

NORTH SUNDERLAND AREA COMMITTEE

21 NOVEMBER 2011

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

COMMUNITY ACTION IN SUNDERLAND NORTH: IDENTIFYING NEW ISSUES AND AGREEING ACTIONS (2010/11 WORK PLAN) – COMMUNITY FIRST

1.0 Why has it come to Committee?

1.1 To enable the future development of area based working, the Area Committee requires detailed information to be freely available from a number of different sources.

2.0 Community First - £30 million Neighbourhood Match Fund

2.1 Sunderland Council has been requested, by government, to co-operate in maximising the potential of a new programme designed to help communities. Seven wards across the City have been selected to benefit from the neighbourhood grant programme, one of which falls within the boundaries of Sunderland North Area. The following ward in Sunderland North is eligible for a minimum level of neighbourhood grant over the next four years.

i)	Southwick	£33,910
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2.2 The delivery partner is the Community Development Foundation (CDF) and the purpose of the funding is to help groups in these wards improve their area. The wards selected were based on communities that appeared to require additional support based on relatively high levels of economic deprivation and low levels of social capital.

2.3 This is a community led programme to be accessed through the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS). The aim is to provide local communities with the means to address their own priorities and stimulate local interest and action. Funding was available from October 2011. Interested groups need to register on line with CDF. To access the money wards must do the following:

- Create a Community First Panel who will think strategically about their local area; bring people together to decide how funds should be used and promote the programme locally.
- Have an active on line presence through a community website or blog.
- Match funds for every £1 provided with their time, money or other resources on a 1:1 basis.
- Create a neighbourhood plan by year 3 which seeks to improve the quality of life in neighbourhoods by involving everyone's voice in shaping their future. This should identify the resources and capacity already available to the neighbourhood.

2.4 CDF and Office for Civil Society are requesting the involvement of the Council and Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) to support the development of the Community First Panels, for example, this development may include a member of the authority staff sitting on the Panels and the active involvement of elected councillors, however there is no requirement to do so, nor is there any new cost attached to the local authority.

3.0 Recommendation

- Note the opportunity for funding to come into the area as a community led initiative with the potential for the council to offer additional support.

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