

COALVILLE SPECIAL EXPENSES

PORTFOLIO HOLDER CLLR ALISON SMITH MBE

Previous recommendation to Cabinet

Re-assessment of General Fund expenditure spent on Coalville Special Expense area activity

Consultation responses from Members of the Public

- None on this issue

Consultation responses from Working Groups, Unions etc

- None on this issue

Consultation responses from the Executive Consultation Meeting

- None on this issue

Consultation responses from the Coalville Special Expenses Working Party

- Councillor M B Wyatt stated that he strongly disagreed with the proposal to charge the Coalville Special Expense Budget for the Remembrance Day Service given that it acted as a focal point for commemorations in the entire District. He stated that this was highlighted by the fact that the Chief Executive and Chairman of the District attended the Coalville event.
- The Head of Community Services stated that the Coalville Special Expense Budget could fund the event as other parishes within the District host their own events which they fund themselves.
- Councillor L Spence stated that he agreed with the position taken by Councillor M B Wyatt and that he disagreed with the proposal in the strongest possible terms. He noted that he appreciated that some burden would have to transfer to the Coalville Special Expense Budget given the current economic climate. However, he said that he was astonished that it was being proposed to transfer the funding of the Remembrance Day Service for the same reasoning given by Councillor M B Wyatt.
- Councillor R Johnson stated that he thought the proposal was disgraceful and agreed that the cost of running the event should be taken from the General Fund.
- Councillor J Geary stated that he was bitterly disappointed with the proposal. He noted that other parishes within the District held their own events, but stated that parishes were able to raise Council Tax precepts to help fund such events whereas the Coalville Special Expense area had to liaise with Cabinet in order to do so. He stated that he felt the maximum increase in Council Tax should be requested.
- Councillor M B Wyatt countered that in his opinion Council Tax should not be raised.

- Councillor L Spence also stated that, in his opinion, an increase in the precept for the Coalville Special Expense area should not be requested.
- Members sought clarification as to how much the Council could increase Council Tax. The Senior Accountant confirmed that any raise is capped at 2% and that the District intended to implement a 1.5% raise in any case.
- Councillor J Legrys suggested that the increase should be kept at 1.5% if the £3,500 cost of holding the Remembrance Day Service was returned to the General Fund.
- Councillor L Spence stated that, in his view, it was important to maintain open spaces, such as flowerbeds, as it provided both residents and visitors with a positive impression of the town. He stated that he believed this was more important than one-off events and that the Working Party should concentrate on making Coalville a place where people want to live all year round.
- Councillor J Legrys concurred with the views put forward by Councillor L Spence. He stated that it was essential that the town was maintained all year round and that events such as Coalville Twenty14 could instead be run by volunteers.
- The consensus of Members was to convene a meeting of the Events Task & Finish Group during the consultation period to consider the 2014/15 Events Programme and other budget changes in light of the proposed reallocation of funds from the General Fund to the Coalville Special Expense Budget. See notes from meeting below.

COALVILLE SPECIALS EXPENSES EVENTS TASK & FINISH GROUP

(14/15 BUDGET MEETING)

In attendance:

Cllr Spence, Cultural Services Team Manager, Democratic Services Support Officer

An Events Task & Finish Group meeting was held on 30 October 2013 to discuss how to address the budget proposals outlined in the Councils September Cabinet report. The report highlighted that £25,000 of General Fund expenditure would be re-allocated to the Coalville Specials Expenses in 14/15 (based on the activities/functions/services being directly attributable to Coalville).

The following proposals were discussed in order to achieve the savings target required.

Coalville Events

Reduce the events budget from £31,500 to £18,500 **Saving £13,000**

The events programme for 14/15 would therefore be as follows

- Coalville Twenty 14 (budget being reduced from £15,000 to £10,000)
- Christmas in Coalville (budget reduced from £10,000 to £5,000)
- Remembrance Day Service (budget £3,500)

(It should be noted that St Georges Day Flags would no longer be put up, and the Food and Drink promotion and Coalville by the Sea events would not be held, however, these could be discussed with the Town Team to see if they wished to fund and take on the management of these events/activities)

Coalville Christmas Decorations

Reduce the budget from £18,500 to £12,500 **Saving £6,000**

The budget would fund the annual contract and maintenance of £12,500

(No new lighting would be added in 14/15 unless members consider use of reserves as per 12/13 budget)

Asset Protection

Merge together and reduce Asset Protection budgets for Coalville Park, Recreation Grounds, Open Spaces and Coalville Cemetery, reducing budgets from £17,000 to £9,000 **Saving £8,000**

Total proposed savings for 2014/15 £27,000

(Extra savings contributing to the recharge of officer time for event management)

The following suggestions were received from Cllr Wyatt who was unable to attend the Events Task & Finish group meeting

- To re-look at the Asset Protection Funds with a view to identifying if further reductions can be made.
- To retain the Coalville by the Sea event as an important local event during the School Holidays particularly for families that do not have a summer holiday
- To investigate the feasibility of transferring assets such as Nature Alive and Urban Forest to agencies such as the Woodland Trust or National Forest
- To retain the Remembrance Day Events as General Fund expenditure, with at best a part contribution from the Coalville Specials to the event
- To incentivise local businesses to contribute financially to events in Coalville, through earmarking a figure from reserves ie £5,000 and for every pound contributed by local businesses the Specials budget would match from this reserves allocation with any income being ring fenced for the Community Events such as Coalville Twenty 14 and Christmas Switch On Event, in return the businesses would receive recognition through various means such as event posters, event brochure adverts, website adverts etc
- To consider branding the above initiative as 'Love Coalville' – Supporting Local Business
- To engage a company or individual on a commission only basis to seek advertising and sponsorship for town centre hanging baskets, flower beds, park flower beds, events and any other identified opportunity. Any income generated would be ring fenced for community events to increase footfall into the town centre.

Consultation responses from the Policy Development Group

- None on this issue

Officer Comments

- None on this issue

Recommendation

In considering all the consultation responses the following recommendation are now proposed to Cabinet

- That the £25,000 re-allocation from General Fund to Coalville Special Expenses is progressed
- That a further meeting of the Events Task & Finish group be held to finalise the specific reductions proposed for decision at February 2014 Cabinet. That the Portfolio Holder be invited in order to discuss Remembrance Day and all proposals/suggestions received.