

SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

MEETING: Community Select Committee
Wednesday 6 January 2016. Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Stevenage, SG1 1HN

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors: S Mead (Chair), M Notley (Vice Chair), L Bell, L Harrington, J Mead, C Saunders, G Snell, P Stuart and the Leader S Taylor OBE CC.

ALSO PRESENT: Alderman D Kissane, Y Tiako (Youth Mayor) and S Crudgington (Chief Executive).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor E Connolly.	G Moody Ext 2203
2. MINUTES – 18 NOVEMBER 2015	
It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of 18 November 2015 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.	G Moody Ext 2203
3. WITNESS INTERVIEWS FOR THE LOCAL COMMUNITY BUDGET (LCB) REVIEW	
The Committee interviewed the Leader, Alderman D Kissane and the Chief Executive concerning the Local Community Budget process and sought their suggestions for making changes and/or improvements that could make it work even better in the future.	

The following key points were identified:

- LCBs fit well with the Co-operative Neighbourhood Working strand of the Council's 'Future Town Future Council' programme.
- LCBs offer a flexible approach to help Members meet local priorities at a micro level.
- LCBs help Members develop a stronger connection between townspeople and the Council.
- To make effective use of LCB monies Councillors must know their own wards.
- There was a desire to see more Ward local spend and fewer town wide bids.
- There is a perception that Young People receive a disproportionately lower LCB spend than other groups.
- Accountability for spend rests with Members.
- Opportunities for improving the communications around LCB's should be considered.

Members requested the following information which the Chief Executive undertook to provide through colleagues within the Chief Executive's Unit:

- Analysis of the underspend in 2013/14. The Chief Executive believed this related to a proposed carry forward but would confirm.
- Analysis of LCB spend split between town wide and local initiatives.
- Analysis of LCB spend on youth orientated projects and bids submitted by young people.

The following emergent recommendations were identified:

- Improved feedback to be garnered from recipients of LCB awards either as a condition of the award or by Members actively seeking their own feedback.
- A summary of LCB spends to be published in the Chronicle (or other SBC publications) on a quarterly / yearly basis.
- Members to share best practice and ideas for LCB spend on an annual basis.
- An assessment of the practicality of officers undertaking 'due diligence' checks on bids before passing to Members for authorisation.
- Improved training for Members on the LCB process.
- Recognition of the need to ensure LCBs are not used to cover shortfalls in SBC budgets.

S Crudgington
Ext 2815

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved liaison between Members (including HCC Members) to determine whether bids should be supported at a ward / area level. • Officers to issue updated guidelines as to how LCB monies could be spent. • Consideration to be given to new and innovative methods of promoting LCB awareness to Young People. • The communications leaflet should be updated. • Officers to examine the potential to allow accruals for committed LCB spend. • Consideration to be given to the practicality of timescales for LCB approval being made more flexible, especially around the summer and Christmas holiday periods. • The system to be amended so that Members can only approve or reject bids with a free text box added so that reasons for rejection can be fully explained. • Consideration to be given to the establishment of a method of determining whether organisations were potentially overbidding for funds in the expectation of receiving a reduced amount that would actually meet their requirements. • More flexibility to be designed into the system as it was considered inappropriate that an organisation receiving only a small percentage of the funding that had been bid for should receive an email that read 'Your application for funding has been successful'. <p>It was RESOLVED that the emergent recommendations identified in the interviews with the witnesses be noted and incorporated into the final report as appropriate.</p>	<p>S Weaver Ext 2332</p>
<p>4. MEMBER EVIDENCE GATHERING</p>	
<p>This item was dealt with at item 3 and emergent recommendations identified listed above.</p>	
<p>5. NEXT STEPS</p>	
<p>It was RESOLVED that the dates of the next meeting and the following stages of the review process be noted.</p>	<p>S Weaver Ext 2332</p>

6. URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS	
None	
7. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC	
Not Required.	
PART II	
8. URGENT PART II BUSINESS	
None.	