

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 30 October 2020	Meeting Name: Cabinet Member for Communities and Equalities
Report title:		2020-21 Getting Involved Grants (GIG)	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All wards	
From:		Eva Gomez, Resident involvement Manager	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Cabinet Member for Communities and Equalities approves the Getting Involved Grants (GIG) programme recommendations for 2020-21 for a total sum of £47,739 to fund 16 projects by 14 organisations as detailed in Appendix 1.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. In February 2020 Cabinet approved a series of recommendations to strengthen the way the council works with the people who live in council homes. The agreed recommendations opened up the council's approach to resident participation so everyone who lives in a council home can get involved. The recommendations also shifted the resources that the council puts into resident participation back to the grassroots, giving residents more support and funding to do the things they want to do to improve their local estates and communities.
3. One of the recommendations allocated £900k to a new Resident Participation Fund, which replaced the previous Tenants Fund, Homeowners Fund and Tenant and Residents Social Inclusion Grants (TRSIG).
4. The agreed recommendations also set aside £272k of the new Resident Participation Fund for a Resident Participation Small Grants programme, which has now been named the Getting Involved Grants (GIG), and replaces the previous TRSIG programme.
5. The GIG programme allows residents and community organisations to apply for up to £5,000 to support projects and activities that bring tenants and residents together and improve their wellbeing.
6. These grants are aimed at funding projects and activities that primarily benefit people who live in council owned homes.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

7. Officers originally launched the application period for this grant programme in March 2020, inviting applications until the end of April 2020 and with the intention of having a resident panel making the recommendations on which projects should receive the funding.
8. However a few weeks into the launch of the grants the COVID pandemic, swept the country and, like many other activities and services delivered by the council, the GIG programme was ground to a halt.
9. As weeks went by it became apparent that some TRAs would benefit for some small funding allocation to support covid-19 related support activities that were being organised at local level. The council launched the covid Community Support Grants programme and it was decided that some of the £272k which had been originally allocated to the Getting Involved Grants would be re-profiled so that the SHUs, TRAs and TMOs could also apply to the Covid support grants scheme.
10. Thus £87k were allocated to SHUs, TRAs and TMOs between April and June 2020 via the Covid community support grants scheme. Therefore the remaining budget for the Getting Involved Grants 20/21 was £185k.
11. The programme was re-launched at the end of August 2020 (28/08/2020) and was publicised directly to SHU/TRA/TMOs, via the Southwark Group of Tenants' Organisations (SGTO), via Community Southwark, the new Residents Online Panel (circa 500 residents) and the council's website. Information about this opportunity was provided upon request to others eg potential service providers. The deadline for the submission of completed applications was 30 September 2020.
12. A virtual workshop on the GIG programme was held on 8 September 2020 attended by a relevant number of TRAs and potential service providers. Over 40 people attended the workshop. The purpose of the workshop was to:
 - Explain the programme criteria
 - Offer advice on completing applications
 - Outline the budget breakdown
 - Indicate the monitoring info for future reporting
 - Emphasise the importance of the community's outcomes and benefits
 - Offer presentations by TRAs and service providers who currently run TRSIG schemes
 - Answer questions from attendees about the programme.
13. On this occasion, and as an exception, the grants allocation panel was made up of officers only and not residents. This was in order to ensure the speediest possible turnaround timescales and due to wider changes being implemented within the resident participation framework as well as given the ongoing social distancing and other pandemic related measures

still in place. In 2021/22 the GIG allocation panel making the recommendations will be made up of residents.

14. Officers have administered the programme and ensured that criteria is complied with and that there is no duplication with other grants programmes. They also cross referenced with the Neighbourhoods Fund or Cleaner Greener Safer Fund to ensure there would be no duplication of funding with these schemes.
15. Following Cabinet recommendations earlier in the year the project aims criteria were simplified so that applicants simply had to demonstrate that projects *“bring tenants and residents together and improve their wellbeing”*
16. Eligibility requirements are that applicants must be from:
 - Tenants & Residents Associations (including Sheltered Housing Units)
 - Tenant Management Organisations
 - SHUs/TRAs/TMOs can apply in partnership with service provider organisations, but the application must come from the SHU/TRA/TMO, who have overall responsibility for the scheme.
 - Constituted local groups that can evidence that the application has been developed by and for people living in council homes.
17. In addition, applications:
 - Must be for revenue funding only. The maximum amount that can be applied for is £5,000.
 - Must have at least two committee member signatures and one must be the Chair's.
 - Must include the minutes of the Management Committee meeting when their application was discussed and agreed.
 - Must also include a copy of the SHU/TRAs/TMOs safeguarding policy and confirm that they, and any proposed Service Provider, are compliant with disclosure and barring service (DBS) legislation.

