

Report to Halesowen North and Halesowen South Community Forum 24th June 2014

Report of Lead Officer

Area Grants

Purpose of Report

1. To consider applications for grant assistance from the Community Forum Funding Budget.

Background

2. The 10 Community Forums are responsible for allocating expenditure from the 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. A copy of the application referred to in this report has been sent to Members prior to the meeting.

Applications

3. There are three new applications be reconsidered. These are:
 - **COCOA (welcome to Dudley project)** - an application for £2,500 (and £3,500 from BVHG&CS) to assist with running courses for new arrivals to Dudley (inc. asylum seekers, refugees & economic migrants) to help them avoid a life on benefits and social housing and encourage them to use mainstream services appropriately.
 - **LIFE Centre (Stourbridge)** – an application for £1320 (and the same for the other forums plus £3960 from Norton) for a start up project to give members of the community debt advice, specifically in the main a contribution to the first year's part-time salary for the debt advise manager.
 - **Samaritans Brierley Hill Branch** – an application for £4,452 from each of the 10 forums, so presumably £445.20 from us for the repair of a wall at Beryl House and the replacement of 3 computers.
 - **Somers Sports & Social Club** – an application for £3,000 for improvements to the children's play area this will include a floor level trampoline, padded flooring and swings.
 - **St. Margaret's Church Hasbury** – an application for £5,000 (and the same from BVHG&CS) for additional parking facilities and permanent disabled access.
 - **Dudley Community church** – an application for £5,000 (£45,000 requested from all forums in total) for a building project to extend the play therapy service provided.

- **Highfield Park Allotment Association** – an application for £5,000 (and the same from BVHG&CS? – to be confirmed) for toilets, gates and fencing.

Finance

4. Taking account of all previous commitments, the current balance of funding available to the Halesowen North and Halesowen South Community Forum is **£17,192.85** (taking into account Unit3sixty and the Black Country festival awards).

Law

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

Section111 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

6. This report complies with the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy.

Recommendation

7. That:-
 - i) The Community Forum considers the application referred to in this 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 sent to Members prior to the meeting but contain exempt information under the terms of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of 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.