

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 30 March 2004	Meeting Name Executive
Report Title:		Community Council Capital Programme	
Ward(S) or groups affected:		Borough-Wide	
From:		Chief Executive (Borough Solicitor & Secretary)	

Recommendations

1. That the objectives and criteria for the *Cleaner, Greener, Safer* Capital Programme as set out in Appendix B be approved.
2. That the objectives and criteria for the *Improvements to Playgrounds* Capital Programme as set out in Appendix C be approved and Community Councils be invited to bid for scheme funding.
3. That capital resource allocations be made to Community Councils for *Cleaner, Greener, Safer* expenditure within their own Community Council boundaries from the options set out in Appendix D. The Executive may wish to allow or encourage adjoining Community Councils to jointly fund projects at their boundaries.

Background

4. The Executive allocated £3m from the Capital Programme to Community Councils on the 2nd March 2004 for local expenditure on *Cleaner, Greener, Safer* projects. The Executive also agreed £1m to improve playgrounds against which Community Councils could bid. The Executive called for a further report to consider the allocation formula for *Cleaner, Greener, Safer* and the bidding process for *Improvements to Playgrounds*.
5. For the current year a formula was agreed that gave a basic allocation to each Community Council topped up by a percentage based on the number of 2003/04 Priority Neighbourhoods in each area. Community Councils have successfully prioritised and commissioned environmental improvements and community safety projects using devolved budgets in 2003/04.

Key issues for consideration

6. The number of individual CGS schemes arising from Community Councils has been greater than previously experienced from the Environmental Improvement Programme and Community Safety Programme. Following advice in the Executive item of 20th May 2003, Community Councils have begun a process to develop a long list of schemes which together with unfunded projects from 2003/04 will form the basis for early decision-making and commitment to spend and implement schemes at the start of the next financial year.
7. Other funding regimes may exist for the broad range of projects developed at Community Councils. Subject to appropriate application and approval, otherwise unsuccessful projects may be eligible to alternative funding, including:
 - Bidding for resources under other schemes including *Improvements to Playgrounds* and the *Joint Security Initiative*
 - S106 programme
 - External funding such as Borough Spending Plan bids

- Third party funding such as 'Living Spaces' (including options for joint-funding)
- Other funding schemes e.g. government initiatives, Lottery funding etc.

Community Councils will be given sufficient information for them to pursue these additional routes.

8. The roles and functions of Community Councils include the promotion of involvement of local people in the democratic process and taking decision-making closer to local people. 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.
9. Capital funding proposals through Community Councils provide an opportunity to make use of Council resources at a local level. Any allocation or bidding options will need to recognise the areas of greatest need. The 2003/04 allocations were set on a basic allocation to all community councils (£250,000) with an additional allocation targeted to 2003/04 Priority Neighbourhoods. This allocation formula recognised the link between Community Council areas and deprivation and need identified in the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy.
10. The gap of disadvantage that exists between Priority Neighbourhoods and other areas is being addressed through a number of developed programmes. They represent the areas of highest need in Southwark and continue to warrant consideration from mainstream programmes to redress the imbalance. The capital programme can play an important role in supporting and complementing the process.

Policy implications

11. The Council's five strategic objectives include four that can be positively addressed through the proposed devolved and biddable capital resources:
 - Making Southwark cleaner and greener
 - Cutting crime and fear of crime
 - Raising standards in schools
 - Improving the health of the borough

The *Cleaner, Greener, Safer* programme supports the first two areas directly by implementing schemes for sites and buildings that are in poor condition, underused or facilitating crime including enviro-crime. Schemes provide the opportunity to improve appearance, access, lighting etc., as well as the promotion of Southwark as a green and safe borough and can have a direct impact on traffic and air quality.

The *Improvements to Playgrounds* programme supports the second two areas directly by providing better facilities for young people and opportunity for learning, achievement and behaviour. The programme will also improve the local environment of playgrounds.

Resource issues

12. Some of the options set out in paragraph 7 of this report, may need other approval.
13. Council Assembly agreed the revenue budget and the Council's Capital Investment Strategy on 18th February 2004. That meeting made specific allocations from the Revenue budget to fund the Council's policies and strategic objectives. Any decision to use any of the resources agreed at that meeting to fund the Council's Capital Programme would need its specific approval before the funding could be released. The Council Assembly did agree funding of £878,000 to be used for Revenue Community Council expenditure in 2004/05.

14. As Executive knows the Capital Investment Strategy will be managed in the future under the financial and management principles included within it. In financial terms this in effect means that schemes will only be "released for funding" and therefore committed, once the capital resources from which they will be funded, have been received. This process of schemes "release" is being managed through Capital Investment Strategy Team.

