



**Big Warsop AGM, 26th Feb 2014**

## **Report on the establishment and operation of the Community Chest**

### **A Brief Background**

From the outset, the concept of a community fund to support local good causes was at the heart of thinking about how the Big Local funding should be best used in Warsop. The initial Steering Group recognised that local voluntary groups and organisations play a vital role in providing community support and wellbeing and that they should have access to funding set aside to help their longer term sustainability and development.

The Steering Group also recognised that there was a strong tradition of community support and grant-making already in place within the area, provided by the Rotary Club of Warsop and that by working together there was a real opportunity to increase both the funds available and the experience and expertise on hand to help organise and operate a joint fund. It was agreed by both organisations that they shared a common purpose in building stronger communities and a series of meetings and negotiations took place to bring about a funding partnership.

In late 2012, the Rotary Club agreed in principle to support the idea of a joint enterprise with Big Warsop and similarly the Big Warsop Board agreed to form a joint steering committee with Rotary, to commission and design a new 'Community Chest'. This new initiative was referred to by the two organisations as RoLo (Rotary, Lottery) and immediately set out its key role and commitment: 'To ensure a coordinated approach to local grant-making, to increase the availability of funds and to provide a stable and professional grant-making process'.

The new body was charged with producing a definitive set of guidelines for the operation of the fund, including the application process. This was successfully completed by March 2013 and subsequently adopted by both organisations – Big Warsop and the Rotary Club.

### **Simple Guidelines & Procedures**

The guidelines that were produced and agreed, set out simple protocols on:

- How the two organisations should work together to manage the fund
- The initial number and timing of grant rounds
- How the grant panels should be conducted and decisions made
- How the process should be coordinated and administered
- How panel members should conduct themselves throughout the process

The application form was designed (and kept) as simple as possible. The intention was and remains, to make grants available with a minimum of bureaucracy and to encourage applications from as wide a

cross-section of the community as possible. All grant panel members made a personal commitment to assist applicants as far as possible and to be willing to make personal contact with applicants where more information is required rather than expect lengthy written submissions. In this way, organisations with no previous experience of grant application could be confident of getting full and proper consideration of their bid. Just as importantly, this approach was considered essential for developing longer term relationships with community groups and potentially strong networks for the future.

### **Grant-Making Format**

Each year a 'Bank' will be established consisting of members nominated by both partners (RoLo), together with the funds they provide. The Bank will aim to have approximately 10 – 12 members, sufficient to ensure continuity of process, breadth of expertise and a good choice of grant panel members. The Bank will determine the size and frequency of grant rounds for the year, dependent on the funding available, and will publish the opening and closing dates for all grant rounds.

For each grant round there are a minimum 3 formal meetings held:

- (i) The Pre-Meeting of all members of the Bank. This will :
  - Determine the number of applications received that are eligible, their names and status
  - Identify any connections between applicants and members of the Bank – any interests must be declared and those holding an interest are excluded from the decision making panels
  - Allocate Bank members to liaise with applicants that need to provide further information
  - Confirm the date and composition of the grant panel
- (ii) The Grant Panel. This will:
  - Act with full delegated authority from both Big Warsop and the Rotary Club for grant allocations up to £500 per applicant
  - Decide which applications shall receive grants
  - Agree any conditions that should apply to grant recipients
- (iii) The Review Meeting of all members of the Bank. This will:
  - Meet within one month of the grant panel
  - Review the effectiveness of the process relating to the previous grant round
  - Make recommendations for improvement to the process
  - Allocate monitors/liaison members for both successful and unsuccessful applicants, where appropriate

### **Outcomes for 2013**

Two grant rounds were held in 2013, in May and October. A total of 17 grants were awarded amounting to £8,500. Four applications were ruled to be ineligible, but for each, suggestions were made regarding future bids. The list of successful applicants is attached as appendix 1. In summary, these comprised:

5 grants to Community Centres or Venues

4 grants to organisations running community events or providing amenities

8 grants to organisations providing purposeful activities for young people

All decisions for both grant rounds were made on the basis of total consensus amongst all panel members. The degree of collaboration and cooperation between the two funding partners was of a high order and significant levels of trust and mutual support have developed within a relatively short period of time.

The two funding organisations have contributed equally to the funding available. In terms of panel membership, the Rotary Club has provided approximately 65% to Big Warsop's 35%. However, this combination appears to be effective and there has been no discernable difference of opinion between members from the different organisations. Bank members have expressed very positive views about the integrity of the process and the level of consideration given to decision making.

Contact and engagement with local groups has been significantly enhanced and as stated previously, the intention is to build long-term relationships with applicants in order to create strong support networks for the future.

Feedback from grant recipients has been positive and we will be publishing and showcasing the successes recipients have had as a result of their funding.

### **The Future**

The RoLo partnership is unique in the UK; nowhere else has the Big Lottery teamed up with Rotary International (the world's largest service organisation) to produce effective local grant-making that essentially doubles the impact locally of each organisation.

Rotary Club members have given generously of their time both in serving on the panels and, most importantly, in raising money to contribute to the fund itself. They continue to do so. The Big Warsop Board are currently considering how best to develop and fund larger initiatives that will produce community benefits in line with the Big Warsop priorities – there is every hope that the two organisations will continue to develop their collaboration and address the next stages of the Big Warsop Plan

### **Recommendations**

The AGM is invited to:

- 1) Recognise the progress to date of the Community Chest.
- 2) Acknowledge the support provided by the Rotary Club of Warsop, all members of the Bank and particularly the secretary
- 3) Agree to continue the current arrangements for 2014

P A Lyons

Community Chest Coordinator

February 2014

Appendix 1 – Grant Recipients 2013

Grant Round May 2013			
ORGANISATION	AMOUNT	PURPOSE	UPDATE
Warsop Infotech	£500	Disabled benching	Project complete & in use
Meden Vale – The Future	£500	General running costs	Full report received
Warsop Wheelies	£500	School based activity	Project complete
Hetts Lane Holiday Club	£500	Activity & trip costs	Full report & photos received
Warsop in Bloom	£500	Planting equip./materials	Full report & photos received
Warsop Carnival Committee	£500	Cost of programmes	Successful event – small surplus
1 <sup>st</sup> Warsop Guides & Brownies	£500	New tentage	Full report & photos received
Grant Round October 2013			
Market Warsop Players	£500	Costumes & props.	Successful community panto
Longden Terrace Welfare	£500	Stage curtains	Report & photos received
Meden Vale Play Scheme	£500	Christmas trips	Project complete
Welbeck Allotments Assoc.	£500	Provision of water supply	Awaiting installation
1208 Sqdrn Air Cadets	£500	Equipm. For climbing wall	In use – report received
M. Warsop under 7s Football	£500	Posts, nets, kit	Full report & photos received
2 <sup>nd</sup> Warsop Scouts	£500	Event shelter & room hire	Shelter in use, report received
Oaklands	£500	Fundraising event costs	Scheduled for 17 May
Warsop Judo Club	£500	Electronic scoreboard	In use – report received