

Gornal /Upper Gornal and Woodsetton Community Forum – 5 November 2013

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. 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.
3. Copies of the applications referred to in this report have been e-mailed to Members prior to the meeting.

Confirmation of Grant Awards from the Previous Meeting

4. At the previous meeting the Forum discussed applications from Baggeridge Social Welfare Centre (Gornal Ward) and Woodsetton Charitable Trust (Upper Gornal & Woodsetton Ward) that were received too late to be included in the published report.

The Forum resolved:

- That a grant in the sum of £5,000 to the Woodsetton Charitable Trust be supported in principle subject to the successful funding application with external sources. In the event that the amount received from external sources be lower than the figure indicated in the application, the Area Forums grant would also be reduced proportionately.
- That a grant in the sum of £7,500 to the Baggeridge Social Welfare Centre be supported in principle subject to the Lead Officer circulating the application to Ward Members and confirming the level of grant awarded in accordance with the funding guidelines.

5. In terms of the Woodsetton Charitable Trust I can confirm that they have been successful in obtaining a £30,000 grant from Cory Environmental Trust subject to the WCT being able to provide a third party 10% contribution of up to £3,000 payable to Cory Environmental. In addition Woodsetton Charitable Trust are also applying to Ibstock Cory Environmental Trust for £20,000 which would also require a 10% third party contribution.
6. So far as the Baggeridge Social Welfare Centre grant is concerned the Lead Officer circulated the application to Ward Members. The responses received have all indicated support for the grant award in the amount stated even though it exceeds the suggested maximum grant award per the funding guidelines.

New Applications for Consideration at this Meeting

Gornal Business Watch – Christmas Decorations (Gornal Ward)

- 7 An application has been received from Gornal Business Watch for £5,000 to cover the purchase of new decorations, the installation costs and any maintenance requirements of the full Christmas Decorations scheme in Gornal Village.
- 8 These decorations have been funded by the former North Dudley Area Committee in each of the last 3 years with installation undertaken by the Council's Environmental Management Division.
- 9 The application has been circulated to Ward Members and I recommend that Members consider whether a grant should be approved.

Dudley MBC Environmental Management Division – Christmas Trees (Gornal/Upper Gornal & Woodsetton Wards)

- 10 In line with a number of other Area Forums an application has been submitted by the Councils Environmental Management Division to cover the costs of the purchase and installation of 2 Christmas trees plus the energy costs associated with their use to be provided one in each ward. The cost excludes the costs of decorations and any maintenance required during the festive period which will be covered by the EM Division.
- 11 The purchase, installation and energy costs for the trees is estimated to be £2,009.80, divided equally between the 2 wards. The application has been circulated to Ward Members and I recommend that Members consider whether a grant should be approved.
- 12 To summarise there are 3 applications for funding from the Gornal Ward allocation that require a decision. They are:

- Baggeridge Social Welfare Centre - £7,500 requested
 - Gornal Business Watch - £5,000 requested
 - DMBC – Environmental Management Division - £1,004.90 requested
13. For the Upper Gornal and Woodsetton Ward there are two applications to finalise, those being the confirmation of funding to be made to the Woodsetton Charitable Trust as detailed in paragraph 5 above, plus the DMBC – Environmental Management Divisions application to cover the cost of a Christmas Tree (£1004.90 requested).

Finance

14. Each Community Forum receives £10,000 funding per ward per annum to allocate plus any accumulated balances brought forward
15. The total sum currently available to spend in each ward is:-

Ward	Amount £.
Gornal	14,486.14
Upper Gornal & Woodsetton	45,663.12

16. This amount includes unspent balances from the resources allocated to the former Area Committees.

Law

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

19. 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

20. 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 1 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.

Standing Orders requires the submission of at least three quotations, unless the Director of Corporate Resources deems that one is acceptable. The Director of Corporate Resources should exercise this discretion where the Members of a Community Forum have received copies of the grant application, have discussed the matter in public and have recommended award of a grant.

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.