Legal issues

15. The Executive has the authority for allocating the capital funding. There are no legal implications arising from this decision.

Equal opportunities implications

16. Specific schemes will be agreed at Community Councils, with input from the community and will reflect local needs and priorities benefiting everyone.

Consultation

17. Consultation will be an integral part of the process to identify schemes through Community Councils following extensive publicity. No further consultation is deemed necessary for this decision although consultation will be part of the work undertaken to develop scheme ideas and determine the viability of individual schemes. Consultation will specifically need to include Education and Housing stakeholders.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Executive report – CGS Capital Programme 2003/04 (20 th May 2003) Executive report - Capital Proposals (2 nd March 2004) Council Assembly – Capital Policy & Resourcing Strategy (18 th February 2004)	Town Hall	Everton Roberts

APPENDIX A - AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Deborah Holmes, Borough Solicitor	
Report Author	Graham Love	
Version	Final	
Dated	22 March 2004	
Key Decision?	Yes	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / EXECUTIVE MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
Borough Solicitor & Secretary	Yes	Yes
Chief Finance Officer	Yes	Yes
Executive Member	Yes	
Date final report sent to Constitutional Support Services	22 March 2004	

APPENDIX B – Objectives and criteria for Cleaner, Greener, Safer Programme

Cleaner, Greener objectives

To improve the appearance of the borough by implementing schemes for sites and buildings that are regarded as eyesores due to their poor condition

To add value to existing Council Area Based Initiatives and to provide leverage for external sources of funding

To improve the appearance and impact of important landmarks and prominent interconnections between major routes in the borough

To emphasise transport links and improve the appearance of railway bridges in the borough

To raise the image of the borough's shopping and commercial areas by brightening them up, giving them a sense of identity and improving the quality of the street scene

To promote a positive impression of Southwark as a green borough by improving air quality through soft landscaping and tree planting schemes on main roads where traffic congestion and air pollution are a particular concern

To make Southwark's Parks and Open Spaces more attractive to residents and visitors by improving entrances and boundary treatments

To target prominent buildings and sites in poor condition for special design projects that will stimulate public interest and debate about design issues and present options for ambitious improvements in the future.

Community Safety objectives

To reduce street crime and fear of crime.

To reduce concerns arising from poor design/environment.

To address fear of crime through a positive promotion policy.

Bids for funding must:

be evidence based. This could be based on crime data, significant concerns expressed locally or by police crime prevention officers' recommendations on re-design of areas;

support the priorities of the Southwark Crime and Disorder Strategy (2002-5);

support one of the following programme themes, although other innovative proposals would also be welcome:

Safer Housing Environs

Safer Parks and Open Spaces

Safer Routes (safer routes to schools and access to public buildings)

Safer Shopping

Safer Stations

Safer Streets

School Security

CCTV (supporting the CCTV strategy)

APPENDIX C – Objectives and criteria for Improvements to Playgrounds Programme

In order to raise educational achievement and, in particular, to tackle under achievement at Key Stage 2 (7-11 year olds), the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Board wished to identify a project which linked school improvement to the need to promote positive outcomes for children and young people in the broadest sense.

The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Board has identified 10 desirable outcomes of which the *Improvements to Playgrounds* programme could have a direct impact on at least six:

- children thrive and are safeguarded
- young people choose healthy behaviours
- improving measures of children's health
- children are ready for school
- families contribute to the community, and
- families live in safe and supportive communities.

At a time when there is a great deal of activity in and support for schools in terms of leadership and management, and the quality of teaching and learning, the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Board believed that there could be significant improvements in children's opportunities to access external environments which are:

- safe
- encourage physical activity
- encourage creative play
- stimulating learning environments in their own right
- fully accessible, not only in terms of access for children with disabilities, but also in terms of being available at times children are not in classrooms, beyond the school day, at weekends and school holiday periods.

Research undertaken by Learning Through Landscapes (2003) of schools which had seen significant investment in their grounds, indicated that:-

- 65% believed the improvements had improved overall attitudes to learning
- 52% had evidence of improved academic achievement
- 73% identified considerable improvements in behaviour
- 64% identified improved self-esteem of the children and a reduction in bullying and
- 84% noted improvements in the children's social interaction.

The Physical Education and School Sport investigation, which has been underway since 2000, finds that, in schools that are promoting at least two hours a week physical activity there are remarkable improvements in attendance, behaviour, attainment and attitudes to learning.

One of the planks of the Green Paper, "Every Child Matters" and the subsequent Children's Bill, is the Extended School Initiative. In essence this means transforming schools into 'hubs' for community activities and multi-agency support for children and families. It involves maximising the use made of school facilities, buildings and grounds.

