

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
23RD APRIL 2009

Section 136 Grant Aid to Bewdley Town Council 2009/2010

OPEN	
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEME	Internal Organisational Theme
CORPORATE THEME:	Improving Corporacy & Performance
KEY PRIORITY:	Financial and Asset Management
STRATEGY:	Grant to Parish/Town Councils
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor John Campion
HEAD OF SERVICE:	Director of Resources
CONTACT OFFICER:	David Buckland Ext. 2100
APPENDIX 1	Letter from Bewdley Town Council
APPENDIX 2	Grant Usage Proposals from Bewdley Town Council

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider a request by Bewdley Town Council for payment of their £12,007 Section 136 Grant Aid for 2009/2010.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is asked to DECIDE :-

- 2.1 **That given the conditions that Bewdley Town Council are applying to the Section 136 Grant Aid application, this should not be approved.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 As part of the annual Budget process, Council on 25th February 2009 approved the sum of £12,007 additional grant to Bewdley Town Council, equivalent to 15% of parish precept.
- 3.2 The grant was to be used for purposes agreed or stipulated and administered through the Cabinet.
- 3.3 A request for payment of the grant aid has now been received and a copy of the request is enclosed for Members' information as Appendix 1.

4. KEY ISSUES

4.1 The proposal for usage of the Grant is identified in Appendix 2. The proposals include a payment of £2,110 for Annual Maintenance in relation to the Wyre Hill Play Area.

4.2 However, contained within the proposals Bewdley Town Council is also seeking the following condition in relation to the future management of the play area:

“This grant is requested to allow the Play area to remain open but only for 6 months as the Town Council does not consider that it can justify payments for a full year’s maintenance. The Council accepts that when the Town Council’s funding finishes, full responsibility for the play Area will revert to Wyre Forest District Council”.

4.3 During the production of the Financial Strategy 2009/2012 a proposal was included to cease future aid to Parish Councils from 2010/11 onwards, subject to consultation. The final decision on this proposal will be made as part of the Financial Strategy 2010/13.

4.4 Also as part of the Financial Strategy 2009/12, resources were withdrawn from the Ground Maintenance budgets, so that the Council does not have the resources to take on the management of this facility and therefore is not in a position to agree to the conditions specified by Bewdley Town Council.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 For information, the approval of the 2008/2009 Section 136 Grant Aid in the sum of £11,666 was given by Cabinet on 26th June 2008.

5.2 The payment of this grant can be met from within existing budget, however, the future maintenance of the Wyre Hill Pay Area is not contained within the Council’s budget.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There are no significant legal or policy implications arising from this report.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 The grant payment is made in accordance with Section 136 of the Local Government Act 1972.

7.2 There are no risk management implications.

8. CONCLUSIONS/ACTIONS

8.1 The request by Bewdley Town Council is in accordance with the criteria agreed by the Executive on 20th March, 2003, i.e. grant aid should be used for projects that benefit the local community. However, the request contains a condition which would impose future costs upon the District Council and therefore could not be supported.

9. CONSULTEES

9.1 CMT.

9.2 Councillor J.P. Champion.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Council Minute C.80 25th February 2009.