

**TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL**

**CABINET – 24 APRIL 2014**

**PRIDE IN YOUR COMMUNITY - COMMUNITY PRIDE FUND**

**REPORT OF MANAGING DIRECTOR**

**LEAD CABINET MEMBER – CLLR SHAUN DAVIES**

**PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT**

**1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS**

- 1.1 The 'Pride in Your Community Programme' comprises of an £8m capital and £1.5m revenue investment over a period of 2 years. In January 2014 Cabinet agreed that the 'Community Enabling Fund' would be established to support the delivery of the Pride in Your Community Programme. The fund is a two year £1m grant programme which will be administered by Telford & Wrekin Council to support the delivery of capital projects and schemes within the Borough. The grant fund will be launched in May 2014 as the 'Community Pride Fund' and will be open for applications from public, private and voluntary sector organisations within the Borough. The £1m will be divided into 2 'pots' of £500,000 to allow the allocation of small to medium grants (£2,000 to £50,000) and medium to large grants (£50,001 to £100,000).
- 1.2 It is proposed that the grant funding process will involve the completion of a funding application form, which will be assessed against a number of criteria. The criteria will include the project's contribution to delivering the Council's priorities, value for money, sustainability and the level of community engagement and support for the project. The grant approval process will involve applications that meet the grant criteria being submitted to an independent panel for consideration, the panel will make recommendations on the approval of the grants to Cabinet. The Managing Director will have delegated authority to implement the funding decision made by Cabinet.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 **That Cabinet agree the process set out for allocating the 'Community Pride Fund' including the criteria for the Fund outlined in 4.2.**
- 2.2 **That Cabinet agree the process for assessing applications including the establishment of a Funding Advisory Panel who will evaluate applications and make recommendations on grant allocation to Cabinet for a decision.**

- 2.3 That Cabinet agree that the Funding Advisory Panel will comprise of 5 cross party Elected Members from Telford & Wrekin Council and 5 representatives from the Cooperative Commission.
- 2.4 That delegated authority is given to the Managing Director to implement the funding decisions made by Cabinet.

**3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

<b>COMMUNITY IMPACT</b>	Do these proposals contribute to specific Co-Operative Council priority objective(s)?	
	Yes	Projects approved for grants will need to demonstrate that they support at least one of the Council's priority objectives; therefore the fund has potential to contribute to all of these objectives.
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	No	
<b>TARGET COMPLETION/DELIVERY DATE</b>	The scheme will open for applications during May 2014 with a deadline of submission of early September 2014. Dependent on the number of successful applications there may be a subsequent opportunity to submit applications in October 2014.	
<b>FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT</b>	Yes	£1m capital funding has been allocated to fund the 'Community Pride Fund' for 2 years 2014/15 and 2015/16. It is important to note that grants can be provided for expenditure of a capital nature only and a definition of eligible expenditure is provided within the report. The successful bidders will be required to enter into a grant agreement which will cover; the terms of the grant and the purpose for which it is approved, the arrangements for the drawdown of funding, the monitoring arrangements for the grant and the arrangements for the repayment of grant funding if it is unspent or used for purposes other than those agreed under the grant agreement. Finance support will be provided in the finalisation of the Grant Conditions, the evaluation of bids and

		<p>the monitoring of successful grant bids. JAC 200314</p>
<b>LEGAL ISSUES</b>	Yes	<p>Any decision made by the Authority can be subject to challenge in respect of its reasonableness or lawfulness. It will therefore be necessary to ensure that a robust and transparent assessment procedure is developed so as to avoid challenge of either the process or recommendations made by the Funding Advisory Panel and the decisions taken by the Cabinet.</p> <p>This should be achieved by developing a Terms of Reference for the Funding Advisory Panel which should detail:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who the key members of the Funding Advisory Panel will be</li> <li>• The roles and responsibilities of the Funding Advisory Panel</li> <li>• How the Funding Advisory Panel will operate (Governance)</li> <li>• The key processes for ensuring accountability, probity, transparency, compliance with legal obligations and value for money</li> <li>• How stakeholders can contribute to the work of the Funding Advisory Panel</li> </ul> <p>Although the De Minimis principle is likely to apply in the vast majority of cases the assessment and award process will need to ensure that State Aid does not arise either directly or indirectly by the award of grant funding which could distort competition and affect trade by favouring certain undertakings.</p> <p>Legal Services have developed a standard form of grant agreement that should be used in each award of funding.</p>

<b>OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS &amp; OPPORTUNITIES</b>	No	
<b>IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS</b>	No	This scheme is open to applications from organisations across the Borough.

