

Key Decision Required:	Yes	In the Forward Plan:	Yes
-------------------------------	------------	-----------------------------	------------

CABINET

23 JANUARY 2013

REPORT OF FINANCE AND ASSET MANAGEMENT PORTFOLIO HOLDER

A.8 BIG SOCIETY FUND
(Report prepared by Gill Burden)

PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To review the operation of the Big Society Fund to date and in the future.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Cabinet announced, at its meeting on 26 January 2011, that it was proposing a one-off £500,000 fund as part of the 2011/12 budget (subsequently agreed by Council on 8 February 2011).

Following on from this, a database of community groups and voluntary organisations was created and a two stage application process put in place. This is presented to the Big Society Panel which sits monthly and has comprised the Portfolio Holders for Finance and Asset Management and Regeneration, Head of Resource Management, Head of Corporate Services and Community Projects Manager.

The scheme went “live” on 28 March 2011.

It is proposed that the criteria for the Big Society Fund is reviewed to focus on key priorities for the Council of the emerging Education and Aspiration Plan along with sport provision and physical activity in addition to the existing criteria. These are set out in the proposed revised application in **Appendix A**. It is also proposed to amend the approval process to increase the transparency of funding allocation by setting up a Portfolio Holder Working Party with final decisions being confirmed by a formal Portfolio Holder decision

RECOMMENDATIONS

- a) That Cabinet notes the outcomes from the allocation of Big Society funding to date.
- b) That Cabinet approves the creation of a Portfolio Working Party to assess and determine future applications and that the Portfolio Holder nominates Members to sit on that Working Party.
- c) That Cabinet confirms that future allocations from the fund should focus on Education, Skills and increasing participation in sport and physical activity.
- d) That a monitoring report setting out the outcomes from future Big Society funding allocations be brought back to Cabinet at six monthly intervals

PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

DELIVERING PRIORITIES

This decision supports the delivery of the Corporate Goal to *“Help Children and Adults Achieve their Full Potential”* (Corporate Goal 3). In addition the actions detailed in the attached plan support the priority from the Corporate Plan 2010-2016 to *“Ensure people have the knowledge and skills to secure good employment”*.

FINANCE, OTHER RESOURCES AND RISK

Finance and other resources

There is an existing budget of £513,960 of which £341,746 remains unallocated.

Risk

There is a risk that funding allocated to any group or organisation is not spent appropriately or in accordance with the purpose for which it was given. Although controls are already in place to mitigate this risk through the processes in operation, the establishment of a Working Party with cross council representation will help to bring enhanced scrutiny of the process. This will also provide increased transparency as to how funding is allocated.

LEGAL

There are no legal implications.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Consideration has been given to the implications of the proposed decision in respect of the following and any significant issues are set out below.

Crime and Disorder / Equality and Diversity / Health Inequalities / Area or Ward affected / Consultation/Public Engagement.

By reducing worklessness it is anticipated that we will be able to reduce the number of young people and adults who engage in unlawful behaviour.

The actions set out have taken into account equality and diversity issues.

The actions will cover all wards.

PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

BACKGROUND

The Cabinet announced, at its meeting on 26 January 2011, that it was proposing a one-off £500,000 fund as part of the 2011/12 budget (subsequently agreed by Council on 8 February 2011). It was agreed that: *“...one-off funding of up to £500k on a one-off basis be earmarked within the Regeneration and Communities budget to create a Big Society Fund whereby local voluntary groups, organisations, schools, Town and Parish Councils and neighbourhood communities are able to bid for funds to enable them to work with the Council to deliver a direct saving (on a one-off or ongoing basis) or a measurable significant community project.*

Officers are therefore asked to prepare a proposal for the operation of the Scheme in

consultation with the Finance Portfolio Holder and the Community, Partnerships and Renewal Portfolio Holder.”

