

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR LANCASHIRE



DECISION REPORT: COMMISSIONER'S COMMUNITY ACTION FUND

As part of the 2013/14 budget setting process, the Police and Crime Commissioner agreed to create a Commissioner's Community Action Fund with an annual budget of £50,000. Since then work has been undertaken to consider the best way in which to use and administer the fund and this is set out in the report and, subject to the approval of the Commissioner, it is anticipated that the Fund be launched from 22 May 2013.

Purpose

The purpose of the fund is to provide small grants to assist community and voluntary groups in tackling local concerns and helping to deliver the Commissioner's priorities. The fund is £50,000 for 2013/14 although any possibilities to match fund from other sources of income will be pursued.

The Grant conditions and criteria are detailed in the Policy and Procedure document attached at Appendix A.

Who should the Fund be open to?

The Community Action Fund will be open to applications from formally constituted community, voluntary and faith groups across the Lancashire Constabulary area for projects and services delivered within that area.

It is proposed that the Fund will not be open to applications directly from statutory agencies as these tend to be support activities that are directly commissioned and not supported by grant type funding.

What should be the maximum size of grant?

It is proposed that no single application from a formally constituted group should be for more than 5% of the total Fund giving a maximum grant of £2,500. However in exceptional circumstances, awards up to a maximum of £5,000 will be considered. These will be subject to the approval of the Commissioner.

How often should applications be considered?

A number of options were considered including having a set "decision making" date each quarter. However the main concern with working to set dates is that if an application is received the day after the set date the applicant will have to wait 3 months before the application is considered – which may be after the proposed purpose. It is felt that this does not offer the flexibility required for such a scheme to be of real value to local communities.

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It is proposed that a process is established where the commitment is to consider an application within 4 weeks of receipt.

Administration of the Fund

It is essential that the administration of the fund is as efficient as possible and can be met from within existing resources in order to minimise the impact on the PCC's budget. Discussions have been held with Lancashire Partnership Against Crime (LANPAC) as they currently administer funds that are targeted to initiatives aimed at reducing crime.

The Lancashire Partnership Against Crime Ltd is a Company registered in England and Wales with Company Number 3328436 and Registered Charity Number 1064922 with a board made up of 16 Directors.

Only recently LANPAC has been approached by SPOR TED Foundation (a sports legacy trust set up after the Olympics) with an offer of £20,000 to use as match funding for projects affecting young people, especially in relation to ASB and re-offending. The ability to bring together funds that are targeted at small local initiatives aimed at reducing crime is an attractive proposition and ensures that resources can be targeted effectively, maximised, and that the risk of duplication is minimised.

Discussions with LANPAC have been positive and the Police and Crime Commissioner has been offered a place on the board of LANPAC to ensure continued involvement and direction of the fund.

Applications to the Fund will be received by LANPAC who will be responsible for ensuring that applications are correctly completed and that the proposed project or scheme support the Commissioner's priorities as detailed in the Policy and Procedure document.

Once an application has been verified it will be forwarded to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for the Commissioner's decision and sign off. A decision will be made within four weeks of receipt of the application. A record of the decisions taken by the Commissioner will be published on the Commissioner's website.

Applicants will be required to complete an Expenditure and Evaluation form either at the end of the financial year in which the Grant is made or at the end of the project, whichever is sooner. This will provide the Commissioner with verification that the grant has been used for the project or scheme submitted and provide details of the outcomes achieved.

Recommendation

The Police and Crime Commissioner is asked to agree the arrangements set out in the report for the use, application and administration of the Community Action Fund.