



Constituency Committee - Wirral West
Thursday, 4 October 2018

REPORT TITLE:	Wirral West Constituency Committee Budget and Spend 2018/19
REPORT OF:	Corporate Director of Strategy & Partnerships

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides an update on constituency projects and activities, including those funded using the Wirral West Constituency Committee's budget allocations.

This report also outlines considerations in respect of the Committee's budget for 2018/19, seeking decisions around how that budget is allocated.

RECOMMENDATION/S

It is recommended that:

- The Committee notes the Constituency projects and activities update detailed in the report.
- The Committee agrees to utilise the £50,000 core budget to continue with the established Community Fund, i.e. £10,000 per ward, allocated through small grants with an opportunity for residents and communities to show their support for project applications.
- The Committee allocates £25,000 environmental funding to three schemes of work comprising indicative amounts of; £5,000 towards five Environmental Action Days in each Ward across the Constituency, £15,000 towards the Small Grant, Big Difference grant programme and £5,000 to support local improvements in each ward delegating decisions regarding spend to individual ward members.
- The Committee notes the outstanding 2017/18 budget commitments for expenditure during 2018/19.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

To ensure that the budget decisions and work programme of the Constituency Committee are being progressed as required and that the Committee is updated on the work of the constituency team and other initiatives which impact on the constituency area.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The Committee has an established approach to its core budget expenditure since commencement in operation in 2013. Members are being asked to reflect on the previous approaches to determine a way forward for the allocation of the budget currently available.

This report sets out activities undertaken in relation to the priorities of Constituency Committee, all of which have been progressed with due consideration to a range of options and in consultation with the Committee and relevant stakeholders.

3.0 CONSTITUENCY PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

To highlight the local impact of the Committee's programmes and the work undertaken by the constituency team to support voluntary and community groups to address local issues, a summary of projects and activities in which the team is involved is set out below. A presentation, appended to this report, details the outcomes from this work.

3.1 Small Grant, Big Difference

During 2017- 18 the Constituency Committee launched the Small Grant, Big Difference programme which awarded funding to projects designed to improve local high streets, parks, open spaces and community assets across the Constituency. A total of 19 projects were successful and each received up to a maximum of £200, totalling expenditure of £3994.00. Table 1 provides a summary of how the funding was allocated.

Table 1: Wirral West Small Grant, Big Difference funding distribution

Ward	Group	Allocation
Greasby, Frankby and Irby	Greasby Allotment Holders and Garderners Association	£152.00
	Greasby Community Association	£200.00
	Greasby Community Association (Greasby & Blooming Greasby)	£200.00
	Irby, Thurstaston & Pensby Amenity Society	£100.00
TOTAL		£652.00
Hoylake and Meols	AC Hoylake	£200.00
	Friends of Ashton Park	£100.00
	Friends of Hoylake and Meols in Bloom	£200.00
	Love Where you Live – West Kirby	£100.00
	West Kirby Ladies Bowling Club	£100.00
TOTAL		£700.00
Pensby and Thingwall	Irby, Thurstaston & Pensby Amenity Society	£100.00
	Pensby Library Volunteers	£200.00

	Pensby Recreational Centre	£200.00
	Thingwall Recreation Centre	£200.00
	TOTAL	£700.00
West Kirby and Thurstaston	Friends of Ashton Park	£100.00
	Friends of Grange Hill	£150.00
	Love Where You Love: West Kirby	£100.00
	St Michael and All Angels Church, Newton	£200.00
	West Kirby Ladies Bowling Club	£200.00
	West Kirby Promenaders Bowls Club	£200.00
	TOTAL	£850.00
Upton	Carrbridge	£200.00
	COGS	£192.00
	Holy Cross Parish Church, Woodchurch	£200.00
	Salacre Allotment Society	£200.00
	TOTAL	£792.00

An overview of the projects is provided in the attached presentation, which also illustrates the outcomes of the work completed.

