

BISHOPSTON, COTHAM AND REDLAND NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP

SPECIAL NEIGHBOURHOOD COMMITTEE

12th November 2013

AGENDA ITEM 4A

Report of: Jenny Hoadley, Chair of the Grants Sub Group

Title: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ALLOCATION OF THE WELLBEING FUND

RECOMMENDATION

The Wellbeing Budget stands at £756 which has to be allocated by March 31st 2014. The Grants Subgroup recommends that there should be a full discussion about how best to spend this money in the light of inevitable further cuts to local services in 2014-15, increasing pressure on the staff who work for the Neighbourhood Partnerships, and the fact that the Communication and Engagement group no longer have direct access to an internal budget. The application from the Communication and Engagement Group should be considered as one of the options open to the Partnership.

1 Background

1.1 The Grants Subgroup has not had the time to meet to review the application from the Communication and Engagement Group. However informally we have agreed that there should be a discussion by the Partnership about whether this application is the most effective way of using up this year's balance.

1.2 There was a request from the Communication and Engagement Group for a decision to be made on their application *before* the next Partnership meeting in January. They feel that as there is barely six months before the proposed start of the 2014 NP Festival it would assist their planning if they knew there was a fund of money available as soon as possible.

The Partnership is asked to note that the local resident on the Grants Subgroup did express some concern that there seems to be an increasing number of "special meetings" to agree allocation of the Wellbeing Fund, which she feels could raise a transparency issue from the point of view of the public.

2 The Communication and Engagement Gp's application

2.1 The Wellbeing Fund can be spent on anything which the Partnership feels will enhance the wellbeing of the Partnership area – precedents include the money which contributed to the zebra crossing within the area and the Waste Doctor scheme.

2.2 It would appear that the money would be spent on

- Small grants to participating organisations (up to £100 per grant) to cover the costs of participating
- Volunteer expenses
- Refreshments, hire of equipment etc

These expenses are not unreasonable. It would, nevertheless, be useful to know how much it cost to run the Festival in 2013, and whether this amount is in fact sufficient.

2.4 However there is an internal budget available for these types of projects, which is accessed by the Co-ordinator. It is recommended that this source of money is considered first before turning to the remainder of the Wellbeing Fund.

3 Other options

3.1 The Grants Subgroup feels that the Communication and Engagement Group's application is only one of several options for spending the money. Partnership members may have their own ideas but options could also include:

3.1.1 To cover the costs of advertising the Wellbeing Fund in the Bishopston News and Redland Directory during February and June 2014.

3.1.2 The Communication and Engagement Group to organise a series of half day consultations about the Partnership priorities, as happened in 2011 (but possibly a different format): the money could be earmarked against the cost of bringing in a facilitator and the cost of room hire, refreshments etc. Staff time could assist with outreach work with local groups to encourage them to participate.

3.1.3 Street trees are always popular with the public-the money could be used to further the local street tree programme.

3.1.4 There may be work undertaken now, or in the next few months, by our Neighbourhood Development Worker and/or our Co-ordinator which would benefit from a small budget.

3.1.5 The Street Scheme Subgroup may have proposed schemes which would require a small budget to get them off the ground.

3.2 There is only £756 so the Partnership has to decide where its priorities lie. A final decision needs to be made at the January meeting at the latest.