

## **Town Centre Events Grants Programme**

*Portfolio Holder:* Cllr Val Keitch, Chairman of Area West Committee  
*Service Manager:* Zoë Harris, Area West Team Leader  
*Lead Officer:* Dylan Martlew, Neighbourhood Development Officer (Economy)  
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### **Purpose of the Report**

To inform members about the programme to provide additional grant funding to boost town centre footfall and retail engagement in Chard, Crewkerne and Ilminster, and to request approval to run the programme.

### **Public Interest**

The programme will make £4,500 of grant funding available to boost town centre footfall and encourage retailers to engage in events and activities in Chard, Crewkerne and Ilminster. This funding is available because savings from Christmas free parking have been ring-fenced for economic development in the three town centres.

### **Recommendations**

That the Area West Committee:

- i. Note the content of the report.
- ii. Support the proposed Town Centre Events Grants programme.
- iii. Allocate £4,500 of Area West revenue budget funding to the programme.

### **Background**

At the Area West Members workshop in April 2017 it was suggested that the £4,500 of community grant money usually allocated for free Christmas parking, be used for town centre events that increase footfall in each of the market towns.

The Area Development Team has devised this town centre events programme which has been informed by discussion with Area West Members.

### **Town Centre Events Grants Programme**

The aim of the programme is to support economic development through increased footfall in town centers and increased engagement by retailers in town centre events.

### **Funding**

The programme will have a funding pot of £4,500 from which it will make grants of between £200 and £1,500 available to local community groups in Crewkerne, Chard and Ilminster.

### **Administration**

The programme will be administered by the Area West Development Team using a tailored version of the established community grants process. This will provide consistency, transparency and an audit trail.

### **What are the timescales?**

If approved the programme will be launched in September 2017. There will be two calls for applications, the first from 1/9/17 to 31/10/17 and the second from 1/1/18 to 28/2/17. Applications will be assessed and selected at the end of each call and successful applicants notified. All events will need to be completed and claims paid by August 2018.

### **Who will we fund?**

We will fund formally constituted not for profit groups and organisations who are based within SSDC Area West. This could include:-

- Community, voluntary and charitable organisations
- Chambers of Commerce, Town Teams
- Parish and Town Councils

To be eligible groups must be based within SSDC Area West and have a constitution or signed set of group rules, as well as a bank account in the name of the organisation.

### **How much will we fund?**

Requests for grant support can be from £200 - £1,500. Although we will fund 100% of programme costs applicants are encouraged to provide match funding wherever possible. We will be looking for even distribution across the three towns.

### **What will we fund?**

Applications will be considered for new events or enhancements of existing events that:-

- can show a measurable increase in visitor footfall in the town centres of Ilminster, Chard and Crewkerne.
- can demonstrate engagement with town centre retailers.

We will look more favourably upon events that are a collaborative effort. i.e. involve more than one organisation working together.

We will not fund:-

- Events that have already taken place.
- Organisations which have more than one year's running costs held in uncommitted reserves.
- Organisations generating funds for private profit.

Applications will be assessed by the Area West Development Team. They will be scored against the criteria above and grants will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis.

Except in exceptional circumstances grant funding will only be made upon receipt of invoices or receipts.

(See Appendix A for the 'Guidance for Applicants' document which will be sent to applicants with the application form.)

### **How do groups apply?**

Interested parties should contact Dylan Martlew at the Area West Development Team by email ([dylan.martlew@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:dylan.martlew@southsomerset.gov.uk)) or by telephone on 01935-462695. We will discuss the proposal and if it fits the criteria we will send out an application pack including guidance and an application form. The initial discussion will help to save both parties time.

### **Feedback**

Successful applicants will need to produce feedback (with photos if appropriate) that provides evidence of how the award was spent and the level of success achieved.

## **Financial Implications**

The programme will draw on £4,500 of the community grants revenue budget.

## **Council Plan Implications**

The SSDC Council Plan 2016 – 2021 states:

Focus on economy: “We will work with businesses and use our assets to grow our economy.”

Focus on Health and communities: “Support communities so that they can identify their needs and develop local solutions.”

## **Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications**

None directly arising from this report.

## **Equality and Diversity Implications**

Rural communities are vulnerable to isolation from services & markets and face higher transport costs. This programme provides an opportunity to support locally important economic initiatives.

## **Privacy Impact Assessment**

None directly arising from this report.

## **Background Papers**

None cited.

## Appendix 1 – Guidance for Applicants

### AREA WEST TOWN CENTRE EVENTS GRANTS PROGRAMME GUIDANCE

Before, and whilst completing your application form, please read and refer to these guidance notes carefully. If, having read them, you are still unsure about how to answer any of the questions, please contact the Area West Neighbourhood Development Team. Contact details can be found at the end of this document.

#### Introduction

This is a one off, time-limited grants fund administered by the Area West Committee of South Somerset District Council. Its primary aim is to increase the footfall in the town centres of Ilminster, Chard and Crewkerne.

#### What are the timescales?

This grants programme opens on 1st September 2017 and closes on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2018. Applications can be made at any time between these dates. Events must be complete and all claims made by 31<sup>st</sup> August 2018.

#### Who will we fund?

We will fund constituted not for profit groups and organisations which are based within SSDC Area West. This could include:-

- Community, Voluntary and charitable organisations.
- Parish and Town Councils
- Business networking groups and Chambers of Commerce
- Town Teams

To be eligible groups must have a set of rules / constitution and a separate bank account in the group's name.

#### How much will we fund?

Requests for grant support can be from £200 - £1500.

Although we will fund 100% of event costs applicants are encouraged to provide match funding wherever possible.

#### What will we fund?

Applications will be considered for events that:-

- Can show a measurable increase in visitor footfall to the town centres of Ilminster, Chard and Crewkerne.
- Can demonstrate and engagement with town centre retailers.

We will consider new events, or an enhancement of an existing event, as long as the criteria above can be demonstrated.

The grant is expected to mainly cover revenue costs but may also be used for capital expenditure on equipment.

We will look more favorably upon events that are a collaborative effort, i.e. more than one group/organisation working together.

Please note that we are unable to fund:-

- Events that have already taken place.
- Organisations generating funds for private profit.

Except in exceptional circumstances grant funding will only be made upon receipt of invoices or receipts. Therefore you will need to ensure that you have sufficient resources to cover any upfront costs.

#### Please remember

- Successful applicants will need to produce feedback (with photos) that provide evidence of how the award was spent and the level of success achieved.
- Organisations must be based within SSDC Area West and have a constitution or signed set of group rules, as well as a bank account in the name of the organisation.
- All grants offered will be subject to conditions. We will discuss these with you and these will clearly be set out in your offer letter.

For more information please contact Dylan Martlew in the Area West Development Team on 01935 462695 or [dylan.martlew@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:dylan.martlew@southsomerset.gov.uk)