

DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
RESOURCES DIRECTORATE	FINANCE AND DEMOCRACY COMMITTEE	25 JUNE 2018	5
COMMUNITY PROJECTS FUND			

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

SUMMARY

Members have budgeted to support the Community Projects Fund in the sum of £20,000 in the current financial year. In 2017/18 £25,000 was made available, but based on the trajectory of spending the amount was reduced slightly.

Whilst supporting the principle of the funding, members sought feedback on the 2017/18 bidding round once it closed, together with some feedback from those bidding for the fund.

It is suggested that any further discussion about the principle and criteria of the fund is dealt with via a Working Group, with a report back to members at the September meeting. Any changes which members may then wish to implement can be done so in time for the October bidding round.

RECOMMENDATION

1. To appoint councillors to a Working Group to include Councillor John Singleton to consider the principle and criteria of the Community Projects Fund to make recommendations thereon to the Finance and Democracy Committee at its September meeting.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

22 January 2018

1. Support the application for an allocation of £20,000 revenue funding to the fund in 2018/19, with £15,000 allocated to the larger fund and the remaining £5,000 allocated to the smaller fund.
2. Request for the principle and criteria of the fund to be brought back before a future Finance and Democracy Committee for discussion.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

Spending your money in the most efficient way to achieve excellent services (Value for Money)	✓
Delivering the services that customers expect of an excellent council (Clean and Green)	✓
Working with all partners (Vibrant Economy)	✓
To make sure Fylde continues to be one of the most desirable places to live (A Great Place to Live)	✓
Promoting Fylde as a great destination to visit (A Great Place to Visit)	✓

REPORT

1. £20,000 was allocated to the Community Projects Fund in 2018/19. Members also requested that the principle and criteria of the scheme be also subject to review.
2. Members are reminded that projects are currently considered for funding which:
 - *To Promote the Enhancement of the Natural and Built Environment*
 - *To Encourage Cohesive Communities*
 - *To Promote a Thriving Economy*
3. Some examples of the types of projects funded are:
 - Encouraging young people to reach their potential
 - Enhancing the skill levels in the community that will be attractive to future employers
 - Bringing young and older community members together
 - Enhancing the cultural heritage of Fylde
 - Giving learners better access to a wider range of learning opportunities
 - Enhancing the natural environment such as park enhancements
4. There are two separate bidding rounds, a smaller fund supporting bids of up to £300 and then a larger fund with bids from £300 to £2,000. Rounds for the larger fund are as follows:

Round 1 Application submitted between 1st and 31st June

Round 2 Applications submitted between 1st and 31st October

Round 3 Applications submitted between 1st and 28th February
5. Written applications for the fund are considered via the Panel members electronically. For the larger fund, more substantive written applications are sought, together with documentary evidence such as the respective constitutions and summary of accounts. Presentations are then invited by those organisation submitting the bids who are invited to give an overview of the application for up to five minutes with questions from the Panel to follow.
6. Panel members give their time to assess bids and attend presentations and thanks are expressed to those individuals for their time and input. The Panel currently comprises representatives for the Community Safety Partnership, Voluntary and Community Sector, Lancashire Constabulary, Health Sector together with Fylde Council representation including the Mayor of the Fylde. However, the current health sector representative has given notice that she is unable to re-join the Panel in 2018/19, so a review of its membership in the longer term may be timely.
7. Details of the larger funding awards made in 2017/18 are summarised below:

Community Projects Fund 2017/18 – Successful Applications

Name of applicant	Details of Project	Funding awarded
Lytham St Cuthbert's Community Fridge	Purchase of community fridge	681.00
Friends of Lytham Railway Station	Self-watering barrels, baskets and planters	1,000.00
Just Good Friends	Purchase of office equipment	1,250.00
Fylde Coast Theatre Company	Funding for Community Christmas Pantomime	992.44
Friends of Promenade Gardens	Water Play Scheme	2,000.00
Freckleton Bowling Club	Replacement of floodlights	2,000.00
Streetwise Youth Club	Replacement/upgrade of sports and recreational equipment	2,000.00
St Annes on the Sea In Bloom	Community stone carving workshops	1,335.00
Ansdeall in Bloom	Replacement of plants barrels and stone troughs	1,034.40

8. Each successful bidder is asked to complete a project evaluation form and this information is provided on trust. The fund has recently also been the subject of internal audit and a report is awaited. Members may wish to give further thought to any recommendations arising as a result of this audit in their evaluation work. In light of the intent of members to review the principle and criteria of the fund, qualitative feedback on the fund has been sought from 2017/18 applicants and this is set out below:

- *"It is an excellent source of relatively low value funds that make all the difference to local community projects".*
- *"The application form is easy to complete and not too long".*
- *"Some people may be daunted by being invited to meet the panel so perhaps more guidance could be provided on what to do or expect at the panel meeting".*
- *"Having three rounds per year, with a relatively small window in which to apply, means that some applicants will miss out. Perhaps the window could be extended".*
- *"Help, on the fund, is readily available from FBC officers".*
- *"We had no problem completing the form all the questions being logical and gave us ample opportunity to present our case".*
- *"We found the grant application interview provided sufficient time to present our case but we would have welcome the opportunity to enhance our case with the facility to present a PowerPoint or video presentation".*
- *"We were relying on word of mouth when our case would have been much enhanced by being able to present a visual presentation".*

9. Members will see that it is recommended to establish a Working Group to review the principle and criteria of the fund. The intention is that the Working Group would meet over the summer months, making a recommendation to the Finance and Democracy Committee on 24th September. It is recommended that Councillor John Singleton is also included within the Working Group as immediate past Mayor with experience of serving on the Project Fund combined with his perspective as Chairman of the Audit and Standards Committee.

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	The budget for 2018/19 includes a sum of £20,000 in respect of the Community Projects Fund. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.
Legal	No direct implications
Community Safety	Some of the initiatives support community safety
Human Rights and Equalities	No direct implications
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	Some of the initiatives support environmental improvements
Health & Safety and Risk Management	No direct implications

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
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BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection