



Committee and Date:
Albrighton Local Joint
Committee
Date: 8 October 2009
Time: 7:00pm

Item/Paper
11
Public

FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS AND APPLICATIONS

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1. Summary

This report provides the Local Joint Committee with details of the budget and the proposed uses of this budget for the 2009 /10 financial year.

2. Recommendations

- A. To set up a community chest with a budget of £2,000 to provide grants of up to £250 and subject to the criteria set out in the report.
- B. To allocate the remaining sum of £19,000 for a larger grant scheme for projects over £250 and subject to the criteria set out in the report.
- C. To approve the additional criteria as set out at Appendix 3 of this report to enable applications for grant funding to be considered by Members of this Committee following an initial assessment by Officers and in accordance with the Financial Procedure Notes governing Local Joint Committees.
- D. To consider the application for funding received from Albrighton Youth Drop-In Centre in line with the previously agreed criteria.

3. Report

From 1 April 2009 Shropshire Council created 28 Local Joint Committees to operate across Shropshire. A devolved budget of £21,000 has been allocated to this Local Joint Committee for the financial year 2009/10.

The Constitution governing the Local Joint Committee states:

- *Each Local Joint Committee (LJC) has a delegated budget which will be confirmed on an annual basis.*
- *The LJC must use the standard guidelines and application form when granting funding to third parties.*
- *The LJC budgets will be subject to Shropshire Council's audit procedures.*

This report recommends that Members consider allocating £2,000 of its budget to establish a Community Chest and £19,000 for a larger grant scheme with the aim of providing community and voluntary groups an opportunity to bid for funding for local projects. It is, of course, open to the committee to review these figures at a later date should they wish to do so.

4. Process and Criteria

The standard form produced by Shropshire Council will be used for all applications for funding (attached at Appendix 1). All applications will be submitted to the Community Regeneration Officer in the first instance who will liaise with the applicant throughout the process. There will be a closing date of 4 weeks before each Local Joint Committee meeting in order to allow sufficient time to check the applications.

The Community Chest and the larger grant fund are subject to the Financial Procedure Notes (attached at Appendix 2). In addition to this and in order to provide some criteria by which to evaluate any applications received for funding it is suggested that an additional set of criteria be agreed as set out in Appendix 3. However, it is always open to the Committee to develop and review these criteria at a later date should this be required.

5. Funding application

One application for funding has been received from the Albrighton Youth Drop-In Centre for funding towards its continued provision at the Methodist Church in Albrighton on a Friday evening aimed at providing 10-16 year olds living in and around Albrighton with free access to the Centre. The grant is required to help towards the costs of rent, insurance and the provision of a new foldable football/tennis table which the young people have identified as being an activity which would be popular for both boys and girls of all ages to use. They are requesting a grant of £971.46 which is detailed in the Appendix 4.

Should the Committee approve the above application there would be a £18,028.54 remaining in the larger budget pot.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

None

Human Rights Act Appraisal

The recommendations in this report are compatible with Human Rights legislation.
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Environmental Appraisal

Not applicable

Risk Management Appraisal

All funding applications will need to be evaluated against agreed criteria and in accordance with agreed financial procedures.
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Community / Consultations Appraisal

Decisions on allocation of funding will be taken by the committee as local representatives of the community.

Cabinet Member

Councillor Gwilym Butler

Local Members

All members of the Local Joint Committee.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 Application form
- Appendix 2 Guidelines
- Appendix 3 Local Criteria
- Appendix 4 Summary of Grant applications