3.2 Pensby and Thingwall Community Fund

Utilising underspend from the Community Fund programme, Pensby and Thingwall ward members made available funding for local groups to bid in for activities within the ward area. A total of £5,280.00 was awarded to 15 projects; each received up to a maximum of £500 to complete projects by March 2018.

3.3 Upton Community Fund

Funding was allocated by ward members to support running costs for the Fusion Breavement Support Group and to assist Carrbridge Centre for holiday provision over the 6 week school summer holiday and is also scheduled for the impending October half term school break.

3.4 Hoylake Boating Lake

The Wirral West Constituency Engagement Officer met with United Utilities, Amey, Parks and local stakeholders to expedite improvement works to Hoylake Boating Lake. United Utilities and Amey supported the works at no cost to empty and clean the Boating Lake including the installation of new lining. Volunteers from Hoylake Model Boat Club painted the lake wall. Owing to water use restrictions announced by United Utilities during the Summer the lake will be refilled and officially reopen in Autumn 2018.

3.5 Hoylake and Meols in Bloom

Friend of Hoylake and Meols in Bloom entered North West in Bloom 2018. The Wirral West Constituency Engagement Officer worked with the Friends in relation to Council support. The Constituency Committee clean- up budget enabled the project by making improvement around the Market Street area. The results of the 'In Bloom' community environmental competition will be announced in November 2018.

3.6 Constituency Team Engagement

As well as implementing the budget decisions and local priorities of the Constituency Committee, the constituency team works more widely to support community capacity building and key Council projects linked to neighbourhood working. The team also helps to develop local networks, raises awareness of what's happening through regular communications and secures external funding for the area where possible. The Constituency Engagement Officer liaises between council departments, and other partners, on behalf of local community groups. Since the last meeting of the Committee and until the end of August 2018 the engagement team received 22 Wirral West issues and resolved 16; due to complexities the team also worked to resolve ongoing issues.

During August the Wirral West Constituency Team also supported the successful 'Lost Castles' event, which was one of six projects located across Liverpool City Region, hosted in Ashton Park, West Kirby. Over 8,500 visitors came to the Park to see the 20 metre sculpture until it collapsed due to prolonged rain. More than 250 volunteers of all ages and abilities came together to prepare and build the enormous Viking stave church entirely from cardboard, tape and community spirit. Visitors to the Park enjoyed lots of activities as part of the event including Viking re-enactments, Birds of Prey demonstrations, street theatre, and a mass yoga session.

4.0 CONSTITUENCY BUDGET 2018 – 2019

Following a one year pause in spending on Constituency Committees (i.e. a pause in respect of £50,000 core budget for each the four Committees), during 2017- 18, the core budget of £50,000 has been allocated to the Committee for use during 2018 - 2019.

4.1 Wirral West Community Fund

Since the Committee's inception the core budget of £50,000 has been invested into a small grants programme for local groups and organisations to deliver quality of life improvements in each ward, with a maximum grant award of £1,000 for each project. Some of these projects continue to be delivered. The Community Fund has helped to extend the reach and scope of community organisations and provides an important mechanism for local networks to maximise their resources.

It is proposed that the Committee agrees to utilise the £50,000 core budget to continue the established Community Fund, i.e. £10,000 per ward, allocated through small grants with an opportunity for residents and communities to show their support for project applications.

Subject to agreement by the Committee as to this proposal, a detailed timetable will be circulated and published on the Council's website prior to the Fund being launched. Grant applications would be subject to both assessment and public vote as part of the administration process. Outcomes regarding award decisions would, it is suggested, be reported at the March 2019 Committee with funding distributed before the end of the financial year. Any remaining and uncommitted monies from the Community Fund would be allocated to local improvements at the discretion of ward councillors, supported by Officers.

