

Report to The Chesham and Chiltern Villages Local Area Forum

Title:	LOCAL AREA FORUM BUDGETS
Date:	2 nd May 2012
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Electoral divisions affected:	Chess Valley, Chesham East, Chesham North West, Chiltern Ridges

Summary

1. This paper describes the arrangements for the funding delegated to Local Area Forums (LAFs) in 2012/13.
2. In previous years, this funding has been made up of the Local Priorities revenue budget to be allocated in line with the priorities agreed by the LAF in its local area planning process, plus its share of the Transportation budget. From April 2012, these two budgets are being merged to form a single Local Priorities budget. This provides full flexibility to each LAF to spend its budget as it determines according to its agreed local priorities and can include transportation schemes as previously.
3. The amount to be allocated to each LAF will be known in early May. In the meantime LAFs are requested to make indicative allocations in order of priority in order that implementation can begin as soon as the budget is known.

Recommendations

4. The Chesham and Chiltern Villages Local Area Forum is recommended to note the arrangements in 2012/13 for its delegated budget as described in the report [and also note the expenditure of the allocated funding in 2010/11 at the end of this report].



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5. The Chesham and Chiltern Villages Local Area Forum is recommended to proceed with indicative allocations in order that they can be implemented as soon as the delegated budget figure is confirmed in early May.

Background

6. A key element of the locality strategy is “genuine and increased influence by residents over local decisions and budgets”. LAFs play a central role in achieving this (although this is not the only mechanism for working at a more local level).

Delegated budget allocation 2012/13

7. The total amount delegated by Buckinghamshire County Council to LAFs in 2012/13 is £880,000. The apportionment of this budget between the different LAFs will be confirmed in early May and LAFs will be notified immediately.
8. In the meantime, LAFs are advised to proceed where possible to make allocations and indicate the priority order in which they would wish schemes to be funded. Once the budget for the Chesham and Chiltern Villages LAF is confirmed, the Locality Manager can proceed with implementing the LAF’s decisions and consult with the Chesham and Chiltern Villages LAF chairman and other LAF members if any changes are required.

Management and Decision-Making of the Local Priorities Delegated Budget

9. The Local Priorities budget is to be used to commission activities to meet the local priorities identified in the Chesham and Chiltern Villages LAF’s Local Area Plan to support community needs and the well-being of the area in line with the criteria below:
 - Proposals meeting more than one of the LAF’s priorities or addressing a well-evidenced community need will be prioritised for funding.
 - Proposals enabling capacity-building or those with match-funding – financial or in kind e.g. with community volunteer input – will be given priority over proposals with no additional funding or those with little community support.
 - Priority will also be given to proposals which cannot be undertaken by an individual Parish Council, either because an activity is not within its remit or funding capability.
 - The Local Priorities budget is not the catch-all to fill service budget cuts or short-falls. Similarly, it should not be used for activities normally funded by Parish precepts.
 - The Locality Manager will also assess potential proposals to see whether there are other funding opportunities or if ‘quick wins’ can be identified to enable specific proposals/issues to be resolved quickly through other means.
10. The Locality Manager will evaluate potential proposals, whether commissioned or unsolicited, and make recommendations in due course to the LAF. LAF members who have particular ideas should raise these directly with the Lead Area Officer or Locality Manager.
11. Standard conditions apply to schemes receiving LAF financial support. In addition, the Locality Manager may recommend additional conditions for any specific scheme. The standard terms and conditions are:
 - The LAF’s financial contribution may only be used for the purposes agreed by the LAF and detailed in the submissions held by Buckinghamshire County Council. Any

variations must be agreed by the Head of Service and any significant changes will require reconsideration by the LAF.

- Payment will be made upon invoice with proof of expenditure e.g. relevant paid invoices/receipts at completion of the scheme. (Advance or staged payments can be made by separate agreement with the County Council should this be necessary).
- The LAF's support for the project must be acknowledged in relevant publicity.
- The funding should be utilised during the financial year that it relates to.
- The recipient must provide monitoring information requested by Buckinghamshire County Council and may also be required to attend a subsequent LAF meeting to speak on the outcomes of the project.

12. The funding must be spent within the financial year for which it is allocated:

- Allocations can be made on schemes which span 2 financial years (or more), but funding can only be assured for the current year. This should be borne in mind if making such an allocation i.e. what value can be achieved in the 1st year should funding not be available for the remainder of the scheme in subsequent years.
- Where a scheme was planned to complete in the financial year that the budget relates to but its timetable has slipped for unavoidable reasons, provision is being sought for the balance funding for such schemes to be carried forward to the following financial year. This will be subject to a revised timetable demonstrating a reasonable assurance that the scheme will be able to complete in the following year.

13. As in 2011/12, in terms of formal decision-making, the LAFs will be advising the relevant Service Director on how to spend the devolved budget who will then implement that advice.

14. In November, in consultation with the LAF Chairman, the Service Director will take a view on the likelihood of unallocated and unspent monies being used that year. If there is budget that is unlikely to be spent that year, the Service Director will allocate it to activities that will benefit the area during the remainder of 2012/13.

Transportation schemes

● 2012-13

15. Most LAFs will already have submitted transportation proposals to be funded from the 2012-13 transportation delegated budget. Transportation has already begun costing these schemes.

16. Subject to the availability of the costings from Transportation, it will be up to each LAF to decide when to consider these proposals:

- Delay making allocations until a range of proposals (both Transportation and non-transportation) is assembled and consider them together. However this could impact upon the delivery of schemes in this financial year

or

- Make allocations as and when proposals come through.

● Subsequent years

17. Each LAF will need to work with its Transportation officers to agree how ideas for transportation projects should be submitted and the timetable. The implication of many late allocations is that such schemes may not be deliverable until the following financial year.

- **Other considerations**

18. If parishes and town councils wish, they can appoint an external contractor for delivery of transportation schemes. However, they should be aware that only contractors with the required accreditation approvals needed to work on the public highway will be permitted to undertake the works.

Local Priorities Budget Expenditure 2011-12

Project	Amount agreed	Date agreed
Building Community Capacity in Chesham and the Villages	5000	15/6/11
Citizens Advice Bureau	5000	15/6/11
CDC/Nexus youth activities (5 schemes)	1818.05	15/6/11
Community Arts Quilt Project	1450	31/10/11
Whelpley Hill Village Hall Multi-Sports Sessions	750	31/10/11
Cholesbury Village Hall toilet refurbishment including disabled facilities	500	19/1/12
Chesham pilot art trail	2000	19/1/12
Waterside youth engagement	500	19/1/12
Badminton equipment for Ashley Green activities	321	19/1/12
CREC - contribution to project worker salary	1700	23/1/12
Renovation and Replacement of Playground equipment - The Lee Parish Council	700	23/1/12
Pond Park Community Assoc to run gentle exercise classes for Older People to the end of March 2012	261	23/1/12
Total	20000.05	