

Report of: Martin Dean, Area Leader South East

Report to: Outer East Community Committee covering the wards of Cross Gates & Whinmoor, Temple Newsam, Kippax & Methley, Garforth & Swillington

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For decision

Outer East Community Committee Well Being Budget 2014/15

Purpose of report

1. This report seeks to provide Members with:
 - a. Wellbeing Budget commitments to date;
 - b. Agreed funding streams;
 - c. Details of new projects for consideration;
 - d. Details of small grants (Appendix 1);
 - e. The remaining balance on the budget.

Main issues

2. Well Being commitments and funding streams

2.1 The Well Being Budget allocated to Outer East for 2013/14 is £162,790. The carry over figure from 2013/14 is £16,000. The budget had one commitment of £33,649 to fund the annual cost of its 11 Leedswatch CCTV cameras.

2.2 Community Committee has agreed the following funding streams:

- £5,000 for a small grants budget.
- £5,000 for skips
- £5,500 to hold older persons event week
- £10,000 to its 4 tasking teams

- £2,000 communications budget

2.3 Community Committee has approved the following projects:

- £20,000 to provide a gardening service for the elderly
- £23,620 for Christmas lights and switch on events
- £8,000 Neighbourhood Elders Team (NET) luncheon club worker
- £1,300 for the MethleyFest
- £2,000 towards community galas in Cross Gates & Whinmoor Ward.
- £5,000 Sutton Park play area improvements

3. Details of new projects for consideration

3.1 Project Title: Money Buddies

Name of Group or Organisation: Ebor Gardens Advice Centre

Total Project Cost: £3,195

Amount proposed from Wellbeing Budget 2013/14 £1,995

3.1.2 Money Buddies are trained volunteers who provide a handholding service in order to empower members of the public wishing to maximise their income. Volunteers can support clients in a number of ways including

- Switch utility suppliers (gas/electric/broadband/phone) on-line;
- Apply for grants such as Discretionary Housing Payments (where there are under occupancy issues), Yorkshire Water Community Trust, British Gas Energy Trust etc;
- Develop budgets or financial statements using software such as CASHflow which is designed for this;
- Negotiate with creditors by helping write letters or print template letters for clients to send to creditors themselves
- Report illegal loan sharks in a confidential environment
- Apply for Credit Union accounts, such as budgeting accounts on-line
- Explore other ways of saving money such as looking at websites like 'Freecycle' to see what is going for free, if people need items of furniture for example.

3.1.3 The funding requested will pay for 3 Money Buddies for 12 months to be based at suitable venues in Outer East Leeds.

3.1.4 The funding will cover the management, supervision, training and support of the Money Buddies for one year. Partners on the South Leeds Debt Forum have identified a need for this service, based on their experience of supporting people on low incomes and those facing financial hardship. This Money Buddy proposal is designed to complement existing advice provision across the wedge; the Money Buddy volunteers will take referrals from advice providers such as Leeds Citizens Advice Bureau and One Stop Centre Customer Service staff.

- 3.1.5 All Money Buddies will be able to book appointments for clients with any member of the Advice Leeds Partnership, if the client needs specialist advice. The proposal fits a gap in provision in that it offers one to one, face to face support for clients and will reduce the pressure on specialist debt advice services in Leeds. The pilot in East Leeds has demonstrated that Money Buddies have led to a reduction in the number of revolving door clients seen by advice providers.
- 3.1.6 Ebor Gardens Advice Centre (EGAC) will train and support volunteers to become Money Buddies. All volunteers receive regular supervision and reviews of their objectives along with an annual appraisal. Volunteers can go on to gain QCF (previously known as NVQ) level 2 qualification in Gateway Assessment and QCF level 3 in Legal Advice. There is no cost to EGAC or the volunteers for this and all expenses are reimbursed.
- 3.1.7 EGAC is a member of Advice Leeds; Leeds City Council (LCC) Financial Inclusion Steering Group; LCC Financial Literacy Group; as well East, West and South Leeds Debt Forums. The project has received national recognition winning The Institute of Money Advisers Award for the Best Financial Capability Project 2014.
- 3.1.8 The South Leeds Debt Forum has recently completed a mapping exercise of advice services in South Leeds. This has identified that there is fairly good provision in terms of Welfare Benefits advice but provision of debt advice is very scarce.
- 3.1.9 The project supports the following priority of the Community Plan:
- Residents in Outer East are active and healthy

3.2 Project Title: Well Being Pack for the elderly
Name of Group or Organisation: All Outer East Neighbourhood Networks
Total Project Cost: £15,000
Amount proposed from Wellbeing Budget 2013/14 £5,000

- 3.2.1 This proposal was discussed at the recent meeting of the Older Persons sub-group. The exact details of the project are still to be agreed and therefore Community Committee is requested to conditionally approve the project subject to match funding being confirmed, the content of the packs to be agreed and the neighbourhood networks having sufficient volunteers in place to deliver the project.
- 3.2.2 The Winter Warmth Pack project of 2013/14 was very successful in providing support to older people across Outer East Leeds. This proposal is to carry out a similar project but to provide a Well Being Pack rather than a winter pack. The feedback from recipients of that project suggests that a more generic pack is more appropriate.
- 3.2.3 Neighbourhood networks are consulting with their customers on the content of the pack. In the meantime the Housing Advisory Panel will consider a request for £10,000 from its budget with Community Committee requested to contribute £5,000 from its budget.

- 3.2.4 The project supports the following priority of the Community Plan:
- Vulnerable members of the community are able to live at home for longer

3.3 Project Title: Garforth & Villages Food Bank
Name of Group or Organisation: Garforth NET (Neighbourhood Elders Team)
Total Project Cost: £2,000
Amount proposed from Wellbeing Budget 2013/14 £2,000

- 3.3.1 This project establishes a food bank to support needy residents in Garforth and surrounding villages.
- 3.3.2 The project will be delivered by Garforth NET, which has received numerous queries from local people expressing the need for a food bank. NET has identified a number of volunteers who will support this project.
- 3.3.3 Community Committee is requested to award £2,000 towards the start up costs for this project.
- 3.3.4 The project supports the following priority of the Community Plan:
- Vulnerable members of the community are able to live at home for longer

4. Small Grants

- 4.1 Appendix 1 details small grants approved to date.

5. Budget remaining

- 5.1 Taking account of commitments, agreed funding streams and projects approved this financial year the remaining balance is just under £56,000.

6. Corporate considerations

- 6.1 **Consultation and engagement.** The Money Buddies project was identified as something required across the whole of South East area at The South Leeds Debt Forum.
- 6.2 **Legal implications and call in.** There are no legal implications and this decision is not subject to call in.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1 Community Committee is requested to:
- Note the budget commitments and budget balance
 - Award £1,995 to the 'Money Buddies' project

- Award £5,000 to support the Well Being Pack proposal subject to details outlined in 3.2.1 of this report.
- Award £2,000 to Garforth NET to establish a food bank

8. Background information

8.1 There are no background papers.