

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

Committee	RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT	Item A2	Page 1 of 2
Report Originator	Helen Edwards Head of Democratic & Legal Services	<i>Fwd Plan Ref No:</i>	
Wards Affected	ALL	12 th June 2018	
Title	WARD INITIATIVE FUND - REVIEW OF RESTRICTIONS		

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider current restrictions on the use of the Ward Initiative Fund by elected members and to decide whether such restrictions should be reviewed.

2. INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Ward Initiative Fund (WIF) is an amount of £625 allocated to each elected member per annum of their four year term that provides members with the opportunity to enhance the undertaking of their community representation role. The fund does not form part of the Scheme of Members' Allowances.
- 2.2 The current WIF Guidelines provide a non-exhaustive list of prohibited uses of the fund as well as acceptable uses and are attached as **Appendix A**. A more recently produced "dos and don'ts" advice note is included at **Appendix B**.
- 2.3 At its meeting on 4th April 2018, the Research and Development Committee considered a report and made recommendations to the Executive Committee in relation to the setting of WIF levels for the following two years. Full Council subsequently made a decision that these should be retained at the level of £625 per annum at its meeting on 25th April.
- 2.4 In addition, at the meeting on 4th April Research and Development Committee requested that an item be brought to the next meeting regarding WIF Guidelines with a view to considering whether these should be reviewed.
- 2.5. The Ward Initiatives Fund was created nearly twenty years ago and has remained largely unchanged in that time. The bulk of the restrictions relate to a desire for the fund not to be used as a "back door" replacement for other public funding streams, so that it did not encourage a habit whereby the Borough Council effectively subsidised the activities and responsibilities of other public agencies. Members have found some of these restrictions frustrating particularly in contrast to the County Council's member empowerment scheme, which did not take this view.
- 2.6. The scheme adopted by East Northamptonshire Council is also attached for comparison purposes. (**Appendix C**). From this, it can be seen that some of the same restrictions apply to their scheme.

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

Committee	RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT	Item A2	Page 2 of 2
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3. CONSULTATION AND CUSTOMER IMPACT

3.1 None

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None at this stage

5. FINANCE and HR RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None at this stage

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 None at this stage

7. RECOMMENDATION

Members are requested to consider the existing WIF Guidelines and to make recommendations to the Executive Committee in relation to their future application.

Background Papers:

Previous Reports/Minutes: