



Borough of Telford and Wrekin

Cabinet

13 October 2022

Councillors Pride Fund 2021-22: Helping to Protect, Care and Invest to Create a Better Borough

Cabinet Member:	Cllr Paul Watling - Cabinet Member: Stronger and Safer Communities	
Lead Director:	Fliss Mercer – Director: Communities, Customer & Commercial Services	
Service Area:	Community Services	
Report Author:	Fran Bache – Community Funding Officer	
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Wards Affected:	All	
Key Decision:	Not Key Decision	
Forward Plan:	Not applicable	
Report considered by:	SMT - 20 September 2022 Business Briefing - 29 September 2022	

1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting:

It is recommended that Cabinet:-

- 1.1 Note the continued impact of the Councillors Pride Fund in supporting Members to deliver the Council's five priorities in their ward to protect, care and invest in order to create a better borough.
- 1.2 Note the importance of this funding in offering a bespoke response to need in individual communities and in supporting community organisations to thrive and offer valued services to residents.

1.3 Note the final deadline for applications is 1 February 2023.

2.0 Purpose of Report

2.1 To update Cabinet on the allocation of the Councillors Pride Fund during the financial year 2021/22 and progress to date in 2022/23.

3.0 Background

3.1 The Councillors Pride Fund was established in 2015 following development of the “Ward Cooperative Fund” and previously the “Your Money Your Projects Scheme” (2011). Until 2020 the annual allocation per ward member stood at £2,000.

3.2 The fund enables Members to deliver the Council's five priorities in their ward to protect, care and invest in order to create a better borough.

3.3 In 2021 the Council showed a clear commitment to supporting communities through the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic by implementing an increase in the Councillors Pride Fund, allowing each member to support their ward with an allocation of £5,000.

3.4 This commitment to strong and thriving communities was further confirmed in 2022 as The Councillors Pride Fund was increased to £10,000 per Member per annum giving a total annual budget of £540,000 to support the Council's priorities at ward level.

4.0 Summary of main proposals

Councillors' Pride Fund 2021/22

4.1 The 2021 fund opened in June 2021 and closed on 31 January 2022, during this time a total of 328 proposals were submitted by Councillors. Some Councillors opted to join forces with colleagues to enable their funding to go further, meaning a total of 257 applications were received and awarded.

4.2 In 2021 Councillors allocated the total budget of £270,000 taking the total budget allocated under these schemes since 2011 to £1,188,000.

4.3 Councillors and applicants are encouraged to seek match funding for their grants to ensure the funding can go further. In 2021 a total of £220,159 match funding was achieved, so for every £1 allocated from the Councillors Pride Fund, 82p of match funding was secured. This is an increase of 37p per £1 on 2020 plus given the increase in overall budget this means in 2021 an additional £171,581 of match funding was secured. Sources of match funding include for example, Town and Parish Councils, other grant funders and the applicants own financial contribution to a project.

4.4 This report will highlight how Councillors have used the funding to support the council's priorities in 2021.

Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community

4.5 During 2021 a significant number of applications supported the priority every child, young person and adult lives well in their community these included;

- In Newport North & West a £400 grant was awarded to Warm Welcome on a Wednesday Dementia Support Group to cover the cost of room hire and to pay for external agencies to visit the group to offer advice and practical sessions. This group offers a vital opportunity for peer support and social interaction for those living with dementia and their families.
- Alongside the many applications supporting a variety of sporting clubs such as football, hockey, boxing, bowls and martial arts a grant of £2,500 was awarded to Ladygrove Primary School to install a new Daily Mile running track. This attracted £2,500 match funding from Great Dawley Town Council and will ensure a quality facility is available for local children for years to come encouraging engagement in sporting activity from a young age. Pupils got behind the opening of the new track with a year 3 pupil winning the competition to name the track with their entry "Smile Mile Track".
- The Fibro Family Telford Support Group who received £400 from two Oakengates and Ketley Bank Councillors. The funding will enable the setup of a support group at The Wakes in Oakengates for those living with Fibromyalgia. Sessions will be offered on both a group and individual basis providing an opportunity to meet with others experiencing this condition, to build a support network and socialise.
- The St Vincent de Paul Society received a £500 grant to hold a social event for the Afghan families residing in hotel accommodation awaiting housing, it offered an opportunity to socialise and lift spirits.
- A grant of £1,000 was awarded from the ward of Dothill to YMCA Wellington, this grant will contribute towards the YMCA Wellington's Step Up Fund which is used by YMCA Support Workers to purchase items for customers of the YMCA such as starter packs when someone moves in, counselling and clothing for a job interview. These items support the individual's independence and offer vital resources which they might struggle to afford and crucially help them to take the step towards achieving employment.

All neighbourhoods are a great place to live

4.6 During 2021 Councillors recognised the importance of place and invested funds to ensure neighbourhoods have great facilities and events for residents to enjoy and be proud of, examples include:

- Several grants were allocated to support community events, including a £2,000 allocation by both Brookside Councillors to the Brookside Central Event's group to plan and run community events at Brookside Central for local residents. And a £500 grant in Ironbridge Gorge to cover the cost of traffic management for the Ironbridge Gorge Christmas Light Switch On event with a road closure and diversion route necessary to ensure a safe

evening. Community events play an important part in connecting communities and in developing a sense of pride in the local area.

- Councillors in Oakengates & Ketley Bank contributed £600 towards establishing a Five Aside pitch on the play park on Newlands Road, Oakengates, creating new facilities for all to enjoy, to socialise and increase opportunities for people to take part in physical activity and improve health.
- Horsehay & Lightmoor Councillors joined forces to install a new playground spinner at Spring Village Play Area to improve facilities for local children. Both Councillors awarded £700 and achieved £700 each in match funding from Dawley Hamlets Parish Council meaning a total grant of £2,800.
- In Muxton £2,000 was allocated to upgrade the surface of the ball court at the play area on Marshbrook Way adjacent to Ryder Drive. The project improved drainage making the facility more accessible after adverse weather.
- A number of benches and picnic benches were installed across the Borough improving facilities in local green spaces and offering members of the public a space to rest and enjoy their surroundings. A total of £16,200 was allocated to such facilities in Apley Castle, Dawley & Aqueduct, Edgmond & Ercall Magna, Ercall, Ironbridge Gorge, Newport South and East, St Georges, The Nedge and Wrockwardine Wood & Trench.

Our natural environment is protected, and the Council is taking a leading role in tackling the climate change emergency

4.7 Climate change and protecting the environment was a key concern for Councillors during 2021, in total 25% of proposals put the environment and climate change at the forefront, examples include;

- Three Councillors from Woodside and Edgmond & Ercall Magna gave a total of £2,500 to two projects to install electric vehicle charging points. These are accessible to the community and support the aim to reduce harmful emissions.
- Five Councillors across Oakengates & Ketley Bank, Newport North & West and Wrockwardine supported the installation of recycling bins in their communities enabling people to recycle on the go and thereby reducing plastic, cans and glass in general waste. A total of £8,900 was granted which was matched by £11,000.
- In The Nedge £2,000 was allocated to create a Community Orchard at Stirchley Allotments and a further £500 to creating a Community Orchard at Holmer Lake. In Edgmond & Ercall Magna £1,000 was allocated to creating a Community Garden and Orchard at Shrewsbury Road playing field. These projects not only support the environment through the ability of trees to remove a significant amount of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere in their lifetime but provide fresh fruit and vegetables on people's doorstep without the carbon footprint. Crucially at this time these projects also provide free access to fruit and vegetables. These schemes support the Borough's aim to be Carbon Neutral by 2030

- Alongside these we received many requests for bulb and tree planting across the borough serving to make Telford a great place to live and investing in the natural environment to protect it for residents and support the climate change agenda.

A community-focussed, innovative council providing efficient, effective and quality services.

4.8 Across the Borough projects have been developed to support the Council's priority of a community-focussed, innovative council providing efficient, effective and quality services, such as:

- Councillors opted to install defibrillators in the wards of Dawley & Aqueduct, Ironbridge Gorge and Madeley & Sutton Hill, the total granted was £3,200 with individual grants ranging from £200 to £2,000. Match funding of £3,300 was achieved from Great Dawley Town Council, Ironbridge Rotary & Ironbridge Lions, Madeley Town Council and parents of Madeley Nursery. In addition, Ercall ward granted £500 to improve the lighting of the defibrillator outside of The Orbit in Wellington and, Councillors in Wrockwardine Wood & Trench granted £600 to purchase and fit an outdoor case to allow an existing defibrillator to be sited outside enabling 24/7 access.
- A grant of £2,500 was awarded to Millbrook Primary School in the ward of Hadley & Leegomery which was match funded by Hadley & Leegomery Parish Council by £2,500. Grant funding enabled the school to participate in the Square Yard project. The aim of the project is to develop the school garden which was unsafe for children to use and turn it into a place where children can spend time outdoors, learning about the environment and about how food and plants are grown. Not only will this support their scientific learning and their understanding of the world, but it will also support children's physical and mental health and wellbeing. The eventual aim is for the garden to be a place that is open to the whole school and local community. Deputy Headteacher Joanne Edwards has said of the award, "we cannot express our gratitude enough for the money we were awarded. The children now have a wonderful outdoor space to learn in".
- In Edgmond & Ercall Magna, £750 of Councillors Pride Funding was matched with £750 from Waters Upton Parish Council to create new vehicle and disabled access from the Village Hall car park to the Village Green ensuring the area is accessible for all to enjoy.
- The Windrush Exhibition Telford & Wrekin received £500 from the College ward to help organise a celebration and awareness event recognising the local Windrush Generation. The Windrush Exhibition group advise that "the event honoured the memory and preserved the history of the Windrush Generation elders who arrived in the UK from the Caribbean between 1948 and 1971 and who settled in what is now the Borough of Telford and Wrekin. The exhibition was held at Telford College for two months and attracted visitors from across the county and as far away as Hong Kong. The event has opened up conversations and many families' have expressed an interest to the group in submitting their family's stories for the next round of exhibitions." This event has helped to document and celebrate an important part of the Borough's history.

