

**PROPOSALS FOR DISBURSEMENT OF INCREASED FUNDING FOR  
COMMUNITY COUNCILS**

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**1. SUMMARY**

As part of the budget agreement for 2012/13 additional financial support of £10,000 per annum has been allocated to community councils. This report sets out proposals for the disbursement of this additional discretionary funding.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 That the Executive endorse the proposals set out at paragraph 4.1 below and to delegate, to the Executive Director of Customer Services, authority to put in place guidelines relating to meeting attendance which should aim to promote the use of video conferencing and car sharing, where appropriate.

**3. DETAIL**

3.1 The Council resolved on 16 February 2012 to increase financial support to Community Councils by £10,000 per annum. This additional funding will supplement the existing Administration Grants currently paid to our 54 established Community Councils.

3.2 The current grant scheme calculates the annual grant on the basis of their electorate as is calculated as follows:-

<b>Total Electorate</b>	<b>Grant Received</b>
Up to 500	£300
501-2000	£400
2001-5000	£500
5001+	£700

- 3.3 Community Councils within the area range from having an electorate of just over 100 to approximately 11,000. Given the total electorate of the Council area is (as of 1<sup>st</sup> March) 68,301, the largest community council represents a significant proportion of the population and there have been concerns raised that the administration grant does not even address the costs of holding meetings. It is therefore suggested that payment of an additional discretionary grant based on actual electorate figures be implemented to supplement the current grants available and that this be administered in accordance with the current Scheme of Establishment.
- 3.4 Since the introduction of Local Area Community Planning Groups (LACPG) meetings there has been consistent representation made by Community Councils who have been critical that there is an expectation on them that they participate in such meetings but that they are required to do so at their own expense. It is therefore proposed that part of the funding should be directed at reimbursement of public transport fares and payment of mileage associated with attendance at such meetings. If agreed, it would be appropriate that guidance be put in place to take this forward which is dealt with within the report recommendation.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 For the reasons set out in paragraph 3.3 & 3.4, it is suggested that the additional £10,000 be allocated in accordance with the following:-
1. A supplementary grant to be paid in addition to the existing administration grant, at a rate of £0.10p per elector, upon submission of the previous year's financial accounts (with payment being calculated based on the electorate figures as at the date of establishment and remaining at this level for the life of the Community Council). Assuming full takeup, this would cost approximately £6830 per annum.
  - 2.(a) The remainder of the additional funding – c £3170 would be used to fund the payment of mileage costs associated with attendance at the LACPG meetings at a rate of £0.45p and/or reimbursement of any public transport fares (subject to budget being available, and to appropriate guidance being put in place to give regard to use of video conferencing and car sharing, where available and/or appropriate)

- 2.(b) The first 20 miles of any round trip not being liable to payment of expenses.

## **5. IMPLICATIONS**

Policy -	None, the proposals contained herein seek authorisation to disburse the additional funding provided for within the budget but do not seek to alter existing policy
Financial –	£10,000 was committed in the budget for 2012/13 for enhancing financial support to Community Councils. This report suggests how this may be distributed.
Legal -	None
Personnel -	None, additional workload in processing travel claims etc will be absorbed within existing staff resources.
Equal Opportunities -	None

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