

Item No	Classification OPEN	Committee Executive	Date 29/7/03
Report Title:		Tenants Fund Budget 2003/4	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All wards	
From:		Strategic Director of Housing	

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the recommendations of Tenant Council be approved (paragraphs 5 and 6)

BACKGROUND

2. The Tenant Fund is an element of the Housing Revenue Account that is set aside to support tenant participation in the borough. It is managed through the Tenant Fund Management Committee, which is in effect a sub-committee of Tenant Council.
3. The budget is reviewed annually in line with any increase in rents. The base budget for 2003/2004 is £448,786. In addition, any surplus on the budget is carried forward from year to year, the carry forward from 2002/2003 is £202,965.
4. Tenant Council on 9th June 2003 considered a report from the Tenant Fund Management Committee on the spending proposals for 2003/2004 and the eligibility criteria for recognition and funding.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

5. Tenant Council recommend the following budget allocations for 2003/2004:

Salaries and staffing costs	53,000
Payments to Tenants and Residents Associations	208,625
Late payments to Tenants and Residents Associations	40,000
Tenants Conference	25,000
Training expenses	7,500
Cost of equipment	18,000
Repair and maintenance of equipment	5,000
Equal Opportunities / Youth Involvement Grants	15,000
Expenses for Tenant Representations	5,000
Stationery	4,000
Contingency	<u>6626</u>
Total:	£387,751

with no decision on the balance of the funding (£264,000) being made until the Best Value Reviews of Tenant Consultation and the Tenant Fund have been completed. The findings of the review are due to be reported to the Executive in September 2003.

Salaries and staffing (53,000)

Funding Monitoring Officer	£19,500
Training Officers (2 x 20 hours per week)	£33,500

Payments to Tenants and Residents Associations (208,625)

To be based on £4.00 per tenancy (currently £3.25) with a minimum payment of £1000 (currently £700)

Late Payments to Tenants and Residents Associations (40,000)

Tenants and Resident Associations have the right of appeal, against decisions not to fund, to the Tenant Fund Management Committee which results in some 2002/2003 payments being met from 2003/04 budget.

Tenant Conference (25,000)

The Tenants conference in 2002/2003 cost £21,600

Training Expenses (7,500)

This includes the hire of premises, refreshments, materials and other training related items.

Equipment (18,000)

This will enable the replacement of one computer and photocopier in each of the three Tenant Resource Centres, the purchase of a Powerpoint projector and screen, and other sundry items.

Repair and Maintenance (5,000)

Provision for the cost of repairs and maintenance of equipment available for tenants' use.

Equal Opportunities / Youth Involvement Grant (15,000)

This enables small grants to be made to Tenants and Residents Associations to carry out projects aimed at involving more people in their association. This would include providing carers costs, transport or translation for AGM's, open days, fun days, community initiatives and other activities which encourage more involvement.

Expenses for Tenants Representatives (5,000)

Tenants who incur expenses on behalf of their Neighbourhood Forum or Tenant Council can claim from the Tenants Fund.

6. Tenant Council also considered the criteria for recognition and funding. Under the current criteria no organisation holding more than three times its annual grant entitlement will be funded unless the organisation can successfully demonstrate to the Tenants Fund Management Committee that this money is being accumulated to fund a specific project. Tenant Council recommend that the existing criteria be confirmed subject to the following amendment:- any association receiving a grant of £1000 will not receive funding if they are holding more than 5 times their annual grant in their end of year accounts. All other associations will not be funded if they are holding more than 3 times their annual grant in their end of year accounts. Where a group can successfully demonstrate to the Tenant Fund Management Committee that money is being accumulated to fund a specific project an exception will be made. The full criteria are set out in Appendix B.
7. The recommendations of Tenant Council are supported by the Strategic Director of Housing.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

8. The Tenant Fund supports tenant participation in the borough

EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES ON THOSE AFFECTED

9. The report proposes an increase in the grants to individual Tenants and Residents Association and an amendment to the eligibility criteria which increases the reserves that a small Tenants and Residents Association may hold.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

10. The Tenants Fund is an element of the Housing Revenue Account.

CONSULTATION

11. The report set out the recommendations of Tenant Council.

LEGAL/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

12. There are no specific legal or financial implications.

Background Papers	Held at	Contact
Tenant Council 9.6.2003	17/19 Bournemouth Road	Celine Arnold
Tenant Fund Management Committee		0207 525 4003

Appendix A

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Keith Broxup, Strategic Director of Housing	
Report Author	David Hancock, Head of Housing Community Services	
Version	Final Version 2	
Dated	17 th July 2003	
Key Decision	Yes	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / EXECUTIVE MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
Borough Solicitor & Secretary	No	Not required
Chief Finance Officer	No	Not required
Executive Member	Yes	Yes
Date final report sent to Constitutional Support Services		

Appendix B

CRITERIA FOR RECOGNITION AND FUNDING

1. Your Association must **operate under** the terms of your **Constitution** which has been adopted by your membership and recognised by Southwark Council.
2. **A representative** from the Housing Community development Section **must be invited** to your Annual General Meeting. The invitation and notice of meeting should be sent to this officer at the same time as you notify your membership.
3. **Changes to your Constitution must be agreed** by members of your Association at your Annual General Meeting or General Meeting. A copy of the amended Constitution (to enable the Council to recognise the Association) should be submitted to the Housing Community Development Section.
4. The following should be attached to the application form:
 - A. A copy of your annual **audited accounts, signed and dated** by your auditor, with name and address of auditor, presented and agreed at your Annual general Meeting.

