

**SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE COUNCIL**

**CABINET - 5 MARCH 2024**

**APPROVAL OF GOVERNANCE FOR DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNITY WELLBEING FUNDS**

**REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF PLACE & COMMUNITIES**

**LEAD CABINET MEMBER – COUNCILLOR ROGER LEES BEM LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

**PART A – SUMMARY REPORT**

**1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

1.1 South Staffordshire Council has been successful in attracting Health Inequalities Funding (£236,000) from the Covid Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) which is held by Staffordshire County Council. This fund combined with funding from the Council’s Community is the Best Medicine Funding (£30,000), Community Wellbeing funding (£20,000) and the West Midlands Interchange Community funding (£65,000) has been launched as one ‘Community and Wellbeing’ funding package totalling (£370,000), to maximise the reach and benefit to residents and communities across the district.

1.2 The governance arrangements for determining applications for bids against this funding is detailed within the report and in summary a panel consisting of senior officers, along with Cabinet Members in respect of the WMI funding, will assess bids. Determinations on funding allocations will be made by the Panel (WMI funding) or the Corporate Leadership Team. Regular reports on funding allocations will be made to Cabinet Members and Wellbeing Select Committee for oversight and scrutiny.

**2. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

POLICY/COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Council Plan objectives?	
	Yes	Partnership working in the Staffordshire and surrounding areas
	Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) been completed?	
	No	
SCRUTINY POWERS APPLICABLE	The Constitution and associated protocol provides that front line Councillors, the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer will have five clear working days following dispatch of a notification of a proposed decision in which to call in for scrutiny, decisions proposed by the Cabinet or its members. In accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and associated protocol, any two or more members wishing to request that this proposed decision should be called in for scrutiny should do so by giving notice to the Corporate Director of Governance either by e-mail or in writing before the end of the fifth day specifying the reason or reasons	

	therefore. The Corporate Director of Governance will then call in the proposed decision and arrange for it to be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee/relevant Scrutiny Panel. A copy of such notice must also be sent to the Lead Cabinet Member either by email or in writing by the end of the fifth day. This proposed decision will be confirmed and implemented or, where appropriate, referred to the Council for consideration at its next meeting, on or after the date to be notified upon circulation of the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet, unless called in for scrutiny by that date.	
KEY DECISION	No – governance relates to grant funding allocations only.	
TARGET COMPLETION/ DELIVERY DATE	Launched February 2024 but no allocation decisions will be made until governance arrangements are agreed.	
FINANCIAL IMPACT	No	There is no financial impact on the Authority’s approved budget and MTFs. This is a fully grant funded project with new resources received to be applied as detailed in the report. This report ensures that use of these funds follows a formal governance process to avoid any possibility of expenditure occurring outside the remit of conditions set.
LEGAL ISSUES	No	The proposed governance structure is appropriate in the circumstances to ensure that any criteria set out in the funding sources or other legislative requirements are met.
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	Yes	The funding package provides an opportunity for local communities to benefit from funding to help mitigate some of the impacts presented by Health Inequalities by implementing preventative measures that tackle the root causes.
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	No	Bar the WMI funding which can only be utilised in a set geography, funding will be available to providers to deliver programmes across South Staffordshire. However, some projects will be targeted to specific wards/parishes or localities to tackle health inequalities utilising available data and intelligence.

## **PART B – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **3. INFORMATION**

- 3.1 South Staffordshire Council has been successful in attracting Health Inequalities Funding (£236,000) from the Covid Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) which is held by Staffordshire County Council. This combined with funding from the Council’s own Community is the best Medicine Funding (£30,000), Community Wellbeing funding (£20,000) and the West Midlands Interchange Community funding (£65,000) is proposed to be launched as one funding package totalling circa £370,000.
- 3.2 Dealing first with the Health Inequalities funding. South Staffordshire Council, via the Staffordshire Health Inequalities Directors’ Group (HIDG), have been given access to

£236,000 to tackle health inequalities within the district. The funding is via remaining Covid Outbreak Management Funding (COMF), held by Staffordshire County Council.