GIG Panel Recommendations

18. A total of 22 applications were received totalling £69k. Two organisations made more than one application for funding different schemes. The Panel recommended 16 applications for funding and the total amount recommended for funding is £47,739.
19. In making its recommendations the Panel considered each application and whether the funding criteria were met. The focus was centred on the administration and human resources of the applicants, the potential outputs and the budget.
20. In assessing the applications the Panel took the following into account:

- Ensuring that there is a mixture of awards to new applicants, as well as awards to organisations that have previously delivered schemes successfully. Eight of the 22 awards recommended are for new schemes.
 - Whether the costs submitted were reasonable and provided Value for Money.
 - The number of stated beneficiaries of the scheme.
 - Subject to the criteria being met, ensuring that there is a good geographical spread of awards across the borough.
 - Whether there was evidence that previously funded schemes making a new application had delivered expected outcomes and complied with the monitoring requirements.
21. Where the Panel recommended a lower amount of funding than the amount applied for this was due to costs such as hall hire, insurance, publicity, printing and management costs being considered costs that the TRA or service provider would already be able to cover from other sources including Tenant Fund grants. In addition some budget items were unclear e.g. no hourly rates or session fees provided or offering poor value for money.
22. The Panel did not recommend three applications (and two duplications of the same claimant) as seen in Appendix 2 for. Reasons for declining to fund include:
- Proposal was 'inward looking' rather than completely community based
 - The schedule of activities was due to start well after the end of the financial year 20/21.
 - Application was made by a non TRA/TMO/SHU organisation and did not demonstrate or evidence that the proposed project had been designed by or requested by the existing TRAs or residents in the estates mentioned in the application.
23. Unsuccessful applicants will be written to and given reasons why their applications do not meet the grant criteria. Feedback is offered with a view to building knowledge and awareness of the criteria and to enable other organisations to be funded in the future.
24. Applicants will be advised that payments for any projects where face to face activities are included will be subject to the completion and submission of a COVID compliant risk assessment.
25. A comparison of applications submitted and applications recommended for funded is below. The lower number of applications this year is likely due to the fact that many TRAs have previously used this funding for summer activities and the fact that the current social distancing measures make delivering community based projects a lot harder.

Year	Applications submitted	Applications recommended for funding
2018/19	48	31
2019/20	44	26
2020/21	22	16

Monitoring, outcomes and impact

26. Outcomes of the TRSIG 2019-2020 projects have been identified through provision of monitoring information. The below activities are some examples monitored through events and outputs have hosted hundreds of beneficiaries.

- Theatre acting
- Sport activities for young people
- Drumming classes
- Street Fest
- After school tuition
- Yoga
- Circus and Performance
- Film making and photography classes

27. Examples of comments on schemes:

- *Fitness exercise (1) "Looking forward to the classes starting again"*
(2) "Just done 60 minutes of Stretching and toning. It feels fantastic"
- *Circus classes, Quotes from parents:*
"I'm so glad she can do the class, I wish I had that chance when I was young and it's good for her to move, especially with puberty"
"He loves the class so much, now I know how to get him to do what I ask. I say if you don't come now, you won't go to Circus class"
"it's really good to have the class here, I wanted the girls to have sport activities for ages but I couldn't afford it, they really love it"

28. Key outcomes from the council's new Common Outcomes Framework (COF) will identified for successful applicants and they will be expected to report on progress made in meeting them. Some examples are:

- Safer Communities
 - (A3) Children & young people feel safer in their neighbourhoods & in Southwark
 - (A5) Residents feel treated with respect & listened to through ongoing engagement & collaboration
- Healthier Communities
 - (B1) Residents have improved access to community services

