

# CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

## Cabinet

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> July 2014
<b>Report of:</b>	Steph Cordon, Head of Communities
<b>Subject/Title:</b>	Your Money Fund
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Michael Jones, Leader of the Council

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### 1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 In the Chief Operating Officer's Cabinet Report of 1<sup>st</sup> July 2013/14 the Final Outturn Review of Performance highlighted a budget underspend of almost £900,000. The Council's strong financial position reflects its enhanced governance, innovative delivery arrangements and effective stewardship of public money. The overall financial health, performance and resilience of Cheshire East Council is strong despite taking over £50m out of its cost base in since 2011.

- 1.2 At Cabinet on 1 July Cllr Rhoda Bailey proposed that this underspend was given back to the residents of Cheshire East. This proposal was included in a motion to Council on 17 July by Councillor Peter Raynes. The Motion proposed and approved by Council on 17 July 2014 was:

Council welcomes the news that there has been a £900,000 underspend against the 2013/14 budget; acknowledges that this is the result of prudent financial management; and commits to using this money to benefit the residents of Cheshire East Borough. Council is asked to approve a supplementary estimate of £900,000 funded from the 2013/14 revenue underspend and to delegate to Cabinet the power to set up and administer a Community Fund to the benefit of the residents of Cheshire East.

- 1.3 Rather than administer a costly exercise of returning, what will be a very small amount when divided between the 170,000 dwellings which are eligible to pay council tax, it has been agreed that the money is used to fund the following community activity:

- 1.3.1 Young people's sections of uniformed organisations – total allocation £300,000
- 1.3.2 Organisations who provide services and support to older people – total allocation £350,000
- 1.3.3 Domestic abuse support for young people in abusive relationships – total allocation £50,000
- 1.3.4 Faith organisations who are connecting with communities – total allocation £200,000

## **2.0 Recommendation**

- 2.1 To approve the establishment of the Your Money Fund Grant Scheme.
- 2.2 To approve the Your Money Fund Criteria and Principles.
- 2.3 The Your Money Fund budget is a fixed one-off amount made available in the financial year of 2014/15 and will cease to be available at the end of March 2015.
- 2.4 The vast majority of grants will be given out to young people's sections of uniformed organisations and organisations who provide services and support to older people via an application process.
- 2.5 A one-off grant will be given to the most appropriate specialist third sector provider who is able to demonstrate an innovative solution to tackling abuse in young people's relationships. The provider will be determined by the Council's Domestic Abuse Partnership's Co-ordinator.
- 2.6 Grants for faith organisations will be determined following a borough-wide faith conference. This conference will establish the priorities to be addressed by faith organisations working in the community.
- 2.7 The Leader of the Council will be responsible for the approval of Your Money Fund and will assess applications as they are received, upon advice from officers and portfolio holders.

## **3.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1 To enable applications to the fund to be received and assessed in order to grant fund the community activity highlighted above.
- 3.2 Funding is only available until the end of March 2015 so it is imperative that groups are given enough opportunity to apply to the scheme.

## **4.0 Wards Affected**

- 4.1 All Wards.

## **5.0 Local Ward Members**

- 5.1 Local Ward Members will be encouraged to express their views about need in their respective communities.

## **6.0 Policy Implications**

- 6.1 The establishment of the Your Money Grant Fund will enable the Council to flexibly grant fund communities to deliver against its key outcomes.

## **7.0 Implications for rural Communities**

- 7.1 All proposals will be considered for their impact on rural communities.

## **8.0 Financial Implications**

- 8.1 The proposed Your Money Grant Fund will support the development and delivery of services at no further cost to the Council.

## **9.0 Legal Implications**

- 9.1 The Council has the power to award grants to organisations using its general power of competence in section 1 of the Localism Act 2011. In exercising the power the Council must satisfy its public law duties. In essence this means that in making the decision the Council must have taken into account only relevant considerations, followed procedural requirements, acted for proper motives and not acted unreasonably.
- 9.2 There are no legal issues preventing the establishment of this fund. However, it needs to be carefully managed to ensure that no issues arise at the time that grants are made.
- 9.3 The aim of this fund is to give back to the community and to further advance the delivery of stronger communities priorities. In delivering these objectives, care must be taken to ensure that when funding is provided it is truly a grant.

## **10.0 Risk Management**

- 10.1 There is minimal risk associated with the introduction of this fund, as an application and decision making process are in place. It could be considered an opportunity to improve the reputation of the Council by taking positive action to promote and support stronger communities.

