

Northampton Borough Council

Overview and Scrutiny



Overview and Scrutiny Committee

10 June 2013

Briefing Note: Councillor Community Fund 2012/13

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report seeks to brief members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee about the Councillor Community Fund during 2012/13.
- 1.2 The Councillor Community Fund was introduced in 2012/13. It seeks to empower councillors, helping them to play a full role in supporting a healthy and vibrant voluntary and community sector in their localities.

2. Context

- 2.1 Each elected member of Northampton Borough Council had a budget of £3,000 provided in 2012/13 to contribute towards the costs of local voluntary and community sector groups and/or activities.
- 2.2 The Councillor Community Fund is one of a number of ways in which the borough council supports the local voluntary and community sector. These include:
 - a. Funding local voluntary and community sector infrastructure support. This work supports the development and sustainability of the sector; enables the sharing of best practice, helps develop services to deliver against unmet need and provides support to volunteers. The current infrastructure support contract with Northampton Volunteering Centre expires in March 2014.
 - b. Providing grants to local voluntary and community organisations through the Partnership Fund Grant Scheme. Currently, this scheme provides £550,000 to local groups. Each application must be for a minimum of £2000.
 - c. A Borough Council Small Grants Fund for local good causes and projects, providing grants of up to £2,000 per application. This fund is being managed by Northamptonshire Community Foundation on behalf of the Borough Council.

www.northampton.gov.uk/scrutiny

Call 01604 837408

E-mail: ttiff@northampton.gov.uk

Northampton Borough Council

Overview and Scrutiny

3. Councillor Community Fund 2012/13

- 3.1. In 2012-13, 158 Councillor Community Fund Grants¹ were awarded to 96 organisations. The value of the grants totalled £77,144.51 and represented 52% of the total Councillor Community Fund Budget of £147,000 for the 45 elected members of Northampton Borough Council.
- 3.2. The Councillor Community Fund has been widely used to support local initiatives and activities.
- 3.3. Table 1 (below) provides summary information of total spend per councillor for 2012/13. Forty one Councillors have drawn upon their 2012/13 Councillor Community Fund allocation.
- 3.4. Three councillors have spent their full allocation of Councillor Community Fund for 2012/13. A further seventeen councillors (38%) have spent £2,000 or above, of those, thirteen councillors have spent over £2,500.
- 3.5. Just over a fifth (ten councillors) of elected members have spent under £1000.
- 3.6. A significant number of Councillor Community Fund applications involved joint applications by two or more members. This allowed for larger projects to be funded, such as the Multi Faith Day or the repairs to a water pump at a water sports centre.

Table 1: Councillor Community Fund spend by number of councillors

Amount spent	Number of councillors	Percentage of councillors
£3,000	3	7%
£2,000 – £2,999	17	38%
£1,000 - £1,999	11	24%
£1 - £999	10	22%
£0	4	9%

- 3.7. A wide range of organisations received funding from the 2012/13 Councillor Community Fund. These included:
 - Organisations working with children and young people such as schools (Cedar Road, Hardingstone, Hunsbury, Kingsley and Wooton Primary Schools), uniformed groups such as Scouts, Boys Brigade and Girls Brigade, children's centres and youth clubs;
 - Sports organisations / clubs;
 - Local residents associations and neighbourhood groups;

¹ In this instance, each Councillor Community Fund application made by each individual member is treated as a single application. For example, if five councillors each contributed to a single project, this is treated as if it were five applications.

Northampton Borough Council

Overview and Scrutiny

- Parish councils (including Billing, Collingtree, Duston, Great Houghton, Hardingstone and Wooton & East Hunsbury PCs)
- Organisations working with older people;
- Organisations working with people with disabilities;
- Community centres / facilities;
- Cultural organisations;
- Women's groups;
- Environmental and conservation groups.

3.8. Many activities and purchases were funded through the Councillor Community Fund during 2012/13. This included contributions towards the costs of:

- Events (such as the Multi Faith Day);
- Sports and cultural projects;
- Community Safety (such as installation of alley gates, bicycles for Police Community Support Officers, signage, "No Cold Calling" stickers);
- Health, wellbeing and first aid equipment and activities;
- Community facilities (such as tables, chairs, crockery, repairs and maintenance of facilities, litter bins);
- Activities for children and young people (including a breakfast club, holiday activities, theatre activities);
- Community Development (such as volunteer training, hiring of meeting rooms and the printing of community newsletters);
- Environmental projects (such as planting, repairs to footpaths and installation of fencing).

4. Conclusions

4.1 That the Councillor Community Fund 2012/13 briefing be noted.

23 May 2013

www.northampton.gov.uk/scrutiny

Call 01604 837408

E-mail: ttiff@northampton.gov.uk