

Maldens & Coombe Neighbourhood Committee - 20 March 2019
Surbiton Neighbourhood Committee - 20 March 2019
South of the Borough Neighbourhood Committee - 27 March 2019
Kingston Town Neighbourhood Committee - 27 March 2019

Community Grants Programme: Neighbourhood Community Grants, Borough Wide Community Grants, Councillor Ward Funding & Community Infrastructure Levy allocations

Report by the Director, Communities

Purpose

To note the grant funding streams available for 2019/20 and to agree the working arrangements for the allocation of the Committee's Councillor Ward Funding.

Recommendations

To **resolve** that the Neighbourhood Committee -

1. notes the Neighbourhood Community Grants budget, as set out in Key Point B, and that the Committee will be asked to review applications and agree allocations for these grants throughout the year until the fund has been exhausted;
2. notes the Borough-wide Community Grants budget as set out in Key Point C;
3. determines how it wishes to allocate the Neighbourhood's Councillor Ward Funding as set out in paragraph 9 of the report;
4. notes the opportunities available for further grant funding and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts, as set out in paragraphs 10-21 of the report, and that the Committee will be asked to consider any future bids that are made for these funds; and
5. considers whether it wishes to apply a cap to the amount of CIL funding that can be allocated to individual projects each year as set out in paragraph 14.

Benefits to the Community:

To encourage local voluntary and community sector organisations, faith groups, charities and not-for-profit organisations to access funding and expand their capacity.

Key Points

- A. There are four different funding sources under the new Community Grants Programme available for Neighbourhood Committees and Ward Members to support and encourage local voluntary and community activity in their neighbourhoods, as follows:
- B. **Neighbourhood Community Grants** (previously known as Your Kingston Grants and New Initiatives Grants), of up to £3,000 per application, are available to fund projects/ activities/ services to benefit communities in each of the four neighbourhood areas. Each Neighbourhood is awarded £20,000 per annum, which is reduced as Neighbourhood Community Grants are awarded throughout the financial year. Guidelines for Neighbourhood Community Grants have been appended to this report as **Annex 1**.

- C. **Borough-wide Community Grants** of up to £3,000, per application, are available to fund projects/ activities/ services to benefit of communities across the Borough. There is a £20,000 allocation per annum, which is reduced as the Borough-wide grants are awarded throughout the year. Guidelines for Borough-wide Community Grants have been appended to this report, also included in Annex 1.
- D. **Councillor Ward Funding**, at £2,000 per Councillor per financial year, will remain at the discretion of individual Ward Councillors unless the Neighbourhood Committee decides to pool all or part of the Councillor Ward Funding budget. Guidelines for Councillor Ward Funding have been appended to this report as **Annex 2**.
- E. **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)** must be spent on infrastructure needed to support development in the Borough. The upper limit of funding to apply for will be the amount allocated to each Neighbourhood Area - allocation will vary by Neighbourhood and is not time limited. Guidelines for 'the Neighbourhood portion' of the CIL have been appended to this report as **Annex 3**.

Neighbourhood Community Grants (up to £3,000)

1. Neighbourhood Community Grants are for the benefit of community-based groups, or organisations that need a small amount of funding to enable them to have a big impact on their local community, particularly projects or activities that focus on meeting the needs of marginalised or isolated people or communities and fund local initiatives provided for community benefit. The funding is intended to support local activity that engages communities in projects or activities that contribute to meeting the outcomes set out in the Neighbourhood Committees' adopted Community Plans or the Council's Corporate 3 Strategic Outcomes and Priorities to 2023, which are:
 - Healthy, independent and resilient residents with effective support to those who need it most.
 - A safe borough which celebrates our diverse and vibrant communities, with local priorities shaped through participatory democracy.
 - A sustainable approach to new homes, development and infrastructure which benefits our communities, in a well maintained borough.
2. The Neighbourhood Committees are currently reviewing their Community Plans and revised versions of these plans are scheduled to be approved by the individual Neighbourhood Committees in the Autumn of 2019.
3. Neighbourhood Community Grants will be annual grants for events, activities and projects which can include a contribution to project overheads. Projects must be completed within 12 months of starting. Grants will not be awarded to activities or projects that result in ongoing cost commitments to the Council, unless agreed, in writing, with the relevant Council Service Director.
4. Although the upper limit for these grants is £3,000 it is envisaged (based on previous applications made for similar grants) that a significant number of applicants will both request and be awarded a lower sum. Applications for Neighbourhood Community Grants will be reported to the Committee for consideration and approval.