## **11.0 Background and Options**

- 11.1 Your Money Fund Criteria and Principles are set out below:

### Organisations eligible for funding:

- 11.2 Young people's sections of uniformed organisations shall include the Scouting Groups, Girlguiding Groups, Boys Brigade, Girls Brigade, St John's Ambulance Cadets, Red Cross Cadets, Air Cadets, Sea Cadets, Army Cadets and Fire Cadets. As the surplus money has become available in the commemoration year of the First World War the funding will recognise the efforts these Organisations made during the war.
- 11.3 Organisations who provide services and support to older people shall include voluntary and community groups, registered charities or other not for profit organisations.

- 11.4 A specialist third sector provider who is able to demonstrate an innovative solution to tackling abuse in young people's relationships.
- 11.5 Faith organisations who are working in and with communities to create social cohesion and community engagement.
- 11.6 The Council is seeking to support the activities carried out by these Organisations, for whom a small amount of money can be very beneficial, in order to engage with more people in the community and make a real difference to the lives of Cheshire East residents. The funding will recognise the thousands of volunteer hours which are given for free every year in order to provide services for residents within Cheshire East.

#### Funding Budget:

- 11.7 The Your Money Fund budget is a fixed one-off amount made available in the financial year of 2014/15 and so there is a limited amount of money from which to pay grants under this scheme.
- 11.8 The budget for the grants is to be managed carefully and flexibly to ensure that the Council has money available throughout the remainder of this financial year and is able to benefit as many Organisations as possible. As far as possible the Council will try to ensure that no one is disadvantaged due to the time of year that they apply.

#### Application Process:

- 11.9 A one-off grant will be given to the most appropriate specialist third sector provider who is able to demonstrate an innovative solution to tackling abuse in young people's relationships. The provider will be determined by the Council's Domestic Abuse Partnership's Co-ordinator.
- 11.10 Grants for faith organisations will be determined following a borough-wide faith conference. This conference will establish the priorities to be addressed by faith organisations working in the community.
- 11.11 Applications from young people's sections of uniformed organisations and organisations who provide services and support to older people must be made using the Council's Your Money Fund Grant application form and associated guidance notes that are available online on the Council's website and as a paper version on request.
  - 11.11.1 There are no deadlines as this is a rolling application process which means that applications can be submitted at any time up to the end of March 2015 when the fund will close. It will take approximately two weeks to assess the application.
  - 11.11.2 Grants cannot be paid retrospectively therefore any work commenced prior to acceptance of the grant offer will not be eligible for funding.

- 11.11.3 Grants up to £1,000 are available. However, applications for sums over £1,000 but up to a maximum total value of £10,000 will be considered in exceptional circumstances where an organisation can demonstrate meeting an agreed outcome.
- 11.11.4 Organisations who are in receipt of other funding from the Council may apply to this grant scheme if the grant is required for a one-off project which is considered additional to the service already funded;
- 11.11.5 Grants are available to support Organisations who are looking to improve or enhance community life and offer wider opportunities to young and older people within Cheshire East. Examples include, but are not limited to:
- Equipment, materials or specialist kit to help the Organisation develop;
  - Training courses or specialist coaching / teaching sessions;
  - Hire or purchase of equipment or performers for events / fates / carnivals;
  - Events and activities which contribute to the wellbeing of group members.

What cannot be funded:

11.12 The following criteria applies to young people's sections of uniformed Organisations and Organisations who provide services and support to older people.

- Organisations with an annual turnover of more than £25,000;
- Events, activities or purchase of goods which has already taken place before acceptance of the grant offer;
- Individuals;
- General appeals, sponsorship or fundraising for national or local charities (including local branches) or other local organisations;
- Activities of a mainly political or religious nature;
- Events which do not involve members of the local community participating;
- Loan against loss or debt;
- Administration expenses i.e. postage, telephone, utilities etc;
- Running Costs i.e gas, electricity, water, salaries, subscriptions, insurance etc;
- Organisations which are not based in Cheshire East.

Decision Making Process:

11.13 The Leader of the Council will be responsible for the Your Money Fund and will assess applications as they are received, upon advice from officers and portfolio holders.

11.14 Decisions will be treated as final and Organisations will be notified to inform them of whether they have been successful or not within two weeks of receipt of their application.

## **12.0 Access to Information**

12.1 Background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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