

# Report of the Strategic Director of Environment and Sport to the meeting of Bradford East Area Committee to be held on 24th November 2016.

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**Subject:**

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**The allocation of the Community Building Grants (extended community centre core costs).**

**Summary statement:**

This reports sets out the Community Building Grants allocation process. Community Building Grants are for Voluntary and Community Sector organisations to support them in meeting their associated building related costs.

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**Portfolio: Neighbourhoods and Community  
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**Overview & Scrutiny Area:**  
**Corporate**



## 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This reports sets out the Community Building Grants allocation process. Community Building Grants are for Voluntary and Community Sector organisations to support them in meeting their associated building costs.

## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 As part of the budget decision on the 25<sup>th</sup> February 2016, Bradford Council agreed to reduce the discretionary support available to voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations.
- 2.2 In setting the budget for 2016/17 onwards, three specific budget reductions were proposed in relation to rental subsidies, business rate relief and community development to take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017. These are:
- a) **Remove rent subsidies provided to VCS organisations**
  - b) **Reduce Community Development grants**
  - c) **Remove discretionary business rate relief to not for profit organisations**
- Community Centre Core Costs Grants** were included with the three proposals as requested by the sector during the Council's budget consultation.
- 2.3 A review was undertaken of the different types of support given to the VCS and a proposal developed. This proposal merges the remaining support available into one Community Building Grant and devolves the decision making to Area Committees in order to increase fairness, transparency and accountability.
- 2.4 The aim of the review was to find the most effective way to invest the remaining resource and ensure effective use of the funds. Given the significant reductions in available funds the Review Group prioritised community buildings and consequently there will be no money available for community development workers.
- 2.5 The Review group concluded that the best way forward is to combine all remaining resources and establish a single process, based on an extended core costs model.

### Financial Allocation

- 2.6 Apportionment of the remaining budget is based upon a formula that factors in current support levels and also the needs based formula that was used and agreed by Executive to allocate the previous community development and core costs fund.
- 2.7 The VCS Buildings Review Group, chaired by the Strategic Director Environment and Sport used this formula to recommend the allocation of funding levels to each Area. The group's recommendation was agreed by the Regeneration, Planning, and Transport Portfolio Holder on behalf of Council Executive.



**2.8** The available budget across the District, for 2017-18 is £436k (and 2018-19 subject to equivalent budget being available). The new grants will commence from 1 April 2017.

**2.9** A ring-fenced allocation will be made available to support organisations supporting District Wide activity and community of interest groups. This will be allocated by Bradford West Area Committee as several district wide organisations are based in the city centre (Bradford West).

**2.10** Table 1 includes the current levels of support each area received and the allocated amounts for each Area Committee for 2017-2018 for the Community Building Grant.

Table One

	<b>Current 2016/17 amount</b>	<b>Amount 2017/18</b>
East	£208k	£99.4k
South	£71k	£50.7k
West	£295k	£122.8k
Keighley	£124k	£64.4k
Shipley	£98k	£52.7k
District wide provision	£94k	46k
Total	£890k	£436k

**2.11** It will be the responsibility of each Area Committee to make decisions on the allocation of the 2017-18 budget (and 2018-19 subject to equivalent budget being available).

### **Feedback from the consultation**

**2.12** Current recipients of all the different types of buildings related support and community development funding have been invited to participate in a consultation. This consultation period concluded on the 9<sup>th</sup> November 2016. Analysis of the feedback will inform the implementation of the proposal and will be shared with the Grant Advisory Groups (GAGs) and where appropriate any feedback about individual organisations will also be directed to the GAGs.

## **3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Importance of Community Buildings**

**3.2** Helping to ensure that communities are safe, clean and active is a Council priority. Whilst we can no longer fund community development workers we can facilitate this approach by supporting community buildings to stay open and become hubs of local activity and community led development. The 'People Can' approach to community support will contribute to building stronger sustainable communities in the following ways:



- Increase the active participation of residents in their neighbourhoods and communities
- Meeting space for community groups
- Local base to deliver a range of services including advice work
- Places to deliver activities and access to practical resources

### **Framework to be deployed by Area Committees in the allocation of grants**

**3.4** The Area Committees will use their existing Grants Advisory Group in the same way they have for Community Centre core costs and community development grants. The Grants Advisory Group will assess applications and make recommendations to Area Committee for determination.

**3.5** Grants will be available for up to two years.

**3.7** The Area Committee may choose to develop a scoring system for allocation of funds with the support of the Neighbourhood Service central team

**3.8** The main priority of these grants is for organisations with low levels of resources and without the funds to pay the full cost of running the centre without support.