Borough Wide Community Grants (up to £3,000)

5. An additional fund of £20,000 will be dedicated to Borough Wide Grants with the relevant strategic Corporate Head of Service or Service Director signing off the final grant award decision under their delegated authority .

6. The Borough Wide Grants are intended for projects which cross neighbourhood boundaries and may, for example, be used for funding activities responding the needs or aspirations of a specific population group in the borough rather than activity in a specific locality.
7. The Borough Wide Community Grants have the same eligibility criteria as the Neighbourhood Community Grant, with the exception that applications must clearly state how the activity is available to people across the whole borough.

Councillor Ward Funding

8. The Councillor Ward Funding scheme was first introduced in 2016/17 to provide local Councillors with the ability to support the award of flexible, small and timely funds for local initiatives within their Ward. The scheme provides increased opportunities to improve levels of engagement and influence at a very local street based level addressing the 'here and now' issues. Ideally projects/ activities should enable communities to help themselves and lead on delivering local solutions. Overall the fund should enhance the social, economic or environmental well being of the Ward community and residents quality of life.
9. The budget for Councillor Ward Funding is allocated at £2,000 per Councillor but the Neighbourhood Committees may decide how to distribute these funds. The options available to the Committee are:
 - i. retaining the existing Councillor Ward Funding scheme.
 - ii. pooling the Neighbourhood's entire Councillor Ward Funding budget so that it can be allocated as additional funding for Neighbourhood Community Grants.
 - iii. pooling the Neighbourhood's entire Councillor Ward Funding budget so that it can be allocated to larger versions of the type of projects that are currently supported by Councillor Ward Funding. If this option is pursued then the Committee should note, given the larger value, that these allocations will be subject to these projects being reported to the Committee for approval.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):

10. This is the final category of grant funding for Neighbourhoods. CIL is a charge on new development in the Borough, which must be spent on infrastructure needed to support development. For example, transport, social and green infrastructure. The Levy cannot be used to fund affordable housing.
11. CIL legislation requires that a 'meaningful proportion' of the income raised through CIL in a neighbourhood be spent in the neighbourhood in which the development took place, stating that Local Authorities must allocate 15% of levy receipts on priorities that should be agreed with the local communities in which the levy was raised.
12. The 'meaningful proportion' must be spent on schemes that will help support the development of the neighbourhood area by funding any of (a) the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure; or (b) anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands of infrastructure; or (c) anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area.
13. The Council's Neighbourhood structure is an appropriate way to divide and spend the 'meaningful proportion' of the CIL. The amount of Neighbourhood CIL available

in each Neighbourhood is based on the amount of development in each Neighbourhood area. As the South of the Borough sees less development than the other Neighbourhoods, it receives less funds than the others. As at February 2019, the amount of Neighbourhood CIL available is as follows:

Kingston Town	Maldens & Coombe	Surbiton	South of the Borough	Borough Total
£85,157	£62,288	£75,901	£15,817	£239,164