The Council has the right to gain access to the financial records of Tenants & Residents Associations as a condition of funding from the Tenants Fund providing that reasonable notice is given.

- B. The minutes of your last Annual general Meeting.
- C. The minutes of the Annual General Meeting or General Meeting at which the accounts were presented and agreed.
- D. The notice of your Annual General Meeting.
- E. Pro forma of all the meetings you have held during the year to your Annual general Meeting.
- F. Completed draft budget for this year, 2003/2004.
- G. All applications for funding and recognition must be returned to Housing Community Development Section by 28 February 2003. There will be no right of appeal against a funding decision if the application is received late.
- H. **Current:** No organisation holding more than three times its annual grant entitlement will be funded unless the organisation can successfully demonstrate to the Tenants Fund management Committee that this money is being accumulated to fund a specific project.

Proposed: Any Association receiving a grant of £1000 will not receive funding if they are holding more than 5 times their annual grant in their end of year accounts. All other Associations will not be funded if they are holding more than 3 times their annual grant in their end of year accounts. Where a group can successfully demonstrate to the Tenant Fund Management Committee that money is being accumulated to fund a specific project an exception will be made

- I. Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form must be completed and returned with the application.

CONDITIONS OF GRANT AID

1. Before we will pay you any fund, you must send us your Constitution or memorandum and articles of association. This document must show that your organisation:
 - Is independent
 - Is open to its users being involved in the decision making, and
 - Has a clear and democratic procedure for reporting and decision making.
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2. You must have a management committee. You must hold open elections to elect your management committee. All general meetings must be open to all members. You must give the Community Development Section the names and addresses of all management committee members. Community Development Section must have the name and address of your current Secretary.
3. If your organisation employs staff, you must give all your workers:
 - A contract of employment
 - A job description
 - Your organisation's equal opportunities statement and code of practice, and
 - Your organisation's disciplinary and grievances procedure.
4. You must hold regular management committee meetings and these should be minuted.
5. You must not use your funding to pay for publicity that is for or against any political party.
6. You must tell us about all other sources of funding your Tenant and Resident Association receives.
7. We may in future change the criteria for funding; we will write and tell you of these changes.
8. You must have one bank account in the name of your organisation. You must abide by the rules in your Constitution when signing cheques.
9. You must show us that you have proper financial accounting systems and practices.
10. All property and assets of your organisation must be used solely for the business and activities of your organisation. No member of the committee is permitted to use these assets for their personal business and they cannot be moved to the member's home without prior agreement by the Community Development Section.
11. In the event of dissolution, any of the organisation's assets will be disposed of within the terms of your Constitution.
12. You may also want to appeal decisions made with regards to your T&RA. This needs to be in line with our appeals procedure. All appeals must be addressed to the Tenant Fund management Committee (TFMC) in writing at Community Development Section, 17 – 19 Bournemouth Road, London SE15 4UJ. You will need to set out the grounds on which you want to be heard.
13. You must tell us about all other sources of funding your Tenant & Resident Association receives.

14. When we give you funding, we will tell you:

- The date of the committee's decision (where appropriate)
- The purpose for which the tenant funding was awarded (where appropriate)
- The amount being funded.

ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS FOR GROUPS RECEIVING OVER £2000

1. When you want to employ anyone in a post which we have funded, you must keep to the following procedures:
 - You must draw up the appropriate job description and specification
 - You must advertise the vacancy and refer to the fact that you operate an equal opportunities policy
 - You must hold open and competitive interviews.
2. You do not need to follow the procedures above if the vacancy is for a period of four months or less. However, the person who gets the job must meet the requirements of the job specification. You must also tell your Community Development Officer or the Principal Community Development Officer that you have not followed the full recruitment process. If you extend this person's employment beyond four months, it must be agreed with your Community Development Officer or the Principal Community Development Officer.
3. You must notify your Community Development Officer or the Principal Community Development Officer immediately of any vacancies in the posts funded by the Council. Where the Council makes a request, you must involve your Community Development Officer or the Principal Community Development Officer in an advisory role, in all stages of the recruitment process.
4. If a management committee member intends to apply for a post, s/he must immediately resign from the committee and take no part in any stage of the recruitment process. This includes the drafting of the job description and person specification (we would expect there to be at least a three-month gap).
5. You must provide your Community Development Officer with a written report every year about the services or activities you support with our funding. This report must include:
 - A description of your services or activities
 - Information about numbers and types of users
 - Information about the full costs of providing the service
 - Evidence of the benefits users gain from the service or activities
 - Information about problems you have come across in delivering the service, and
 - Proposals for the future (Business Plan if requested).
6. You must be able to show that you are meeting your aims effectively. You must also show us that you provide high quality and value for money services.
7. You must give your Community Development Officer reasonable opportunities to observe your services or activities.