
**Netherton, Woodside and St Andrews, Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood
Community Forum – 1st September 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 2014/15 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. Where indications of support or opposition have been received at the time of producing this report, these are noted below.

Applications for Consideration at this Meeting

4. Dudley Christian Fellowship - An application has been received from this organisation for building work to expand their child counselling and play therapy service at their base in Salop Street, Dudley. Similar applications have been made to all other forums.

Funding Requested: £5,000.

A majority of members have previously indicated opposition to this application, on the basis that there are insufficient direct benefits to the communities covered by the forum.

APPLICATION REFUSED

5. Inspired Communities - An application has been received from this organisation to furnish their health and fitness centre with gym equipment and employment of a coach for one year. A similar application has been submitted to Brierley Hill forum since their premises in Canal Street are close to the border.

Funding Requested: £5,000.

Members have yet to express a preference at the time of writing.

APPLICATION TO BE DETERMINED AT THE MEETING

6. Dudley Disabled Learning Activities and Advice Centre – An application has been received from this organisation for funding to purchase equipment and furniture.

Funding requested: £2,000.

A majority of members representing the relevant ward have previously indicated opposition to this application, on the basis that the premises are not yet identified and other details of the service to be provided are not clear.

APPLICATION REFUSED

7. Dudley Council for Voluntary Service – An application has been received from this organisation for funding to support their volunteer awards event. Similar applications have been submitted to all other forums.

Funding requested: £300.

Of those members expressing a preference at the time of writing, the majority have previously indicated opposition to this application, on the basis that there are insufficient direct benefits to the communities covered by the forum.

APPLICATION REFUSED

8. A further application from Black Country Radio has been deferred until the next meeting at the request of the applicant.

I am recommending that Members consider whether or not the above grants should be approved.

Finance

9. It is proposed that each Community Forum will receive £10,000 per ward to allocate each year.
10. The total sum currently available to spend in this forum area.

Wards	Amount
Netherton, Woodside & St Andrews	£8,039.42
Quarry Bank & Dudley Wood	£21,845.73
Total Amount	£29,885.15

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

Law

12. The Localism Act 2011 gives the Council a power of general competence to act in the interests of the Community.
13. 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

14. 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

15. 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, as modified by the members of this forum.

Appendix 1 – Community Forums

Guidelines for considering funding applications for the Netherton, Woodside & St Andrews / Quarry Bank & Dudley Wood Community Forum

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. The guidelines have some minor variances from the corporate guidelines published on the Council website.

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. Where applications are submitted to multiple forums, the applicant will be expected to provide specific details of direct benefits to the communities covered by this forum, which will be the basis on which members will consider the application.
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, but will not be allowed to speak in support of their application, though may respond to questions raised by members.
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.