14. It should be noted that, once the allocation of CIL has been spent, this will not be available year on year. This funding available is entirely dependent on there being development in the area and therefore the amount available is subject to change. Therefore, Neighbourhood Committees may consider capping the amount groups can apply for per project each year due to the allocation being limited.
15. The Neighbourhood CIL can be used to fund a range of community infrastructure including the following:
 - community gardens/spaces
 - local green space improvements
 - children's play spaces
 - tree Planting
 - baby changing facilities
 - projects to improve the public realm, like boroughwide bulb planting by residents, public artwork
 - the installation of borough-wide defibrillators (although ongoing maintenance costs may not be made available from the CIL)
16. Planning guidance on the CIL requires the Council to engage with communities where development has taken place as to how best to spend the 'meaningful proportion'. The Council must clearly and transparently engage with communities, and the use of neighbourhood funds should match priorities expressed by local communities, including priorities set out formally in local Community Plans.
17. Through community engagement, the Council should encourage the community to submit ideas for the neighbourhood portion of the CIL, and the list of projects would be the primary starting point for the Neighbourhood Community Plan. Other sources of information, e.g. area planning documents, like the draft Tolworth Area Plan can be used by communities to identify infrastructure projects to support development.
18. Anyone can submit a Neighbourhood CIL idea. Projects may be delivered by community organisations, council officers, or third party organisations, external Groups and organisations must be registered with a Regulatory Body (e.g. Charity Commission and/or Companies House).
19. All projects must:
 - meet the terms of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations (2010) (No.948) (as amended)
 - reflect the priorities of the Council and Neighbourhood
 - have community backing (including any adopted Neighbourhood Plan)
 - support, or mitigate the impact of development in an area
 - be a one-off project (or identify and agree longer term revenue implications)
 - benefit the broadest section of the community

- provide value for money
20. Communities should be aware that funds will be accessible only once and projects should not have ongoing running costs for the council. If ongoing costs are likely, then permissions from the relevant service Director at the Council will be required, in writing. Communities should be encouraged to support project maintenance and to seek additional forms of funding, if necessary, e.g. through crowdfunding to match the amount.
 21. Applications for Neighbourhood CIL funding will be reported to the relevant Neighbourhood Committee for consideration and determination.

Timescale

22. Neighbourhood Community Grants and any retained Councillor Ward Funding will be allocated over the Financial Year 2019/20. CIL funding does not have the same time limitation and may be rolled over to subsequent financial years.
23. Although the four grant programmes are yet to begin, the Council will welcome expressions of interest. More information about the application process, and how individuals and groups can express their interest in the respective funding streams, will soon be made available on the Council's website. In the meantime, queries and questions can be sent to neighbourhood_management@kingston.gov.uk.

Resource Implications

24. No additional resources will be required. This will be delivered within budget by existing resources and operates within Financial Regulations.

Legal Implications

25. Part 11 of the Planning Act 2008 provides for the imposition of the Community Infrastructure Levy. The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010, as amended, (the Regulations) implement the detail of the CIL using powers provided in Part 11 of the Act, including specifying how the CIL should be spent by charging authorities. The Government has also issued Planning Practice Guidance on the CIL.
26. Provided the CIL is spent in accordance with the restrictions contained in the Regulations and the Guidance there should be no legal implications arising from the Report.
27. The award of community funding grants and councillor ward funding grants by the Neighbourhood Committee or councillors should not give rise to any legal implications provided the grants are distributed in accordance with the relevant criteria to appropriate persons, bodies or organisations.
28. Under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the 2010 Act) the Council must, when exercising its functions, including considering applications for grant or CIL funding, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct, to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between those who share a 'protected characteristic' under the 2010 Act and those who do not. A 'protected characteristic' is defined as age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership are also protected characteristics for the purposes of the duty to eliminate discrimination.

Equalities Analysis

29. A full EQIA was carried out during the Neighbourhoods Review, this included the consideration of grants and grant allocations.
30. There are no known direct equalities impacts arising from the decisions set out in this paper however, Community Groups funded through these grants will need to consider equalities when planning their projects and/ or submitting bids.

Health, Environmental & Air Quality Implications

31. Organisations and groups will be encouraged to submit grant applications that promote the health and wellbeing of their local communities.

Road Network Implications

32. Grant awards are unlikely to impact on local road network or Parking issues. However, in the event of a grant being considered where road closures may apply i.e. street play/ playing out/ community road party, the Neighbourhood Manager will review and liaise with Highways and road network officers.

Background papers held by the authors of the report:

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Annex 1 - Community Grants Guidelines (Neighbourhood and Borough-Wide Grants)

Annex 2 - Councillor Ward Funding Guidelines

Annex 3 - CIL 'The Neighbourhood Portion' Guidelines