

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
26th JUNE 2008

Community Leadership Fund Review And 2008/9 Process

OPEN	
COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEME	STRONGER COMMUNITIES
CORPORATE PLAN THEME:	A BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE
KEY PRIORITY:	
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Nathan Desmond
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	HEAD OF COMMUNITY AND PARTNERSHIP SERVICES
CONTACT OFFICER:	Linda Collis x 2783
APPENDICES : the appendices have been circulated electronically and a public inspection copy is available on request. (See front cover for details).	Appendix 1 : Community Leadership Fund for Elected Members 2007/8 Grants Application Form Appendix 2 : 2007/8 Community Leadership Funded Projects Summary Appendix 3: Revised Community Leadership Fund for Elected Members 2008/9 Grant Application Forms

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide a review of the expenditure and range of projects supported by the Community Leadership fund in 2007/8.
- 1.2 To recommend a refreshed process for 2008/9 that aligns the use of the Community Leadership fund with clearly identified priorities and ensures that funds are spent in accordance with relevant legislation.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is asked to DECIDE that:

- 2.1 **The 2008/9 Community Leadership fund is used to contribute to the priorities contained within the Corporate Plan, the Sustainable Community Strategy and local Ward Priorities, including PACT priorities.**

- 2.2 **The revised application procedure is endorsed for 2008/9 in order to clearly identify the contribution of projects to priorities.**
- 2.3 **The revised Conditions of Grant Aid are endorsed for 2008/9 in order to strengthen compliance with relevant legislation.**
- 2.4 **The use of Community Leadership Funding on 26 projects in 2007/8 is noted.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council implemented a Community Leadership Fund in 2007/8 in response to the Local Government Act 2000, the 2006 White Paper - Strong and Prosperous Communities and the then Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill. (Now the 2007 Act)
- 3.2 The fund served to reinforce the "community leadership" role of Councils and provided a resource to enable Councillors to meet and respond to needs within wards and focus on meeting local priorities.
- 3.3 Provisions within the Act gave Local Authorities the power to do anything to promote the social, environmental and economic well being of their area, provided it is not prohibited by law.
- 3.4 In 2007/8 £27 600 was allocated to the fund made up of £10 000 agreed by Council on 28th February 2007, £2 600 from the Partnership's budget, £5000 agreed by Council on 16th May 2007 and a "one off" contribution from West Mercia Constabulary as a result of PACT scrutiny. (Appendix 1)

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The Local Government Involvement in Health Act (2007) and the Sustainable Communities Act (2007) further develop the well being powers that Local Authorities were granted in the Local Government Act 2000.
- 4.2 The new legislation supports the role of local authorities as **community leaders** and contributes to the broader agenda for partnership working at a local level, including the development of Sustainable Community Strategies and the negotiation of Local Area Agreements.
- 4.3 The new legislative framework strengthens the community leadership role and the Council agreed on 14th May 2008 that £42 000 be made available to the Community Leadership Fund for 2008/9. This demonstrates an increase from £657.14 per Councillor in 2007/8 to £1000 per Councillor in 2008/9.
- 4.4 The Community Leadership fund supports the role of Councillors in listening to and responding to local communities, building vision and direction, working effectively in partnerships, making things happen and empowering communities.

5. REVIEW OF COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP FUND 2007/8

- 5.1 The fund in 2007/8 was used for 26 projects in local communities including support in purchasing sporting equipment, a multi cultural community event, a rural housing needs survey, environmental and safety improvement, and support for older people's services. A full list of projects is attached in Appendix 2.
- 5.2 An internal project appraisal process was undertaken by the Head of Community and Partnership Services, and the following positive areas were identified: clear identification of project, cost, benefit and value for money, a positive partnership approach to the development of projects and a good contribution to Council policy.

6. REVISIONS TO THE APPLICATION FORM AND CONDITIONS OF GRANT AID 2008/9

- 6.1 The application form for 2008/9 has been amended to enable a clear identification of which priorities are being contributed to, whether local, Corporate Plan, Sustainable Community Strategy or PACT. This will allow data to be gathered demonstrating the contribution of the Community Leadership Fund towards community well-being, partnership working, relevant priorities and where applicable Local Area Agreement targets. (Appendix 3)
- 6.2 The revised Conditions of Grant Aid for 2008/9 clearly set out the basis on which the Council is funding a project and has been amended to afford a level of assurance that public funds are being spent in accordance with current relevant legislation. In particular organisations in receipt of Community Leadership funds must demonstrate that safeguards are in place in respect of health and safety, safeguarding children, liability insurance, equal opportunities, data protection and financial probity.
- 6.3 The revised Community Leadership Fund for Elected Members 2008/9 Grant Application Forms, including a revised appraisal process, is appended in Appendix 3.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Council agreed £42 000 funding for the 2008/9 Community Leadership fund on 14th May 2008.

8. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The revised application process and Conditions of Grant forms for 2008/9 seek to strengthen compliance to relevant legislation for organisations in receipt of funds through the Community Leadership Fund.
- 8.2 The Community Leadership Fund process contributes to the core principles of the Council in exercising strategic leadership and involvement and engagement of communities through constructive partnership working.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT

9.1 The Community Leadership Fund presents an opportunity to meet community needs and demonstrate a response to community priorities through a genuine partnership between elected Members and the community. The projects that are funded through the Fund represent a positive outcome of partnership working and as such represents a critical success factor in managing partnerships which was identified as a Corporate Risk.

10. CONSULTEES

- Corporate Management Team
- Councillor Nathan Desmond – Community and Corporate Services

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Sustainable Communities Act 2007: A Guide
- Local Government and Involvement in Health Act 2007