It is important to embrace the concept of the Extended School in the *Improvements to Playgrounds* project. *Improvements to Playgrounds* must guarantee children's access to play, sport and recreational facilities after school, at weekends and during school holidays. This would be a condition on any bid from a school and, in order to safeguard children, developments in Estate play areas would need to consider the requirements for adult supervision.

Bidding criteria and process (*Improvements to Playgrounds*)

The programme will be implemented jointly between Education and Housing. Evaluation and consultation will be an integral part of implementation and all bids will be collated and presented to the Executive with options for agreement. The Capital Investment Strategy Team will also need to approve the programme.

All costs associated with scheme planning, consultation, applications and approvals, design and build must be included in the overall bid.

At least one proposal will be accepted from each Community Council (priority should be given to areas of lowest educational attainment and/or lack of existing facilities). Not more than 3 schemes will be accepted from any single Community Council. Joint bids may be appropriate and would be welcomed.

Proposals for school playgrounds must be accompanied by commitment and arrangements for 'out-of-school-hours' use e.g. weekends, holidays, and evenings. Proposals for estate playgrounds must include access for school use.

Scheme design should be to minimum standards and enable activity for young people, as detailed below, as well as provide environmental improvement.

Any revenue implications must be agreed and supported by the appropriate department(s).

Bids must include certain features:

- That children and young people have been consulted about their environment and their needs and opinions have been taken into account.
- That the local community has been consulted and its ideas respected and any concerns addressed.
- That proposals cover the need for age appropriate areas devoted to:-
 - physical activity
 - creative play
 - learning opportunities
 - social interaction
- That the facilities will combine the need for site security with the need for access by children outside school hours.
- Design is innovative with evidence that expert guidance has been sought.
- Materials used take account of sustainability issues, but are also of such quality that maintenance costs will be minimised.
- Whether in schools or public play spaces, the local community is committed to keeping the facility open and safeguarding children.
- Where schools are bidding, they will be expected to be engaged in the Healthy Schools Initiative.

APPENDIX D – Allocation options for Cleaner, Greener, Safer Programme

1. Within the broad approach of addressing priorities identified earlier there are a number of configurations for the 2004/05 allocation formula.
2. Using similar weighting options to that for the 2003/04 allocation gives the following options. (An equal allocation would give £375k to each CC) Options A and B are equivalent to the current year allocation, although the total allocated was less.
 - A. £200k base provision + share of £1.4m based on 03/04 Priority Neighbourhoods
 - B. £250k base provision + share of £1m based on 03/04 Priority Neighbourhoods
 - C. £200k base provision + share of £1.4m based on the ratio of 16 declared Priority Neighbourhoods and number of Wards
 - D. £250k base provision + share of £1m based on the ratio of 16 declared Priority Neighbourhoods and number of Wards
 - E. £200k base provision + share of £1.4m based on the ratio of 16 declared Priority Neighbourhoods and population
 - F. £250k base provision + share of £1m based on the ratio of 16 declared Priority Neighbourhoods and population
3. For 2004/05 the whole of the capital allocation for CGS is to be devolved to Community Councils. Calculations for options A – D are (£000);

Option	Berm	B&B	Camb	Dulw	N&PR	Peck	Roth	Walw
A	452	368	480	200	522	424	340	214
	15.1%	12.3%	16.0%	6.7%	17.4%	14.1%	11.3%	7.1%
B	430	370	450	250	480	410	350	260
	14.3%	12.3%	15.0%	8.3%	16.0%	13.7%	11.7%	8.7%
C	362	431	443	273	336	465	288	402
	12.1%	14.4%	14.8%	9.1%	11.2%	15.5%	9.6%	13.4%
D	365	415	423	302	347	439	313	394
	12.2%	13.8%	14.1%	10.1%	11.6%	14.6%	10.4%	13.1%
E	366	410	445	283	344	470	291	391
	12.2%	13.7%	14.8%	9.4%	11.5%	15.7%	9.7%	13.0%
F	369	400	425	309	353	443	315	387
	12.3%	13.3%	14.2%	10.3%	11.8%	14.8%	10.5%	12.9%

4. The allocation for 2003/04 for directly devolved capital was;

	Berm	B&B	Camb	Dulw	N&PR	Peck	Roth	Walw
Sum	400	350	400	250	425	375	300	250
Share	14.5%	12.7%	14.5%	9.1%	15.5%	13.6%	10.9%	9.1%

In addition each CC was able to bid for Lighting and Tree schemes to a total value of £1.1m