- In The Nedge, £1,000 was awarded to Grange Park Primary School to create a sensory area in the school for all pupils to enjoy but in particular for those with additional needs. A sensory area can provide a calm, safe and relaxing space which can be therapeutic and benefit children’s learning experience.

Grange Park are busy creating this new space for their pupils, SENCO Jemma Roberts says “it is still a work in progress but is getting there. Thank you for your support with this project”.

- The Sutton Hill Short Mat Bowls Club which operates from the Park Lane Centre received a grant of £2,000 from two Woodside Councillors. Members of the club appealed for help as many of the players were finding the manual wind-up roller for the mat difficult, were concerned there could be injuries and that the club’s existence could be at risk if the elderly players could not operate this vital piece of equipment. The club had fundraised £4,800 towards the cost of purchasing an automatic mat rolling machine but needed a further £2,000 to make the purchase. Councillors Pride Funding has secured the future of this 40 year old club and enabled elderly members of the community to continuing playing the sport and to socialise on a regular basis.

5.0 Alternative Options

- 5.1 The Councillors Pride Fund is in its seventh year with its predecessors going back just over a decade. As a Co-operative Council communities are at the heart of everything the Council does. The Councillors Pride Fund is firmly rooted in the programme of support offered to establish strong, safe, healthy and vibrant communities. Decommissioning the scheme would have a detrimental impact on residents through a reduction in funding to the many organisations that support them and to physical and environmental improvements in wards.

6.0 Key Risks

- 6.1 As a result of the significant increase in the total budget for 2022 a review of processes and documents was carried out with Audit and Legal with all recommendations being implemented.
- 6.2 The Councillors Pride Fund operates under a grant application process with successful applicants subject to agreement to grant terms and conditions before the payment of any grant, processes are in place to mitigate the risks associated with grant giving.
- 6.3 Spot monitoring of the Councillors Pride Fund has been introduced with projects picked at random to ensure monies are spent as agreed. Monitoring will be proportionate to the level of funding received.

7.0 Council Priorities

- 7.1 All applications to the Councillors Pride Fund must address one or more of the Council Priorities, typically the priorities most often supported are:

- Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community
- All neighbourhoods area a great place to live
- Our natural environment is protected – we take a leading role in addressing the climate change emergency
- a community-focussed, innovative council providing efficient, effective and quality services.

8.0 Financial Implications

- 8.1 The 2022/23 budget allocation for the Councillors Pride Fund is £540k which provides funding of £10k per Ward. Of this £108k is funded from the Council's base budget, £162k from reserves and £270k from one offs (On Your Side Investment Programme).
- 8.2 The Finance Team work with the Community Funding Officer throughout the year to ensure that the funding is allocated to Wards before the year end. Any funding that has not been physically paid out before 31st March, but has been committed to schemes, is set aside in a specific reserve.

9.0 Legal and HR Implications

- 9.1 The general power of competence under section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 allows local authorities to do anything which individuals generally may do which includes making funding available for projects such as those identified in this report, provided that such funding is part of the budget and policy framework.
- 9.2 In reaching decisions about the allocation of funding, it is necessary to ensure that such decisions are made in a fair, reasonable and transparent manner and take account of the public sector equality duty. The budget is subject to consultation on an annual basis as well as being considered by the Council's scrutiny committee and, therefore, the appropriate processes have been followed.
- 9.3 Ongoing legal advice will be provided in respect of this scheme and individual projects, as required.
- 9.4 This report does not raise any specific implications for HR.

10.0 Ward Implications

- 10.1 This report has a positive borough wide impact, all wards within the borough are allocated funding based on the number of ward members in that area.

11.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications

- 11.1 The Councillors Pride Fund continues to have a positive impact on the health, social and economic experiences of residents. In the year 2021-22 44% of grant funding was distributed towards a variety of projects which supported resident's health, social and economic wellbeing with 59% of all applications falling into this category.

Overall 27% of applications supported resident's social wellbeing with a further 16% of applications supporting resident's health and social wellbeing and 7% supporting health alone. It can be noted that it's likely that applications supporting the social wellbeing of residents may also support their health due to the positive impact social interaction is known to have on health.

12.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

12.1 The proposals submitted to the Councillors Pride Fund benefit people who share a range of protected characteristics including age, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, disability, race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. This helps to meet our obligations related to the Public Sector Equality Duty, detailed in s149 of the Equality Act 2010.

13.0 Climate Change and Environmental Implications

13.1 As this report clearly demonstrates the Councillors Pride Fund is one of many ways in which the Council is helping to support the wider Climate Change Borough Partnership to meet its aspirations on this agenda.

14.0 Background Papers

- 1 Cabinet Paper, 23 September 2021: [Councillors Pride Fund - Helping to Protect, Care and Invest in our Communities.](#)
- 2 Business Briefing, 27 February 2020: Councillors Pride Fund Update (due at Cabinet 19 March 2020, postponed due to the pandemic)

15.0 16.0 Report Sign Off

Signed off by	Date sent	Date signed off	Initials
Finance	02/09/2022	06/09/2022	MLB
Legal	02/09/2022	21/09/2022	AL