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KIRKLEES COUNCIL

DISTRICT COMMITTEE - HUDDERSFIELD

Tuesday 12th July 2016

Present: Councillor Sheikh Ullah (Chair)
Councillors N Mather, C Burke, R Eastwood, E Hill,
J Homewood, M Kaushik, M Khan, P McBride, B McGuin,
C Pattison, M Sokhal, J Stewart-Turner, L Wilkinson and
G Wilson

Apologies: K Allison, J Calvert, A Cooper, J Hughes and M Sarwar

In attendance: 30+ Members of the public were in attendance.

1 Welcomes and Introductions

The Chair welcomed everyone and introduced members of the Committee to the public.

2 Minutes of previous meeting

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 22 March 2016 were approved as a correct record.

3 Interests

Councillor McGuin declared an other interest in Agenda item 6 for the reason he is also an elected Parish Councillor on Kirkburton Parish Council.

4 Admission of the public

RESOLVED – That all items be considered in public session.

5 Deputations / Petitions

The Committee received a deputation from Ann Denham, Friends of Tolson and Ravensknowle in response to the 'Culture Kirklees' document. The Chair thanked Ann Denham for making her deputation and advised that it would be passed onto the Head of Active and Creative Communities and she would receive a written response from the Senior Officer.

6 Huddersfield District Committee Working Arrangements for 2016-17

The Chair presented the working arrangements report to the Committee a question and answer session then followed with Members and the public.

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Councillor McGuin, on behalf of the Kirkburton Parish Council asked why the District Committee was not inviting co-optees and Parish Council reps onto the Committee. The Chair responded by saying the Committee is large enough as it covers 7 wards and has 21 Elected Members on it. The Parish Council reps were invited to attend all future public meetings to join in discussions. The Committee Members also agreed that given the Kirkburton Parish Council covers only a small part of the District having additional co-optees was not necessary and Councillor McGuin as a Parish Councillor could also feedback relevant issues.

Councillor Stewart-Turner asked that we make it clearer to community groups that approaching the District Committee for a grant should be after they have exhausted all other funding streams. She also asked that the criteria emphasises more clearly that any activity delivered should benefit the majority of people living in the relevant ward/district committee area.

A member of the public asked if there was a ceiling amount being placed on the grants. The Chair responded by saying no ceiling was necessary and it would be at the discretion of the Members when considering each application seeking funding from the Committee.

Members of the public also raised a number of concerns about the current cuts being made to local services, lack of progress being made around devolution and Member engagement with local residents. Councillor McBride and the Chair, Councillor Ullah responded to the individuals and acknowledged their concerns but stressed the national landscape is having a profound effect on Local Authorities given central government budgets have significantly reduced over the years (and will continue to do so). This has meant Kirklees Council has had to adapt and refocus its relationship with local communities as it can not continue to provide all the services it used to.

RESOLVED - Following a presentation of the report by the Chair, Councillor Ullah it was agreed to adopt the working arrangements along with the grant scheme and criteria for Huddersfield District Committee in the municipal year of 2016-17.

7 Tackling Poverty in Huddersfield

The Committee received an informative presentation from Nicky Hoyle – Consultant in Public Health on the refreshed Kirklees Tackling Poverty Strategy. Table discussions were then held on what more the District committee could do to support communities and local employers to address poverty and low pay across the district. A summary of the comments received related to:

- Improving resident access to free public wifi and IT equipment to support people with benefits, applying for jobs, accessing services.
- More apprenticeship opportunities created particularly in skill shortage areas.
- More local initiatives that don't stigmatise individuals and families by having open access so no one group is singled out as needing help for example look at assets across the district for example kitchens, have more social, growing and cooking activities rather than focus interventions on feeding people (ie via food banks).

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- Remove red tape for volunteers, which is barrier for many local people getting involved staying involved and doing more for their local communities.
- More awareness raising – using local press and neighbourhood/village notice boards, social media, networking events to promote what is going on and how people can get involved.
- Support neighbours to deliver one off or regular community activities rather focus being on setting up of formal, bigger groups when smaller amounts of funding are needed.
- Support employers to help lower income workers to access relevant benefits eg topping up tax credits.
- Develop financial awareness / life skills courses/resources in schools

RESOLVED – The Chair agreed to feed in the comments to the Financial Inclusion Steering Groups Tackling Poverty Conference on the 14 July 2016 and follow up discussions with Members of the District Committee, Senior Council Officers and relevant Partners to identify joint opportunities to help tackle poverty across the district via the District Committee.

8 Committee Budget Report

The District Committee budget balances were noted and applications for funding were considered. The Committee noted the following:

- **Fast tracks of:**
 - £100 revenue for the Community Networking Partnership – Crosland Moor and Netherton Ward
 - VAT costs of £930 revenue for an existing CCTV contract – Greenhead Ward.
- **Discretionary grants of:**
 - £500 revenue grant – Lindley Ward – Community Street Party on 24 June – Lindley Community Group
 - £500 revenue grant – Lindley Ward – Community Garden Party on 18 June – FOCAL
 - £500 revenue grant – Lindley Ward – IT equipment – Fern Lea TRA
 - £500 revenue grant – Crosland Moor and Netherton Ward – ESOL classes for local residents – Thornton Lodge Action Group
- Following a thorough financial monitoring exercise underspends to be returned to the District Committee budget include:
 - Newsome Ward - £26,000 capital
 - Lindley Ward - £1,500 capital
 - Lindley Ward - £75.50 revenue
 - Almondbury Ward - £6,900 revenue

RESOLVED – That the following projects be funded:

1. Lindley Ward – New Footpath to connect Brecon Avenue and Blackthorne Drive - £4,875 capital

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2. Lindley Ward – Festive Lighting Improvements in the Village of Lindley - £950 revenue
3. Crosland Moor and Netherton Ward – Woodfield Park Allotment Site Fencing - £4,950 revenue

9 Public Question Time

One question was asked by a member of the public:

Can the Committee provide roaming MICs at public meetings to assist those with hearing problems?

The Chair responded by saying this would be addressed for future public meetings.

10 Dates of future meetings

Dates of future meetings were noted as below:

Tuesday, 27 September 2016 – 7pm – Huddersfield Town Hall

Tuesday, 6 December 2016 – 7pm – Huddersfield Town Hall

Tuesday, 14 February 2017 – 7pm – Huddersfield Town Hall

Tuesday, 21 March 2017 – 7pm – Huddersfield Town Hall

Dates may be subject to change. Please check the Kirklees Council Website, Huddersfield District Committee on Facebook, or local press for updates.