Following on from this a database of community groups and voluntary organisations was created, which included:

- All Secondary and Primary schools in the district
- All Town and Parish Councils
- All Neighbourhood Watch Schemes
- Voluntary groups and organisations
- Clubs and societies

This database was used to target in excess of 800 groups and organisations with an initial letter from the Leader and Deputy Leader outlining the concept of Big Society and the criteria that projects needed to meet. The criteria state that projects should deliver a significant community benefit and/or a direct cost saving to the authority.

A two stage application process has been put in place, aimed at making it simple but robust, in order not to deter applicants. Stage 1 asks for brief details of the idea and what is required to bring it to fruition. This is presented to the Big Society Panel which sits monthly and has comprised the Portfolio Holders for Finance and Asset Management and Regeneration, Head of Resource Management, Head of Corporate Services and Community Projects Manager.

The scheme went “live” on 28 March 2011 and to date there have been 140 applications of which 105 have been declined as not meeting the criteria or referred to other funders or partners.

The Big Society fund received a further allocation of £143,000 following the Cabinet decision in March 2012. The amount of funding that remains uncommitted is currently £341,746.

OUTCOMES FROM ALLOCATIONS TO DATE

To date there have been 140 Stage 1 applications with 105 declined or in a few cases referred to other funders. In most instances the project proposed does not meet the criteria and it is clear from the wording used they were fully aware that it did not meet the funding criteria but saw the opportunity to ‘approach the Council for money’.

There have been 35 Stage 1 applications invited to submit a detailed Stage 2 of which 23 have been awarded funding totalling £301,254 with 8 being declined or withdrawn and 4 are still awaited. The largest award to date is over £50,000 with the smallest being £100. There is an un-committed sum of Big Society fund of £341,746.

There have been a variety of projects supported to date delivered by charitable and voluntary organisations. Projects included supporting the development of financial capability through the CAB, Community Transport Scheme, training and support of volunteers, enabling better use of local community facilities, facilitating local people to undertake litter picking in their areas and skills and engagement activities for young people. A list of all successful projects is attached at **Appendix B**.

Many of these projects have generated match funding in the form of money or in-kind and for every £1 of Big Society funding awarded the District is benefitting by an additional £3.

PROPOSED FUTURE OPERATION OF THE BIG SOCIETY FUND

There has been some feedback about the transparency of the process currently in place to allocate funds. To alleviate this it is proposed that, in accordance with part 3.17 of the

Constitution, the Finance and Asset Management Portfolio Holder establishes a Working Party to consider Big Society bids. The Portfolio Holder will Chair the Working Party and appoint Members to maintain a broad political balance. The decisions of the Working Party on allocation of funding would be confirmed by a formal Portfolio Holder decision which would be subject to the usual call in process.

The Big Society Fund is currently based around two criteria of which one, or preferably both need to be met. These criteria ask that projects deliver a significant community benefit or that the proposal provides a direct cost saving to the Council. These criteria will remain but in line with the Council's priorities to address education and aspiration amongst young people it is an appropriate time to amend the Big Society Fund criteria to attract applications for funding that will help deliver on these priorities as well. In addition to Education and Skills the criteria will also encourage projects that help to develop sports provision in Tendring and projects that enable more people to engage in sporting activities and encourage physical activity.

Applicants will be made aware that if successful at the first stage they will be expected to provide a detailed Project Plan as part of the second and final stage of the process and this will need to demonstrate wide community consultation and provide evidence of baseline and detailed performance indicators. Projects will be required to submit quarterly monitoring reports showing how they are delivering on the agreed performance indicators and these will be presented to Cabinet as a summary monitoring report every six months.

A proposed new Stage 1 form reflecting these additional priorities and emphasising the monitoring and need for community consultation is attached at **Appendix A**.

Education and Skills

As a District Council improving the opportunities for our young people to achieve their full potential is key to addressing many of the wider issues facing our community. To this end an Education Plan is being developed to see where the Council and our Partners can identify aims and actions which link together to address the priority of Aspiration, Skills and Education.

