



## **CABINET – 17TH JUNE 2015**

**SUBJECT: MAINTENANCE OF COMMUNITY SCHEMES FUNDING 2015/2016**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR SOCIAL SERVICES**

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To seek approval for the allocation of funding from the Maintenance of Community Schemes Budget for 2015/2016 and for the permanent transfer of this budget from Miscellaneous Finance to relevant service budgets.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 The Council has allocated funding to support the maintenance of community schemes. The Community Schemes budget for 2015/16 is £258,000. This report seeks Cabinet's approval for the allocation of that budget in accordance with proposals set out in tabular form in paragraph 4.7.

### **3. LINKS TO STRATEGY**

- 3.1 Maintaining community schemes contributes to all five Priorities within the Caerphilly Local Service Board single integrated plan, Caerphilly Delivers, and Objectives 1 and 3 of the Council's Strategic Equality Plan 2012.

### **4. THE REPORT**

- 4.1 The Council has allocated funding over previous years for the maintenance of community schemes. For example, the type of work carried out by the NCS Community Response Team includes the repair of seats, the replacement of vandalised street furniture and hard landscaping and other small items of maintenance work. Works of this type are well received by Members and the community because they attend to items that would not normally be picked up in other mainstream budgets. In addition, high profile schemes such as repainting of street furniture in town centres along with planting projects have helped the county borough become a more attractive place for residents and visitors alike. Some of the budget has been allocated for funding the maintenance of schemes that have been initiated by the community (e.g. playgrounds, Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs), etc) and is very important where day-to-day maintenance issues are not otherwise provided for.
- 4.2 The community partnership allocation has helped to take forward small community focused projects, empowering local community groups and at the same time adding to the sense of a well kept county borough. Over this last year these have included: planters, fencing, Community Centre building repairs, drop kerbs and handrails. During 2014/15 the allocation to the Greener Caerphilly partnership has provided support for 7 projects including training courses for dry stone walling and hedge laying, river clean-ups and energy efficiency work for community buildings. It is proposed that an allocation for these types of projects continues for 2015/16.

4.3 The allocation to parks and cemeteries funded a number of projects in 2014/15 including:

- Highball fencing, Pengam Play Area
- Replace slabs and Tarmac paths, Oakdale Welfare
- New fencing & gate, Fochriw Playing Field
- Replace barriers Abertysswg Fields
- Drainage works to former Bedwellty School Fields
- Drainage Works to Brithdir Soccer Pitch
- New Gates at Bargoed Park, Playing Fields
- Drainage works to field, Maes McLaren Field, Abertysswg (Colliery Sump Water)
- New knee rail & fencing, St Andrews Drive, Pontllanfraith
- New knee rails & gate Top playing field, Old Colliery, Llanbradach
- New Gate/Barrier at Pontlottyn Welfare.

4.4 The allocation to the Allotment Strategy in the last year funded the clean up and re-instatement of plots to bring back into use at Woodfieldside, School Street, Tirphil and Shingrig Allotments, Nelson. The provision of a Maintenance budget for community schemes in 2014/15 allowed for 3 new play items and general repairs to several Community Play areas. It is also proposed to continue to provide support for the Invasive Species Officer. Over 1100 sites are being treated in the county borough for invasive plants, primarily Japanese Knotweed but also Giant Hogweed and Himalayan Balsam, totalling an area of over 490,000 square metres.

4.5 Our main towns will receive an allocation to reflect the aim of the council to keep its county borough clean and attractive and to support the Town Centre Management function in each. An allocation of funding to the Probation Trust together with a contribution from Community and Leisure Services in respect of a vehicle will allow continuation of Community Payback involvement in graffiti removal, environmental improvements and clean up campaigns.

4.6 The Community Schemes budget is £258,000 for 2015/16. The proposed allocation of this budget results from proposals developed by the Officer Maintenance Group representing relevant functions from the Environment Directorate. These are laid out in more detail in the table in paragraph 4.7 below.

4.7 It is proposed that an allocation for the above projects continues for 2015/16 as follows:

PROPOSAL	Allocation £000,s
Community Response Team (NCS) plus materials	100
Urban Renewal (town centre areas of Caerphilly, Bargoed, Risca, Blackwood, Ystrad Mynach)	20
Community Partnerships (items identified by Community Regeneration Officers)	35
Litter bins - improvement or replacement	10
Invasive Plant Species Officer - contribution to salary	15
Parks to be allocated to cemeteries, parks east and parks west	40
Greener Caerphilly	10
Community Payback (graffiti removal, community clean-ups)	10
Allotment Strategy Implementation	8
Maintenance budget for community schemes	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>258</b>

4.8 The Community Schemes budget was reduced from £400,000. A significant amount of the funding funds posts to deliver the initiatives outlined and therefore the degree of flexibility over distribution of this budget has been very much reduced. Consequently, it is proposed that the

budget is permanently transferred from Miscellaneous Finance into relevant service budgets in accordance with the allocation currently proposed for 2015/16 in 4.7 above. This will allow for more efficient and effective management of the budget alongside relevant service budgets. It will also allow service managers to bring forward options in relation to the Medium Term Financial Plan from 2016/17 onwards.

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The empowerment aspect of the community partnership allocation is especially important for minority groups in the community as they often feel less empowered due to their particular circumstances. Further, the work undertaken in improving seating, pathways and reducing anti-social behaviour has a greater positive impact on elderly and disabled people in the community. Finally, the Community Payback involvement in dealing with graffiti supports the swift removal of graffiti that may contain discriminatory, extremist or hate crime phrases.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no financial implications other than those referred to in Section 4 above. The transfer of the Community Schemes budget will allow this funding to be managed more efficiently with other core service budgets and to be considered within the Medium Term Financial Strategy from 2016/17 as appropriate.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no personnel implications.

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

- 8.1 The report has been sent to the consultees listed below and there are no consultation responses that have not been reflected within the report.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 Cabinet is asked to approve the suggested allocation of the Community Schemes budget set out in paragraph 4.7 and the permanent transfer of the budget from Miscellaneous Finance to relevant service budgets.

## **10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 10.1 In order to allocate resources to the maintenance of community schemes.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

- 11.1 The allocation of these funds is a Cabinet function  
Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000

Author: Rob Hartshorn: Head of Public Protection  
Consultees: Councillor Nigel George, Cabinet Member for Community & Leisure  
Councillor Ken James, Cabinet Member for Regeneration  
Councillor Tom Williams, Cabinet Member for Highways  
Dave Street, Corporate Director, Social Services

Terry Shaw, Head of Engineering Services  
Pauline Elliott, Head of Regeneration and Planning  
Mark S Williams, Head of Community & Leisure Services  
Stephen Harris, Interim Head of Corporate Finance  
Mike Eedy, Finance Manager  
Sian Phillips, HR Manager  
Gail Williams, Interim Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer  
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