## **PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **4. Aims of the ‘Community Pride Fund’**

- 4.1 The ‘Pride in Your Community Programme’ aims to deliver a programme of physical and social regeneration across the Borough to support the Council’s business and housing growth agenda, the programme also shows a commitment by the Council that it is addressing the issues that are important to local people. The ‘Community Pride Fund’ will complement the Pride in Your Community Programme through the provision of a grant scheme to fund capital projects across the Borough. The scheme provides an opportunity for voluntary, public and private sector organisations to access funding that will help to improve buildings, facilities and to purchase capital items for projects within the Borough. This funding aims to support projects that are of community or strategic importance in terms of local regeneration and that have potential to support or create local employment opportunities.
- 4.2 The ‘Community Pride Fund’ also aims to support the delivery of the Council’s priority objectives, therefore applications will need to demonstrate how the project will deliver outcomes that support the delivery of one or more of the following themes;
- Put our children and young people first
  - Protect and create jobs as a 'Business Supporting, Business Winning Council'
  - Improve local people's prospects through education and skills training
  - Protect and support our vulnerable children and adults
  - Ensure that neighbourhoods are safe, clean and well maintained
  - Improve the health and wellbeing of our communities and address health inequalities
  - Regenerate those neighbourhoods in need and work to ensure that local people have access to suitable housing
- 4.3 As well as providing an opportunity for larger, well established organisations to access funding, the ‘Community Pride Fund’ also aims to support small community and voluntary sector organisations by providing an opportunity to apply for smaller grants. It is envisaged that this will enable small or new organisations to develop their confidence and expertise in accessing funding and delivering projects which should assist with their longer term sustainability.

## **5. Application and Approval Process**

- 5.1 The 'Community Pride Fund' will be open for applications in May 2014 with a first closing date for applications being early September 2014. If the full £1m funding is not allocated during the first funding round, a further bidding round for applications is set for December 2014. Further bidding rounds will be identified until the full £1m is allocated. Applications will be welcomed from public, voluntary and private sector organisations within the Borough, individuals will not be eligible to apply for funding. Organisations will be able to submit more than 1 application, however the aim is to maximise the number of organisations that benefit from the scheme.
- 5.2 It is proposed to divide the £1m into 2 funds of £500,000. £500,000 will be available for small to medium applications (£2,000 to £50,000) and £500,000 for medium to large applications (£50,001 to £100,000). There will be separate application forms requiring varying levels of detail depending upon the level of funding applied for. The applications will relate to funding bands of £2,000 to £10,000, £10,001 to £25,000, £25,001 to £50,000 and £50,001 to £100,000. Officers from a range of disciplines including finance and legal will carry out an initial check of the applications to ensure that they meet the criteria that are set out below in 6.1. Applications that meet the funding criteria will be passed to the Funding Advisory Panel for evaluation.
- 5.3 The role of the Funding Advisory Panel is to evaluate the applications against the funding criteria and assess the potential impact the project will have in delivering the aims of the 'Community Pride Fund'. The panel will have a total of 10 members which will comprise of 5 Elected Members (3 Labour, 1 Conservative, 1 Liberal Democrat/Independent) and 5 members of the Cooperative Commission. Nominations will be sought from the Group Leaders for Elected Member representation, and members of the Cooperative Commission will be asked to nominate themselves, with a place being set aside for the Chair of the Cooperative Commission. If more than 4 additional nominations are received from the Cooperative Commission then the names will be 'drawn' from the pool of nominations. A minimum of 6 members would need to be present at each panel meeting for them to be able to make their funding recommendations. The recommendations from the panel will be submitted to Cabinet for a decision.
- 5.4 Applicants will be notified of the result of their application with successful applicants being issued with a grant agreement which will include the grant conditions, the drawdown arrangements for grant funding, the date by which the funding needs to be spent, the grant monitoring arrangements and arrangements for the repayment of funding if it is not spent, or spent on items other than those agreed within the grant offer. All successful applications will need to provide evidence of expenditure and monitoring information as set out in the grant conditions. Feedback will be given to unsuccessful applicants on their application.

## **6 Funding Criteria**

6.1 All applications will need to demonstrate how the outcomes that the project will deliver contribute to at least one of the Council's priority objectives outlined in 4.2, only capital expenditure will be eligible for a grant. In general terms, capital expenditure is defined as spend that results in the acquisition, construction or enhancement of fixed assets. This includes tangible assets, such as property, plant and equipment and intangible assets, such as computer software licences, which are used for service delivery and have a lasting value. The detailed definition is complex and each bid will be assessed individually to ensure the criteria for capital expenditure is met. Applications will also be considered against the following criteria;

- Sustainability of the project and viability of the business plan
- Value for money
- Level of community engagement and support
- Evidence of cross ward working
- Endorsement by Ward Member and Town or Parish Council
- Contribution towards developing community cohesion
- Protecting/safeguarding a building at risk of becoming disused or demolished

6.2 For applications to the small to medium grant fund (£2,000 to £50,000) priority will be given to submissions which have secured a level of 'match funding' towards the project. This 'match funding' can be demonstrated by securing other capital funding, contribution of revenue funding to deliver the project or 'in kind' funding such as volunteer hours contributed.

6.3 Applications for medium to large grants (£50,001 to £100,000) where the 'Community Pride Fund' is a contribution to a larger project will need to demonstrate the source of the additional funding required to complete the project. This might include plans to apply to other sources for funding, in cases such as this the grant would be agreed subject to confirmation that other funding has been secured. Once approved, the funding allocated from the 'Community Pride Fund' can be used as match funding for applications to other grant giving bodies.

## **7. Monitoring and Evaluation**

7.1 The grant conditions will outline the monitoring arrangements for the projects which will be proportionate to the amount of funding allocated from the 'Community Pride Fund'. For small projects this is likely to involve confirmation that funding has been spent, with larger projects providing receipts and details of outcomes achieved. Successful applicants will need to acknowledge the receipt of the 'Community Pride Fund' grant in their communication relating to the project.

**8. PREVIOUS MINUTES**

Cabinet – 9 January 2014 – Report – ‘Everyday Telford – Pride in Your Community Programme’

**9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

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