heath, Kingswinford South, Wordsley Community Forum**

**Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> November 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 municipal year 2014/15.

**Background**

2. Community Forums are responsible for allocating expenditure from the delegated Community Forum Funding budget and the High Street Innovation/Empty Shops Grant, this is a single funding allocation. The guidelines against which allocations from the delegated budgets 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.
3. Copies of the applications referred to in this report have been e-mailed to Members prior to the meeting.

**Applications for Consideration at this Meeting**

4. **Wall Heath Evangelical Free Church**

An application has been received from Wall Heath Evangelical Free Church for £4,575.68 for the purchase of equipment and other sundry's to run a community coffee morning initially once per month and increasing in frequency depending on its success.

5. The Evangelical Free Church has not applied for funding from the Council in the last three years.
6. *I am recommending that Members consider whether a grant of up to £4,575.68 should be approved.*

7. Dudley MBC Environmental Management

An application has been received from Environmental management for £3,800 for the provision of four Christmas lighting displays in Wall Heath. The High Street Innovation/Empty Shops Grant may be used as it is consider the application would support the vitality of the area.

8. Similar requests have been granted in the last three years.

9. *I am recommending that Members consider whether a grant of up to £3,800 should be approved.*

10. Dudley MBC Environmental Management

An application has been received from Environmental management for £2,107.40 for the provision of 3 Christmas Trees at Mere Education Centre, Wordsley, Enville Road, Wall heath, and Townsend Place, Kingswinford. The High Street Innovation/Empty Shops Grant may be used as it is consider the application would support the vitality of the area.

11. Similar requests have been granted in the last three years.

12. *I am recommending that Members consider whether a grant of up to £2,107.40 should be approved.*

13. Dudley Duke of Edinburgh Award Association

Members will recall at their Forum meeting of 9<sup>th</sup> September an application from Dudley Duke of Edinburgh Award Association for £5,000 for Leadership Training. Whilst Members were very supportive of the aims and objectives of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Association, they were concerned that this was placing a large burden on the finances of their Forum for training that would benefit the whole of the Borough. The Dudley Duke of Edinburgh Award Association has revised their grant application to £500.

14. Funding has been submitted to all ten Community Forums.

15. *I am recommending that Members consider whether a grant of up to £500 should be approved.*

## **Finance**

16. Each Community Forum has received £10,000 per ward to allocate. The total sum currently available to spend is £27,134.66. This amount takes into account previous spends and commitments, and takes into account resources allocated by the former Area Committees.

17. Each Community Forum has a special Empty Shops Grant and High St Innovation Fund of £16,736.10 to be allocated 2014/15.

## **Law**

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

19. 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**

20. 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**

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



.....  
**Mr Jeremy Butler - Lead Officer**

Contact Officer: Mr Jeremy Butler  
Telephone: 01384 815457  
Email: [jeremy.butler@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:jeremy.butler@dudley.gov.uk)

### **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 considering funding applications**

Community Forums will consider every funding application on its own individual merits.

Community Forums have discretion to make recommendations on each application taking account of the funding available.

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.

### **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 of up to £5,000 in value (including VAT where applicable).
- 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.