

Item No. 13.	Classification: Open	Date: 17 March 2015	Meeting Name: Borough, Bankside and Walworth Community Council
Report title:		Allocation of Neighbourhoods Fund 2015/16	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		Cathedral, Chaucer, East Walworth, Faraday and Newington wards	
From:		Stephen Douglass, Head of Community Engagement	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Borough, Bankside and Walworth community council allocates a total of £160,224 of the Neighbourhoods Fund 2015/16 from the list of applications outlined in appendix 1. This amount consists of two elements, namely £150,000 available for 2015/16 and £10,224 of unallocated funding carried forward from previous years revenue programmes, known as Cleaner, Greener, Safer Revenue (CGS Revenue) and Community Council Fund (CCF).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. The neighbourhoods fund is a new funding programme, which was created by the merger of two former revenue programmes known as Cleaner, Greener, Safer Revenue and Community Council Fund.
3. The CGS Revenue fund was established in February 2012, initially consisting of £210k borough-wide funding budget with an allocation of £10k per ward. In February 2013, council assembly agreed to increase the funding programme to £420k, each ward receiving £20k.
4. The purpose of introducing the CGS Revenue fund in 2012 was to give community councils decision making powers over significant amounts of revenue funding, that they could allocate to meet locally determined priorities, and also to enhance and complement the effectiveness of the CGS Capital funding programme.
5. Community councils also took decisions on the Community Council Fund and awarded revenue grants of between £100 and £1k for community projects. The total fund available borough-wide for projects in 2014/15 amounted to £122k.
6. Both the CGS Revenue and CCF will cease on 31 March 2015 as separate funding programmes and will be replaced by a single Neighbourhoods Fund. During the 2015/16 budget setting process, a further £88k was allocated to the Neighbourhoods fund, bringing the allocation per ward to £30k. The criteria for the new fund will, in the main, remain the same as previous programmes but have been streamlined to reflect the new brand.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

7. The cabinet member for communities, employment and business authorised the amalgamation the CGS Revenue fund and CCF, into a single funding programme to create a new Neighbourhoods Fund for the 2015/16 round and onwards. This decision (IDM) was taken on 12 December 2014.

8. Each ward will have £30K of revenue grants to allocate. It is proposed that any unallocated funds from both CGS revenue and CCF are to be carried forward from previous rounds (years) and added to the financial year commencing 1 April 2015.
9. The community councils will use the criteria set out below for the allocation of this funding.
 - a. Creating opportunities for people from different backgrounds to get on well together; (e.g. community cohesion)
 - b. Establishing projects which treat each other with respect and consideration (e.g. being a good neighbour, inter-generational contacts)
 - c. Encouraging residents to be responsible for their own neighbourhood (e.g. community clean-ups; volunteering initiatives)
 - d. Specific measures to enhance a neighbourhood's environment (e.g. increased cleaning)
10. A community council may choose to allocate some of their neighbourhoods fund resources to their CGS capital allocations.
11. Subject to the availability of resources, the neighbourhoods fund may be used to 'buy' services from the council.
12. As with any executive decision taken by community councils this is subject to the council's existing scrutiny arrangements.

Community Impact Statement

13. The roles and functions of community councils include the promotion of involvement of local people in the democratic process. Community Councils take decisions on local matters including environmental improvement and community safety as well as consultation on a wide range of policies and strategies that affect the area.
14. An explicit objective within community council is that they be used to actively engage as widely as possible with, and bring together, Southwark's diverse local communities on issues of shared mutual interest. The merger of CGS Revenue and CCF will not adversely affect groups who normally apply for these funding streams.
15. The allocation of the Borough, Bankside and Walworth Neighbourhoods Fund will, in the main, affect the people living in the Borough, Bankside and Walworth Community Council area. However, in making the area a better place to live and improving life chances for local people, Borough, Bankside and Walworth Neighbourhoods Fund activities will have an impact on the whole of Southwark.
16. The neighbourhoods fund is an important tool in achieving community participation and cohesion.
17. In fulfilling the above objectives that community councils have of bringing together and involving Southwark's diverse local communities, consideration has also been given to the council's duty under The Equality Act 2010 which requires the council to have due regard when taking decisions to the need to:
 - a. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation or other prohibited conduct;
 - b. Advance of equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it
 - c. Foster good relations between those who share a relevant characteristic and those that do not share it.

