

**Report to Belle Vale and Hayley Green and Cradley South Community Forum**

**5<sup>th</sup> February 2014**

**Report of Lead Officer**

**Area Grants**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To update the Forum on the current position in relation to 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. .

**Applications**

3. 5 previous applications have been approved through the former Halesowen Community Forum, (for which the funding commitment will be shared equally between the Belle Vale and Hayley Green and Cradley South and the Halesowen North and Halesowen South Community Forums) and directly through this Community Forum. For information, these applications are;
  - Halas Homes - £5,000 toward an extension to an existing building in order to provide increased floor space for training provision.
  - Ups and Downs - £4,595 toward play equipment and the cost of trips etc for a group providing support to families with children with Downs Syndrome.
  - Halesowen Age Concern £2,500 towards a new marquee and fundraising events.
  - Fast Aid (volunteers supporting the West Midlands Ambulance Service) An application for £10,000 in total (£1000 from each Forum) for a vehicle to assist with 999 emergency calls.
  - Halesowen in Bloom - £2074.80 toward the cost of providing and maintaining planters.
4. There have been no further applications for funding since the last meeting of the Community Forum.

## **Finance**

5. Taking account of previous commitments from this Community Forum and the former Halesowen Community Forum as detailed above, the current balance of funding available to the Belle Vale and Hayley Green and Cradley South Community Forum is £9,627.45.

## **Law**

6. The Localism Act 2011 gives the Council a power of general competence to act in the interests of the community.
7. 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**

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

## **Recommendation**

9. That:-
  - i) The Community Forum notes the contents of this report.



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**and Lead Officer to the Community Forum.**

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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 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.