4.2 Environmental Budget

At Budget Council on 6 March 2017 (minute 125 refers) it was agreed that £50,000 would be allocated to the four Constituency Committees, as a permanent budget, to help support local communities to clean up and improve their local areas ('Community Clean Ups'). This was split equally between the Constituencies, each being allocated £12,500 per annum. This funding is therefore available to the Committee for both 2017/18 and 2018/19. The Committee therefore has £25,000 (from 2017/18 and 2018/19) available for its use to improve the local environment.

It is proposed that this budget is allocated to fund targeted environmental activity within local communities, both to support communities to clean up their neighbourhoods and through the established Small Grant, Big Difference fund. The suggested process for this is outlined below.

4.2.1 Small Grant, Big Difference

It is proposed that £15,000 is allocated to the Wirral West Small Grant, Big Difference programme to bring to life all kinds of projects that spruce up local neighbourhoods. The previously agreed criteria and process would be utilised to administer the programme which would launch in spring 2019. Groups and organisations would therefore be able to apply for a small grant of up to £250 for projects that make a positive difference to the local environment. Funding will be allocated across wards in the Constituency however the amount available will reflect any existing commitments already made (e.g. Hoylake and Meols have invested £1985.10 as part of the Hoylake and Meols In Bloom entry).

4.2.2 Environmental Clean Up days

It is proposed that £5,000 of the environmental budget is utilised to co-ordinate and promote clean up days aimed at bringing community groups together with the Council and partner agencies in each of the five Constituency wards in or around the Spring of 2019 in locations identified by elected members.

Each Environmental Action Day will see the co-ordination of multi-agency and community activity to tackle environmental and quality of life issues and focused on:

- undertaking clean up activity;
- making small environmental improvements;
- engaging with local residents;
- preventative work (e.g. educational and awareness activity, fire safety checks, etc.);
- developing an action plan to address issues that are unable to be resolved on the day.

Planning and implementation of clean up days will be undertaken in consultation with local groups and may include procuring equipment for use by groups to tackle localised environmental issues (with associated training) and making available items for communities to use when undertaking environmental activities (e.g. 'hi vis' jackets). The costs incurred for each Environmental Action Day are likely to include, where applicable, resources and materials (e.g. paint, flowers, etc.), wheelie bin amnesty, skip hire, printing (leaflets) and refreshments for volunteers. An indicative cost for each day is up to £1,000.

4.2.3 Environmental Action in Wards

It is proposed that £5,000 is allocated to support local improvements in each ward delegating decisions regarding spend to individual ward members to agree expenditure relating to action to address hotspots in the constituency and/or to encourage community involvement in environmental initiatives.

5.0 Outstanding 2017/18 budget commitments

In addition to the £50k core budget allocation and £25,000 environmental funding; £24,495 underspend has been carried forward from 17/18 to 18/19 as follows:

'Committed' Core Budget Allocation	£14,000
Love Wirral	£3,800
Anti Social Behaviour	£5,295
Committee Operational Expenses	£1,400

These investments have been previously earmarked at Committee and will be spent as agreed, supported by the Constituency team.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Any financial implications of this report are in respect of the constituency budget currently available. There are no wider financial implications.

Regular budget monitoring with the finance department takes place to ensure that the expenditure incurred is accurate and complies with what has been agreed by the Committee.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications relating to the activities set out in this report.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

The activities set out in this report are being delivered via existing resources. Funding has assisted in making greater use of and/or access to community assets.

8.0 RELEVANT RISKS

Risk assessments are undertaken in respect of constituency projects and activities as necessary and appropriate.

Budget proposals presented within this report reflect the reduced officer capacity within the Wirral West Constituency Team due to the Constituency Manager's current secondment.

9.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

Consultation is undertaken with the members of the Constituency Committee as to the development and operation of the Committee. Ongoing consultation with the local community and proactive engagement with voluntary, community and faith groups is a clear objective of the neighbourhood working approach.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

An impact assessment relating to neighbourhood working can be found at the link below:

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/community-and-living/equality-diversitycohesion/equality-impact-assessments/eias-2010/chief-executives>

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1:

Presentation evaluating Wirral West Community Fund and Activities