Appendix 2

LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEES

FINANCIAL PROCEDURE NOTES

With Effect from 4th June 2009

BACKGROUND

1. Shropshire's Local Joint Committees are a new way of working together with local councils and local people around the county. Local Joint Committees will encourage people to get more involved in decisions about their local community. Each Local Joint Committee has a small budget to allow them to take action over local issues.
2. Local Joint Committees are designed to give local people more of a say in the things that matter to their community. Specifically they will allow local people to:
 - Get involved with democracy at a local level – have a say about decisions that affect your community.
 - Have access to decision makers and get them to explain their decisions and report back on progress made.
 - Influence ways in which some money can be spent in the community.
3. There are 28 Local Joint Committees across the county and whilst each might run slightly differently to reflect the local area, they all give local people the same opportunities:
 - To get items which are important to them on to the agenda.
 - To discuss issues, and to get information from the councils and other organisations such as the Police or Primary Care Trust.
 - To see local decisions made in an open and transparent way.
 - To influence spending decisions locally and at the county wide level.
4. Local Councillors from Shropshire Council and the parish and town councils from the local area will have voting rights when it comes to making decisions. Local people will be able to discuss local issues, raise concerns, ask questions about local services and call service providers to account. Other organisations, like the Police, Fire and Rescue Service or the Primary Care Trust could be invited to the meetings to provide information.
5. Each Local Joint Committee has a delegated budget. The amount allocated to each Committee is calculated based on the population served by the Committee. The budgets have then been adjusted by a sparsity factor to recognise that delivering services in large geographical areas with fewer people is frequently more costly than in highly populated, tightly focussed areas.
6. The Committees can use their budgets for a variety of purposes. They can seek to enhance service provision within their area. They can fund the implementation of neighbourhood and parish plans and they can offer grants to small scale local projects through a Community Chest scheme.
7. Despite the budgets being reasonably small it is important that there are clear and robust financial procedures in place concerning the spending of these budgets. These procedures are set out in this document.

APPLICATION PROCESS FOR GRANT MONIES

Where the budget is to be made available to third party applicants the following process will apply.

1. Each request for funding by a voluntary organisation or body must be supported by a completed application form. The application form is available from the website or your Community Regeneration Officer. Contact details are provided at the end of this guidance note.
2. The application form must be completed to ensure that the Local Joint Committee receives full details about what the project will entail and how the funding will be used to make a difference in the local area. This can then be used as the basis of the committee's decision on funding allocations.
3. Your local Community Regeneration Officer will be able to offer support and guidance in the completion of the form prior to it be submitted to the Committee for consideration.
4. Applications must demonstrate compliance with the following criteria:
 - Expenditure must be consistent with achieving the aims, objectives and vision set out in Shropshire's Sustainable Community Strategy, the Council's Corporate Plans and local Neighbourhood or Parish Plans.
 - Expenditure must be for activity within the geographical area of the Local Joint Committee.
 - Expenditure must benefit the wider community and should not be used to fund a group which restricts membership based on views, beliefs etc. For example, it would not be appropriate to make a contribution to a religious group but a contribution to, say, improvements to a church hall which is open for bookings from the wider community would be acceptable.
 - The budget must not be spent on mainstream council activities, but can be used to enhance mainstream activities.
 - The budget must not be a displacement of existing council funding. For example, a service cannot be reinstated from the local budget if the council has cut funding for it in the previous 3 years.
 - The budget should not be used to meet on-going staffing costs of an organisation.
5. Contributions can be made to larger schemes with a number of funding sources. The applicant must confirm the status of any third party funding before incurring approved Local Joint Committee expenditure on the whole project.
6. Any organisation making a bid for funding must have a bank account in the name of the organisation to which payment will be made.
7. All claims for expenditure must be supported by invoices.
8. Any organisation in receipt of approved monies from the Local Joint Committees must be prepared to be audited by Shropshire Council.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OF THE LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEE BUDGET

1. The budget holder is the Lead Officer for the Local Joint Committee. Reports will be presented to the Local Joint Committee, by the Lead Officer regarding the proposed area of spending.
2. The Lead Officer will lead the primary appraisal of applications, seeking appropriate legal and financial advice. Advice will also be taken from the service directorate on the implications of any proposals as appropriate.
3. Overspends must be met by the body/service directorate responsible for the service delivery.
4. Underspends will be carried forward for use by the Local Joint Committee **only** with agreement from the Council's Director of Resources.
5. The Local Joint Committee cannot commit more than the current year's budget allocation.
6. The budget must not be used to grant aid private sector or profit making organisations.
7. The budget must not be used to fund costs amounting to administration of the Local Joint Committees e.g. room hire and members expenses.
8. Expenditure must be in accordance with HM Revenue & Customs rules for Value Added Tax (VAT) and payments to individuals.
9. Existing Shropshire Council financial and contract rules must be adhered to.
10. There will be no budget virements to or from Local Joint Committee budgets.

PAYMENTS TO ORGANISATIONS

1. Once a grant has been approved by the Local Joint Committee the applicant will be informed in writing by the Lead Officer.
2. The Lead Officer will authorise payment directly into the organisations bank account following approval of any grant. The applicant will be required to provide proof of expenditure upon request and may be subject to audit by the Council.
3. Grant recipients will be asked to provide an update report to the Local Joint Committee, within 12 months of receipt of the funding.
4. Any organisation in receipt of approved monies from the Local Joint Committees must acknowledge this support in any publicity.