3.3 The funding aims are to tackle health inequalities, have measurable impact/outcomes and improve the health of the local population.

3.4 There are several example Projects / Interventions which could be delivered using the available funding these include (not exclusive list)

- Enhancing public open spaces
- Reducing social isolation
- Preventing Falls
- Increasing physical activity participation
- Improving energy efficiency.
- Play Provision
- Reducing damp and mould
- Cost of Living Support
- Reducing homelessness
- Healthy Eating
- Improving community cohesion

3.5 This funding must be allocated by September 2024; it must also meet the original grant conditions of Covid Outbreak Management Funding (COMF) which are

- Public health action on addressing the impact of COVID-19 on health outcomes and health inequalities.
- Public health projects aimed at directly addressing health inequalities arising from the pandemic.
- Public health prevention projects intended to prevent or mitigate health inequalities or unequal impact on populations in future outbreaks.

### **South Staffordshire Council Community Wellbeing Funding**

3.6 This funding is to support community and wellbeing projects that meet local priorities which are identified within the Place Narrative and Partnership plan.

### **Community is the Best Medicine Fund**

3.7 The funding is to respond to increased pressures and the demand that is likely to arise from existing community support provision. The funding will be utilised for a variety of purposes including:

- To support and promote the provision of a network of warm and welcoming spaces for anyone in our community / communities to go to on a regular basis.
- Bespoke support packages offered by community groups to those most in need. As

the cost-of-living increases (i.e. heating, food price inflation, housing costs, other costs, etc.) this will start to impact on our residents' daily lives. Visitors to these locations would be able to receive a friendly welcome, someone to talk with and be listened to, whilst having a warm drink. & food in venues that are equipped to offer this facility. Food and drink maybe offered free of charge depending on their individual's circumstances and the resources available to the provider.

- Befriending and support for those most vulnerable in our communities including those who experience rural isolation.
- To provide support packages that are bespoke for individual communities.

### **WMI Community Fund**

3.8 As part of the West Midlands Interchange ("WMI") Project, a Community Fund has been created. A total of £100,000 (index linked) is available for community purposes through the Fund. This is released in two tranches £50,000 initially (index linked) and £50,000 (index linked) on the fifth-year anniversary of commencement of the occupation of the West Midlands Interchange.

3.9 Applications are invited for grants from the WMI Community Fund. The types of projects that will be potentially eligible for grants are:

- a) Schemes to enhance the public realm in the vicinity of the WMI Development (e.g. Improvements to parks/open spaces for the benefit of the community)
- b) Initiatives to maximise the use of the Community Parks to be provided at WMI by members of the public; (e.g projects to facilitate programming within the parks or projects to enhance connectivity to the Community Park beyond the WMI boundary; and
- c) Other community schemes and initiatives agreed by the Council and the WMI Developer as helping to mitigate the impacts of the WMI development.

### **Governance and determination of bids.**

3.10 A Governance structure (at appendix 1) to determine the acceptability of the bids in line with the relevant criteria has been established and this report seeks approval of this. With all funding streams (apart from the WMI fund) a panel involving the Assistant Director for Partnerships and the Assistant Director for Community Services from South Staffordshire Council along with a Public Health representative from Staffordshire County Council will assess bids and then recommend to the Corporate Leadership Team Locality Board to approve.

3.11 These decisions will be reported to the Wellbeing Select Committee and Cabinet on a regular basis. With regards to the WMI fund the assessment panel will comprise the Cabinet Member for Business Enterprise and Community Infrastructure and the Cabinet Member for Community Service and Climate Change along with the Assistant Directors for Partnerships, Community Services and Enterprise and Growth (as set out in the Lead Members Decision of the 18<sup>th</sup> of October 2023).

#### **4. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 Members to agree the governance for allocation of Community and Wellbeing funding.

#### **5. IMPACT ASSESSMENT – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

None

#### **6. PREVIOUS MINUTES**

None

#### **7. BACKGROUND PAPERS**



Final Individual  
Decision - WMI Comn



Appendix A WMI  
Community Fund.pdf



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Draft Fund  
Application Form (006

Report prepared by: Assistant Director Community Services

**Governance Structure**

