

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Name of Committee

Area Committee

Date of Committee

Report Title

**Use of Area Committee Grants Funds
2008-09**

Summary

The report asks for the Committee's views on the use of Area Committee Grants Funds in 2008-09.

**For further information
please contact:**

Bill Basra
Area Manager North
Warwickshire
Tel: 01827 721084
billbasra@warwickshire.gov.uk

Nick Darwen
Voluntary &
Community Sector
Relationships Manager
nickdarwen@warwickshire.gov.uk

**Would the recommended
decision be contrary to the
Budget and Policy
Framework?**

No.

Background papers

None

CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:-

Details to be specified

Other Committees

.....

Local Member(s)

Cllr Ray Sweet-Area Committee Chair

Other Elected Members

.....

Cabinet Member

.....

Chief Executive

David Carter

Legal

Sian Stroud

Finance

Nicola Cumberledge

Other Chief Officers

.....

District Councils

.....

Health Authority

.....

Police

.....

Other Bodies/Individuals

FINAL DECISION YES

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:

Details to be specified

Further consideration by this Committee

To Council

To Cabinet

To an O & S Committee

To an Area Committee

Further Consultation

Agenda No

North Warwickshire Area Committee

Use of Area Committee Grants Funds 2008-09

Report of the Strategic Director - Performance and Development

Recommendation:

That Members note the report and make recommendations to Cabinet as they see fit.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The County Council's recent Value For Money Review of Community Development included assessment of the management of Area Committee Grants Funds.
- 1.2 The report concluded that Area Committee Funds are efficiently managed and used to good affect in addressing both community needs and the County Council's strategic priorities.
- 1.3 Nevertheless, the report also identified a number of areas where improvements could be made, in particular to ensure:
 - processes for developing projects are transparent and consistently applied
 - processes for monitoring, evaluating and reporting on projects are robust and consistently applied
 - funds are flexible enough address local needs in the most effective manner
 - where there are separate funding streams, there is a clear rationale for this
- 1.4 In order to implement the recommendations of the Value For Money Review, the Committee is asked for its views on the proposed recommendations below before they are considered by Cabinet.
- 1.5 The Committee is further asked to begin to consider how it may wish to operate its community grants funds for 2008-09 should these flexibilities be approved.

2. Proposed recommendations (from 1st April 2008)

- 2.1 That each Area Committee holds a single Community Fund, replacing the existing Community Development Fund, Well-Being Fund and Social Inclusion Fund.
- 2.2 That each Committee is given the following flexibilities in the use of the Fund:
- To agree an appropriate allocation between (a) small grants for community-led initiatives to meet locally identified needs and (b) larger grants to meet local strategic priorities as agreed by the Committee
 - To align, 'pool' or supplement the Fund with other appropriate local funds so long as there are robust and agreed arrangements for management and accountability.
 - To develop local mechanisms to enhance the role of Locality Forums in deciding the use of funds (for instance through setting local priorities, or through 'ring-fencing' funds for each Locality).
 - To use the Fund to ensure the on-going viability of key community projects where appropriate, rather than necessarily for new and short-term initiatives.
- 2.3 That the Fund will be allocated to projects through open and transparent application processes, which are appropriate for the level of grant being awarded.
- 2.4 That the Fund will be subject to clear and consistent monitoring, evaluation and reporting arrangements which are appropriate for the level of grant awarded.
- 2.5 That during 2008-09 a thorough review of WCC grants is undertaken with a view to implementing the following changes from April 2009:
- Development of standardised processes, paperwork and 'gateways' to grants funds across the County Council; and 'merging' of funds where appropriate
 - Review of allocations of grants funds across the five Districts based on up-to-date socio-economic data to develop a consistent formula applicable to all County-wide grants funds that are devolved to District level.
 - Analysis of options regarding the future administration of grants funds across the County Council and other local public services in order to guarantee savings, best value, and best practice.

3. The Use of the Community Fund in North Warwickshire 2008/09

- 3.1 Historically, the use of delegated funds in North Warwickshire have sought to balance community interests and concerns with strategic imperatives. Last year the importance of the latter was recognised when the Committee sought to align grants and funding with LAA outcomes.

- 3.2 In addition to this, the Committee have also demonstrated innovative approaches to partnership working through assisting the North Warwickshire Community Partnership achieve its objectives and match funding locality based grants such as Public Realm.
- 3.3 In the light of previous spending, current commitments and imperatives for next year an outline of grant allocation is attached below. The figures used are indicative and are based upon total grants to North Warwickshire remaining the same as the 2007/08 financial year.

Gross Total Allocation	132,153
Less Commitments	42,500
Village Traffic Plans Officer	15,000
Community Development Worker	20,000
Volunteering Project*	7500
Net Total Allocation	89653
Strategic Fund**	57053
Community Development	30,000
Small Grants (£5000 added rollover from 2007/08)	7500 approx

* Dependant upon successful bid

** Of this at least £6000 will be earmarked for the outcomes that contribute towards the reduction in anti social behaviour.

- 3.4 In addition to the funds listed above an allocation of £10,000 Arts for Health monies will be allocated on a borough/district basis.

DAVID CARTER
Strategic Director -
Performance and
Development

Shire Hall
Warwick

February 2008