- (B3) Residents feel that they have access to services to improve their wellbeing
- (B6) Children, young people & families feel more supported & able to access appropriate health & wellbeing services for the best start in life
- Engaged Communities
 - (C2) Residents have increased opportunities & support to volunteer
 - (C3) Residents have the skills & confidence to increase their use of online services & there is less digital exclusion
 - (C7) Residents & organisations have greater access to community spaces & premises
- Greener Communities
 - (D1) Residents are more able & willing to access community spaces especially local green spaces
 - (D2) Residents & organisations are more able to look after designated green spaces
 - (D4) Residents & organisations feel more able to use green spaces to support social action & health & wellbeing activities
 - (D5) Increasing numbers of residents & organisations support initiatives to make Southwark greener
- Vibrant Communities
 - (E1) More young people feel ready to engage with their education
 - (E7) Residents across communities have access to a broad range of cultural activities & organisations in the creative economy are more able to access support

Policy implications

29. The projects recommended for funding principally target interventions and resources to improve social problems linked to quality of life indicators such as anti-social behaviour, poor social and environmental wellbeing and inequality for tenants and residents.

Community impact statement

30. In previous years demographics data of applicants or grants beneficiaries have
31. not been collected consistently. Officers are planning to start collecting this information from next year via the centralised grants portal currently being rolled out. This will allow to have a better understanding of the demographic make up of those applying for and proposing projects as well as those benefitting from the activities.
32. It is anticipated that the outcomes of GIG schemes will prove beneficial to tenants and residents of the estates and surrounding areas, particularly those from marginalised, disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. The

majority of proposed schemes in 2020/21 target children and young people, isolated and lonely older residents and vulnerable groups. Also, some schemes involve the whole community and bring a sense of togetherness and co-operation.

Resource implications

33. GIG is managed within existing resources in the Communities division. The budget is ring fenced from the Resident Participation Budget part of the Housing Revenue Account.

Financial implications

34. The recommendations in this report are funded by way of a dedicated 2020/21 budget of £185k of which only £47,739 has been allocated.

Consultation

35. The establishment of the GIG programme was part of wider changes by resident participation agreed by Cabinet in February 2020. Said changes followed a period of almost two (2) years consultation including an in depth review delivered by an independent organisation, a residents co-design panel and a 3 month borough wide consultation.
36. This year's exceptional pandemic circumstances have meant that the panel making recommendations on projects for the GIG grants was made of officers but from next year the panel will revert back to being made up of residents and officers.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Director of Law and Democracy

37. The Localism Act 2011 enables the council to do anything that individuals generally may do, which would include incurring expenditure, giving financial or other assistance to any person or entering into arrangements or agreements with any person. This power can be used even if legislation already exists that allows the council to do the same thing although the council cannot do anything which it was restricted or prevented from doing under that previous legislation.
38. The provision of grants from within the funds identified for the Getting Involved Grants (GIG) falls within the scope of activities the council can undertake under the Localism Act 2011.
39. Under the decision making arrangements set out in Part 3 of the council's constitution, the decision on the recommendation in paragraph one of this report is one that the cabinet member is able to take.

40. The council is under an on-going duty, in exercising all of its functions, to have regard to the public sector equality duty (PSED) in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. The duty requires the council to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation or other prohibited conduct, and advance of equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (such as age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership) and those who do not.
41. When making a decision on the recommendation in this report the cabinet member must actively consider the PSED. The community impact statement set out in the report identifies relevant matters to be taken into account in discharging that duty.

Strategic Director of Finance and Governance (H&M20/080)

42. The Strategic Director of Finance and Governance notes the recommendations of the report and notes there is existing resources to cover the recommended grants from the Getting Involved Grant allocation within the Resident Participation Fund, a portion of which has been allocated to COVID related grants.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Southwark Resident Participation Framework Cabinet Report	http://modern.gov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s86945/Report%20Southwark%20Resident%20Participation%20Framework.pdf	Eva.gomez@southwark.gov.uk

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	GIG – Funding recommendations
Appendix 2	GIG – Recommendations not to fund

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Stephen Douglass, Director of Communities	
Report Author	Eva Gomez, Resident Involvement Manager	
Version	Final	
Dated	29 October 2020	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Law and Democracy	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	Yes	Yes
Cabinet Member	Yes	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team		29 October 2020