

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

Tuesday 25th March 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 remainder of the 2013/14 municipal year.

Background

2. 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.
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. Access in Dudley

An application has been received from Access in Dudley for funding of up to £3,411.60 to enable them to update their publicity material and purchase promotional material to help them promote their community services. The aim of Access in Dudley is to promote access to all in the built environment across the whole of the Borough. The application has been made to this Forum but it is understood the application will

also go to the other Forums given the work of this organisation reaches the whole of the Borough.

5. Funding has previously been awarded to this group on three occasions in the last three years amounting to £1622.40.
6. *I am recommending that Members consider whether a grant of up to £341.16 should be approved which is equal to one tenth share when shared equally with the other Forums.*
7. Dawley Brook Supporters Association (Scouts and Guides)
An application has been received from Dawley Brook Supporters Association for funding of up to £5,000 towards a total expenditure of £10,245 to assist in the refurbishment of Dawley Brook hut to include new doors, windows and roof. The aim of the Supporters Association is to help girl guides and scouting in the community with seven different units that has 152 members between the ages of 5-16.
8. The Association have not applied for funding from the Council in the last three years.
9. *I am recommending that Members consider whether a grant of up to £5,000 should be approved which is just under half of the required funding required for the whole of the restoration work of £10,245.*
10. Dudley Arts Council
An application has been received from Dudley Arts Council for funding of up to £5,000 to engage with the whole community as spectators and performers to provide a Borough wide Arts festival. The application has been made to this Forum but it is understood the application will also go to the other Forums given the work of this organisation is Borough wide.
11. Funding has previously been awarded to this group by Stourbridge Community Forum for £4,000 for staging, lights and PA equipment which is shared with other organisations.
12. *I am recommending that Members consider whether a grant of up to £5,000 should be approved. Members may also wish to consider a similar application has been sent to the other nine Community Forums.*

13. Market Street Allotment Association (Kingswinford)

A double application has been received from Market Street Allotment Association of £1,110.00 for a mower, strimmer and Communal shed, and £10,207.51 for new fencing and gates. Separate applications have been submitted so that they may be considered equally. The aim of Market Street Allotment is to cultivate land for the production of crops as a leisure activity. Members have expressed concerns at the cost and responsibility for the provision of the fencing and an update will be provided at your Forum.

14. The Association have not made a funding application to the Council in the previous three years.

15. *I am recommending that Members consider whether a grant of up to £1,110.00 should be approved for the whole amount of the maintenance machinery and shed or Members may wish to consider only 50% (£555.00) of that amount to permit match funding. An update on the fencing responsibility will be reported at your meeting.*

16. World Scout Jamboree to Japan

An application has been received from West Mercia Scout County on behalf of a young person for funding up to £2,995 to assist with the travel expenses of the young person to attend a World Scout Jamboree in Japan in July/August 2015. Additional information was sent to Members in an e-mail of 6th March stating that the true cost was likely to be £4,000 to £4,500. The aim of the Scout organisation is to encourage the physical, intellectual, social and spiritual and character development of young people so that they take a constructive place in society as a member of their local, national and international community. Similar applications have been made to other Forums for other members of the organisation.

17. This branch of the Scout Organisation has not made a funding application to the Council in the previous three years.

18. *I am recommending that Members may wish to consider deferring this application to a future Forum meeting that is within 9 months of travel to the World Jamboree in order to conform to the financial guidance provided to Community Forums.*

19. Friends of Wordsley Park 2012

An application has been received from Friends of Wordsley Park 2012 for funding of up to £5,000 to provide a shelter with seating in an area to be accessible to all, linked to development of sensory garden area within the park that has some 18,000 Wordsley visitors each year. The application has been made to this Forum only.

20. There has been no application for funding in the last three years.

21. *I am recommending that Members consider whether a grant of up to £5,000 should be approved.*

22. As Members will have seen, a number of applications have been submitted to more than one Forum. If Members wish to approve any of these applications, then funds will be earmarked and only released if sufficient Forums give approval to allow the projects in question to go ahead.

Finance

23. Each Community Forum has received £10,000 per ward to allocate. The total sum currently available to spend is £21,186.35. This amount includes unspent balances from the resources allocated to the former Area Committees and also takes into account £5,000 for Unit3sixty CIC indoor recreation centre and skate park which is subject to planning permission.

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. 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

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.



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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 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

The following guidelines are to assist Community Forums in considering funding applications.

Community Forums reserve the right to make exceptions to these guidelines depending on the circumstances of each individual application.

1. The funding allocation 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.

2. Schemes should contribute to the Community Strategy and should not conflict with Council policy. Consideration will be given to how a scheme fits with wider community initiatives.

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.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. Applications will not normally be considered from organisations who have previously applied for funding to the Community Forums (or former Area Committees) within the previous three years.
9. 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 fresh application would be required.
10. 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.