**3.9** Community buildings receiving a contribution to their building related costs through a grant will be expected to be well run facility in the following respects:

- To be accessible to everyone within the local community, including young people
- Well maintained and clean facilities
- Have a responsible charging policy
- Have financial systems and controls in place
- Have a strong and responsible management committee
- To work in partnership with other agencies

**3.10** The Neighbourhood Service Central team will support the Grants Advisory Group to enable a consistency of approach across the five Areas and will also including distributing the expressions of interest (application) packs.

**3.11** Whilst administration of the grants will be undertaken centrally within the Neighbourhoods and Customer Service, the Ward Officer will be the main contact to monitor progress and they will ensure that issues raised are being addressed.

**3.12** Current recipients of buildings related support and community Development Commissions were notified, following the Council decision in February 2016, of the proposed changes to circumstances and the probability of the termination of their current agreements on the 31 March 2017.

**3.13** The Area Office staff, Revenues and benefits, asset management, the Central team and the voluntary sector infrastructure organisations will work with applicants to consider alternative sources of support such as sharing of spaces, community asset



transfer, small business rates relief or registering as a community amateur sports club

#### **4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL**

4.1 The approved reduction identified in the Council budget 2017-2018 is presented in this report.

#### **5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES**

5.1 There is a risk that some of the organisations currently receiving support will not be successful in the Community Buildings fund due to significantly reduced resources. However there are various avenues organisations could pursue which may help reduce the negative impact. These include, becoming a registered charity which will entitle organisations to 80% rate relief, or to register as a small business and rates will be off set by government initiatives. There is also additional support available to sports clubs who register as a Community Amateur Sports Club with HMRC, which would also, reduces the rates charges by 80%.

5.2 In addition Ward Officers and Voluntary Organisations support officers will continue to provide support to areas and organisations.

#### **6. LEGAL APPRAISAL**

6.1 This work relates directly to the Local Government Act 2000 and to the Duty of Well-being placed upon the Council to promote and improve the well-being of the District.

6.2 Under the Councils Constitution at Article 12, the Executive can delegate/devolve the discharge of functions to Area Committees. In discharging these functions, all decisions made must be in accordance with policies, strategies, plans or criteria agreed by the Council or Executive and within the approved budget.

#### **7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

##### **7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY**

7.2 The progressive distribution of grants to Areas with higher level needs will aid the development of initiatives which reduce inequalities.

7.3 Priorities supported will promote fairness and inclusion while supporting Bradford East Area Committee's commitment to equal opportunities for all, including those protected characteristics identified within the Equalities Act 2010.

##### **7.4 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

Resources available to Bradford East Area Committee, described in this report, and used to support the Bradford East Area Committee Action Plan and will directly support the delivery of the District's Plan and promote and contribute to the People



Can Make a difference approach.

## **7.5 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS**

Actions to assist in identifying the greenhouse gas impacts of potential projects to be funded through this budget will be undertaken. These will include a consideration of, for example, energy efficiency opportunities in purchasing new equipment or refurbishing or modifying buildings.

## **7.6 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

None

## **7.7 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT**

None

## **7.8 TRADE UNION**

There are no implications related to Trade Unions arising from this report.

## **7.9 WARD IMPLICATIONS**

The activity outlined in this report affects the whole district and all organisations which currently receive buildings related support in Bradford East.

The creation and devolution of the Community Building Fund to Area Committees will establish a more tailored provision and more accountability at a ward level.

## **7.10 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS (for reports to Area Committees only)**

The activities outlined in this report contribute to priorities within the Bradford East Area Committee's Action Plan.

## **8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS**

None

## **9. OPTIONS**

**9.1** Bradford East Area Committee adopts the recommendations outlined in this report.

**9.2** Bradford East Area Committee adopts the recommendations outlined in this report, with amendments.

**9.3** Bradford East Area Committee decides not to accept the recommendations outlined in this report.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**10.1** Bradford East Area Committee notes the proposed allocation process for Community Building Grants.



**10.2** Bradford East Area Coordinator is requested to organise meetings of the Area Committee's Grant Advisory Group to consider Community Building Grant applications for funding from groups within the Bradford East Area.

**10.3** Bradford East Area Coordinator will bring a further report to a meeting within the 2016-17 municipal year with recommendations from the Grant Advisory Group on how to allocate the Community Building Grants funds available.

## **11. APPENDICES**

None

## **12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Executive Amended Budget Recommendation to Full Council – Agenda item 7A, 25<sup>th</sup> February 2015

### **[Amended Budget Recommendation to Full Council](#)**

Community Building Grant Consultation Process document  
(available upon request from Amria Khatun)