The Education Plan being developed is helping to identify what we are already doing as a local authority and also as a key partner with other organisation. It is also starting to identify where there are gaps in provision and where more innovative and potentially costly interventions could be developed, which is where funding from Big Society could assist. This would create opportunities to work with Partners who are seeking to deliver a more joined up approach to taster and then training sessions that ultimately provide a skilled young person in a growth area with jobs available locally.

The Education Plan mentioned above identified four priorities to address through the action plan:

- Reduce NEETs and worklessness levels
- Raise attainment and aspiration levels for young people and adults
- Improve the relationship between education and businesses
- Provide the right environment for success

The criteria for Big Society funding will require projects to demonstrate exactly how they will deliver on at least one or more of these priorities.

Increased participation in Sport

Cabinet have previously, at their meeting 22 August 2012 resolved that Officers should look at opportunities to develop and promote sports and sports facilities for Tendring. In accordance with this the revised criteria for the Big Society Fund will also reflect the priority aims of the **Active**Tendring Vision and Action Plan which is currently being revised to come in line with the County Sports Partnership - Active Essex Strategic Plan 2012 – 17.

Priority Aims are:

- Increase Participation in Sport and Physical Activity
- Encourage Healthy and Active Lifestyles
- Develop Sporting Pathways
- Encourage Lifelong Learning and Skills Development
- Building Networks and Partnerships for Sport,
- Physical Activity and Healthy Lifestyles

Projects will need to demonstrate how they will assist the Sports Partnership to deliver on these priorities and again demonstrate a joined up approach to funding applications that help to deliver the vision of 'Developing Sport and Positive Activities for all people within the Community'.

BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR THE DECISION

Active Tendring Vision and Strategic Plan
Inspire Tendring Children Achieve – Education and Aspiration Action Plan
Essex Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2012
Active Essex – A Strategic Plan for Sport and Physical Activity

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Revised Stage 1 Big Society Application Form
Appendix B: Summary of Big Society awards to date.

Appendix A

BIG SOCIETY – Stage 1: Tell us your idea:

BIG SOCIETY is all about helping people to take responsibility for shaping the communities and areas around them. Here at Tendring District Council we are very keen to work with all voluntary groups, organisations, schools, Town and Parish Councils and neighbourhoods who come up with their own ideas to help benefit the wider community, and/or deliver a service which reduces the Council's overall annual budget. Projects will need to clearly demonstrate how they meet either one or both of these criteria and then help us to deliver on our objectives of **Education, Skills** and increasing participation in **Sport**.

Some examples might be:

- *Provide a range of activities or interventions for young people or the unemployed.*
- *Deliver a new and improved sports provision that encourages more people to engage in sport.*

Have YOU got an Idea?

If you have an idea, then why not share it with us? From the germ of an idea comes a project which together we might be able to develop. The key to a successful project is that it must deliver a substantial community benefit and ideally savings to the Council and address our key objectives of **Education, Skills and Sport**.

What Next?

We want to hear your idea and would ask that you give us a brief initial outline. Following receipt and consideration of this we will let you know if you have been successful at this first stage and, if appropriate, ask you to develop a more detailed project plan as part of the second and final stage. We will then assess the project to see that it is in line with the Council's objectives and is affordable and sustainable following which you will be notified as to whether you have been successful.

Applicants should note the more detailed Project Plans will need to show how you have consulted with the wider community and provide evidence of baseline and detailed performance indicators which if your project is successful will form part of the Conditions of Funding. Successful projects that receive funding will be required to submit quarterly monitoring reports showing how they are delivering on the agreed performance indicators.

For more details on the scheme and how it operates go to www.tendringdc.gov.uk You may also be interested in a similar scheme run by Essex County Council – visit for more information.

CONTACT DETAILS

Please give us your name and contact details, along with the group you represent, and indicate how you would like us to contact you.

PROJECT BACKGROUND (Maximum 300 words)

Give a brief outline of your suggested proposal under the following headings:

1. Project Outline
2. Community engagement
3. How the project delivers a significant community benefit and /or cost saving
4. How the project helps meet to meet **Education, Skills** or **Sport** priorities
5. The geographic area and/or group that will benefit.