18. Of particular regard are issues of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. In this process there are no issues that contravene the Equality Act 2010.
19. Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity is further defined in s.149 as having due regard to the need of:
 - Remove or minimise disadvantages connected with a relevant protected characteristic.
 - Take steps to meet the different needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic.
 - Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic participate in public life or any other activity in which they are under- represented.
 - Due consideration was given to equalities impact assessment during the design of this awards process and no adverse impact was evident.
20. Due consideration was given to equalities impact assessment during the design of this awards process and no adverse impact was evident.

Resource implications

21. No resource implications

Consultation

22. Neighbourhoods Fund projects may require consultation with stakeholders, including the project applicant, local residents and tenants and residents associations where applicable.

Financial implications

23. The Borough, Bankside and Walworth Neighbourhoods Fund has been allocated a total of £150k for 2015/16. In addition to this, funds totaling £10,224 remain unallocated from previous years' allocations and thus also available to allocate.
24. It is recommended that community councils set aside some of the unallocated funds from previous years in order to prevent an over allocation of funds, as well as act as a contingency from which urgent or incidental requests can be funded throughout the year. It must also be noted that the unallocated figures reported in the previous paragraph represent current best estimates as the 2015/16 funding round is only finally over on 31 March 2015.
25. Projects that are unlikely to be completed within the year will be reported to the community council and available funding may be allocated to other projects or carried over to the following financial year.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Director of Legal Services

26. The Local Government Act 2000 ('the 2000 Act') gives the leader the power to delegate any executive function to whoever lawfully can undertake the function. The allocation of the Neighbourhoods Fund is an executive function.
27. Community councils are 'area committees' within the meaning of the 2000 Act and

executive functions can be delegated to them by the Leader.

28. The Localism Act 2011 gives councils a general power of competence whereby they have power to do anything that individuals generally may do. This power can be used even if legislation already exists that allows a local authority to do the same thing. However the general power of competence does not enable a local authority to do anything which is was restricted or prevented from doing under the previous legislation.
29. The general power of competence includes the power to:
- incur expenditure
 - give financial assistance to any person
 - enter into arrangements or agreements with any person
 - co-operate with or facilitate or co-ordinate the activities of any person
 - exercise on behalf of any person any functions of that person; and
 - provide staff, goods, services or accommodation to any person.
30. The provision of funding under the neighbourhoods fund falls within the scope of the kind of activities the council can undertake under the general power of competence as this includes the power to give financial assistance to any person.
31. In allocating funding under the neighbourhoods fund community councils must have regard to the council's equality duties set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. The report author has demonstrated how those duties have been considered in the body of the report at paragraphs 17, 18 and 19 of the report.

Strategic director of finance and corporate services

32. The 2015/16 budget allocation for the new Neighbourhoods fund has been agreed by council assembly. It stands at £30k per ward and thus £150k has been awarded to Borough, Bankside and Walworth community council. A further £10k has been carried forward from previous years and is thus also available for allocation.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Neighbourhoods Fund Report IDM	160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH	Pauline Bonner 0207 525 1019
Cleaner Greener Safer Revenue - IDM Report	160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH	Forid Ahmed 0207 525 5540
Policy and Resources Strategy 2012/13-2014/15 - Revenue budget	http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s35022/Report%20Policy%20and%20Resources%20Strategy%20201314%20-%20201516.pdf	

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Borough, Bankside and Walworth Community Council Neighbourhoods Fund Applications

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Forid Ahmed, Community Councils Coordinator		
Report Author	Pauline Bonner, Community Councils Development Officer		
Version	Final		
Dated	5 March 2015		
Key Decision	Yes		
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER			
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included	
Director of Legal Services	Yes	Yes	
Finance Director	Yes	Yes	
Cabinet Member	No	No	
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team		5 March 2015	