

Proposed recommendations to present to Overview and Scrutiny Committee

General

1. Continue Neighbourhood Forum funds and increase the amount to £3,000 per ward.
2. Focus future funding on local organisations, groups and charities.
3. Rename “Neighbourhood Forums” to “Neighbourhood Locality Funds”.
4. Relaunch the funds using the Council’s communications team, providing links to all relevant forms and information on the Council’s website.

Guidelines

1. The Head of Democracy and Governance to review guidelines to clarify:
 - how often recipients can receive funding (normally not more than once a year, however the type of project, rather than the organisation, should be the guide)
 - proportionality criteria
 - declaration of members’ interests.

Process

1. Officers to investigate the feasibility of allocating money to individual wards to spend by a given date, e.g., mid-December. After this point, any remaining funds should be pooled so that all wards can bid for the available funds. At the end of the year, any remaining money in this pool should be allocated to the chairman’s chosen charities.
2. Officers to look into the feasibility of requiring recipients to apply for funds directly, preferably using online forms.

Value for money

1. Encourage wards to minimise their administration costs for meetings in order to seek the most cost effective means, particularly in regard to advertising the meetings.
2. Require recipients to complete a feedback questionnaire on their completed projects. Any funds not used for the specific purpose granted should be returned to Watford Borough Council.