Remember to include how the project being proposed will address one or more of the following priorities:

- Reduce NEETs and worklessness levels
- Raise attainment and aspiration levels for young people and adults
- Improve the relationship between education and businesses
- Provide the right environment for success
- Increase Participation in Sport and Physical Activity
- Encourage Healthy and Active Lifestyles
- Develop Sporting Pathways
- Encourage Lifelong Learning and Skills Development
- Building Networks and Partnerships for Sport,
- Physical Activity and Healthy Lifestyles

ANTICIPATED RESOURCES REQUIRED (Maximum 200 words)

What do you need to deliver your proposal? (equipment, people, specialist advice, funding) please also indicate any resources you will be providing such as volunteer time.

Please return to big society@tendringdc.gov.uk or by post to: Big Society, Tendring District Council, Council Offices, Thorpe Road, Weeley, Essex, CO16 9AJ

Appendix B

Big Society funding to date at 12 December

No:	Date	Applicant	Project	BS Funding £	Match in £	Match in kind to date	In Kind Activity
12	05/04/2011	Little Clacton Village Hall	Refurbishment of hall	17,000	40,500	1,000	Volunteer time
13	05/04/2011	Volunteer Centre	Helping Hands	7,000	8,000	50,000	Based on 1/2 value of volunteer time for whole year
16	05/05/2011	Pier Ave Baptist Church	New provision/facilities	17,000	20,000	4,000	Volunteer time to staff new provision
18	06/04/2011	Volunteer Centre	Volunteering	26,602		47,736	Based on 2010/11 registrations of new volunteers
24	14/04/2011	Colne School	Litter Pickers	100		400	Volunteer time
26	18/04/2011	Colne School	Lifeguard courses	1,500			
27	18/04/2011	Thorington Parish Council	Litter Pickers	200		400	Volunteer time
42	10/05/2011	Tendring Furniture Scheme	Apprentice scheme	9,124			Award not drawn down yet
48	19/05/2011	TYA	Battle of Bands	5,000		500	Sponsorship of event and volunteer time
61	12/04/2011	Alresford Parish	Village Hall refurbishment	15,000	70,000	1,000	Volunteer time
66	11/07/2011	Member of Public	Contribution to event	100			Award not drawn down yet
77	08/08/2011	Churches Together	Street Pastor Scheme	8,487	1,000	4,000	Volunteer time
79	25/08/2011	Volunteer Centre	Helping Hands	16,012	8,000	50,000	Based on 1/2 the value of volunteer time for whole year
90	24/10/2011	Colne Housing	Foundry Court Co-Ordinator	£25,174	9,000	500	Volunteer time working with co-ordinator
110	05/03/2012	Dancing Giraffe	Website development	2,000			
109	05/03/2012	St Osyth Parish Council	Install Composting toilet	2,005	5,900	500	Volunteer time
107	29/03/2012	Harwich Rock School	Rock Club	9,450	20,000		
106	02/05/2012	Great Bromley Village Hall	Finish refurbishment	500		200	Volunteer time
135	16/10/2012	Inclusion Ventures	Youth activities Financial	20,000	154,000		
63	30/06/2011	CAB	Capabilities	52,000	30,000	30,000	Volunteer time
136	17/10/2012	Colchester Institute	Building project Community	32,000	500,000		Skills Funding Agency £100k and Institute £400k
138	08/11/2012	Tendring Education Trust	Hopper	25,000	22,000		
126	25/05/2012	Clacton Sports Trust	Vista Road development	10,000			
Total				301,254	888,400	190,236	Funding of £301,254 has attracted over £1m to projects

140 Stage 1 received

105 declined or referred to others

35 Invited to submit a Stage 2 application of which:

23 funded to value of **301,254** with the smallest award £100 and the largest £52,000

2 withdrawn - 6 declined

6 declined after Stage 2

1 still to be determined - Signpost MAHST project

3 Awaited

Every £1 of Big Society money spent the District benefited by an additional £3