

CABINET

25 MARCH 2022

REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR PARTNERSHIPS

A.5 TENDRING COMMUNITY FUND WORKING PARTY

PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet with an update on the work of the Tendring Community Fund Portfolio Holder Working Party and to seek Cabinet's approval for its ongoing work to enable the distribution of grants from the fund.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Tendring Community Fund has been established for the benefit of the community across Tendring. The Tendring Community Fund Working Party has met on two occasions to discuss and agree the proposed Terms of Reference. The Terms of Reference have been drawn up to facilitate the means through which the monies held within the Tendring Community Fund can be allocated as fairly and effectively as possible with effective due diligence and means of governance in place. In addition, the Working Party has agreed a preliminary application process and guidance notes for prospective applicants.

The Chair of the Working Party (the Portfolio Holder for Partnerships) is seeking Cabinet's agreement for the recommendations below. This will enable the Working Party to move forward so that grants from the fund can be awarded in the coming months.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

That Cabinet:

- (a) delegates authority to the Portfolio Holder for Partnerships, in their role as Chair of the Tendring Community Fund PH Working Party, to both receive funds and to oversee the distribution of funds relating to the Tendring Community Fund;
- (b) approves the Terms of Reference for the Tendring Community Fund Working Party; and
- (c) receives an update report from the Chair of the Tendring Community Fund Working Party within twelve months.

PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

DELIVERING PRIORITIES

Tendring Community Fund seeks to support community groups and organisations that in turn support the residents and local communities across our District. In February 2020 the Leader of Council, Neil Stock, OBE announced the introduction of the "Tendring Community Fund that seeks to support community groups and organisations that in turn support the residents and local communities across our District. I will be allocating £500k to this new fund from the Council's New Homes Bonus allocation for 2020/21".

The Leader also stated at Council (11 February 2020) *"In respect of the Tendring Community Fund, I see this as a successor to the hugely successful Big Society Fund, with a lead Portfolio Holder and*

cross-party representation on the panel that reviews and approves applications for grant funding. A key condition of awarding grant funding would be the generation of match funding. I will be asking officers to get going on these two initiatives and bring something back to Members as soon as possible to ensure we can make this money available to organisations as quickly as we can in 2020/21.”

The aim of the fund is to put investment into the District where it is most needed and assist with drawing in match funding where possible to achieve maximum impact and value.

FINANCE, OTHER RESOURCES AND RISK

Finance and other resources: The initial finance for the fund has been allocated from within the Council's New Homes Bonus. Additional funding to 'top up' the fund may be added at the discretion of the Leader and Cabinet.

Following the Leader's announcement £500,000 was allocated to the fund in Q3 of 2019/20. Three allocations of £48,000 have subsequently been made for the Members' Small Grant Scheme which was part of the Covid response and a further allocation for Jubilee Celebrations. This leaves a balance of £356,000 in the fund.

The Working Party has agreed that grants will usually be limited to no more than £35,000 although larger bids may be considered if they can demonstrate significant impact.

Risk: With any grant awarding process there is an element of risk as delivery of the project is dependent upon the recipient of the award. A careful process of due diligence by means of an application process, and an interview will be put in place prior to any grant making decisions. The expertise of the Working Party membership and the advice of CVST will also be utilised in the process. Ongoing monitoring of projects including receipt of progress reports and updates to the Working Party along with an evaluation programme will further mitigate against risk.

LEGAL

The initial budget was agreed by Cabinet on 21 February 2020. The New Homes Bonus is a grant announced alongside the wider annual Local Government Finance Settlement and there are no restrictions on how it can be used.

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.

The Tendring Community Fund aims to provide targeted help to those areas and communities facing the greatest challenges. Recognising that local people are best placed to decide the right approach for their communities, it is designed to respond to the needs which are identified and to support the resourcing of activities.

Funding will be allocated for the benefit of those within the District by working closely with groups and organisations to meet the needs of communities throughout the District. Prioritisation will be given to those projects which clearly show how they will support the achievement of the Council's Corporate Plan and published priorities.

As part of the application and awarding process a record of the Wards which will benefit will be maintained. Equity across the Wards will be taken into account.

PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

BACKGROUND

In February 2020 the Leader of Council, Neil Stock, OBE announced that he would be allocating £500,000 to this new fund from the Council's New Homes Bonus allocation for 2020/21. The aim of the fund is to put investment into the District where it is most needed and assist with drawing in match funding where possible to achieve maximum impact and value.

Following his announcement, the Leader established a cross-party working group to look at how the fund could be established and run, with a brief to report its recommendations back to Cabinet. The implementation of the working party was delayed due to the impact of Covid from March 2020 and it began its work in the autumn of 2021.

CURRENT POSITION

The group has developed and agreed a Terms of Reference document (see Appendix) to outline the key principles to enable the effective administration of the fund through the use of the Working Party under the Chairmanship of the Portfolio Holder, Partnerships.

The proposed Terms of Reference aim to provide a clear and transparent means of governance for the administration of the fund and Working Party. The first eight points establish the purpose, delegated authority and membership of the Working Party. Points 8 to 11 address the proposed administrative routine for the group regarding circulation and distribution of papers and notes of meetings. Points 12 to 15 affirm the process for the confirmation of decisions for the awarding of grants to ensure transparency and compliance with the Council's decision making procedures. Point 15 makes clear that the responsibility of the Working Party will include ongoing monitoring of projects in receipt of grants. Finally, points 17 to 19 aim to ensure transparency and avoid any potential conflicts of interest.

A preliminary application form and guidance note for applicants has been developed and will be further developed to enable additional due diligence regarding revenue funding requests.

All applications need to demonstrate that they support and will enable the Council to meet the priorities of the Corporate Plan.

Subject to Cabinet's agreement to the recommendations supplied in this report, the Working Party will meet every 3 months (the next meeting is scheduled for 20th April 2022). The immediate priority will be to finalise the application form, guidance notes and approve a communications and publicity plan so that applications can be made to the fund. The first applications received will be considered at the following meeting prior to going on to formal assessment with a decision making panel.

FURTHER HEADINGS RELEVANT TO THE REPORT

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR THE DECISION

None

APPENDICES

Terms of Reference of the Working Party

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