

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 9 March 2023	Decision Taker: Cabinet Member for the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development
Report title:		Approval of capital funding for the installation and running of a Library of Things in the borough	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		Rotherhithe	
From:		Climate Change and Sustainability Director	

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Cabinet Member for the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development:

1. Approves £43k from the Climate Capital Fund to Library of Things.
2. Approves the installation and license to occupy for a Library of Things kiosk in Canada Water Library.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. In 2019, Southwark formally declared a climate emergency. This declaration stated that the council should develop a strategy, working with local stakeholders, to ensure that the council becomes carbon neutral at a much more rapid pace. In July 2021, the Climate Change Strategy was finalised and included a list of required actions to reach the 2030 target for climate neutrality.
2. One of the actions outlined in this strategy was as follows:

‘Promote and partner with and invest in community groups to develop sharing/circular economy e.g., repair café, library of things, community fridge, food redistribution centres.’

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

3. Library of Things (LOT) is a social enterprise that rents out affordable and useful items like drills, sewing machines and kitchen utensils from local spaces to the community. Established in 2014, they now have nine sites across London including Greenwich and Bromley. Their central objectives are to reduce waste and carbon emissions and help residents save money.
4. Officers have been working with Library of Things to find a suitable site for a kiosk in Southwark in line with our commitments in the Climate Change Action

Plan. Canada Water Library was chosen as the most appropriate site. There is space within the lobby for a standard sized kiosk, and it is our busiest library in terms of footfall. It is well connected to other parts of London via the Tube Station and fits our criteria of being a council owned building.

5. LOT are able to measure estimated tonnes of emissions and waste prevented for each borrower, as well as the total money saved. Southwark Council will have access to this information and this will be used to monitor usage of the site. We will annually review this data to determine how successful the project has been, with a particular focus on estimated carbon saving. We will compare data with other LOTs to benchmark progress.
6. Initial fabrication and installation costs are £43k and will be sourced from the Council's Climate Change Capital Fund. Ongoing revenue funding is laid out in Schedule 5 of the License to Occupy. The funding model has been reviewed by Southwark's Legal Team, and the agreement is subject to a review at the 24-month period.
7. On launch, the Council and LOT will promote the Library jointly as part of the council's wider communication and engagement plan. We anticipate that the Library of Things will be launched in Summer 2023.

Policy framework implications

8. The recommendations contained within this report are consistent with key actions set out in the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, particularly:
 - Promote and partner with and invest in community groups to develop sharing/circular economy e.g., repair café, library of things, community fridge, food redistribution centres.
 - Encourage and promote shopping locally to support business and reduce miles travelled.
 - Assess the feasibility and most effective possible locations of local distribution hubs for home deliveries that utilise low carbon "Last Mile" deliveries.

Community impact statement

9. The funding of a Library of Things in the borough would allow local residents greater access to tools and resources at a lower cost, and help people reduce their personal carbon footprint.
10. Measures will be taken by LOT to ensure that the installation of the library does not impede on the other services provided by Canada Water Library. They will also look to ensure that installation happens quickly, and with minimal impact to the local community in terms of noise and disruption.

Equalities (including socio-economic) impact statement

11. The funding agreement requires LOT to put in place appropriate equal opportunities and complaints policy/procedures and to not unlawfully discriminate against any person.
12. One of the core objectives of the Library is to help reduce costs for local residents. According the 2022 JSNA figures, Rotherhithe has a significantly higher rate of residents claiming out of work benefits than the borough average.
13. The project will help support families and individuals who are experiencing socio-economic deprivation and help meet some of their essential needs.
14. The recommendation in this report is not considered to have a disproportionate effect on any other community or group.

Health impact statement

15. The funding agreement requires LOT to take all necessary steps to secure the health, safety and welfare of all persons involved in or attending the Project.

Climate change implications

16. The measures support the aims of the council's Climate Change Strategy under Priority 4 - A Circular Economy with Green Jobs. Key aims of the council's Climate Change Strategy include to 'encourage a more circular economy that reduces consumption, keeps resources in use for as long as possible, and recycles used materials' and 'support local supply chains and local businesses to be more sustainable. The measures set out as part of the development of a Library of Things strongly support that ambition.'
17. A just and inclusive transition is at the heart of the council's emerging climate policy. These proposals prioritise the local community, helping them reduce costs whilst also reducing their carbon footprint.

Resource implications

18. Southwark Council has announced an additional £25 million fund for climate-related projects, which would include the LOT project.
19. Alongside this capital funding, a revenue funding stream has been allocated as part of the open book policy set out in the License to Occupy. This funding will be used to ensure the ongoing success of the project, and that it connects to the local community.
20. The total expenditure and sources of funding for the scheme will be monitored and reported on as part of the overall Capital Programme.

Consultation

21. LOT have consulted with our Libraries Team on the compatibility of the project with the space and within the local area. The Cabinet Member and Strategic Director have also been consulted at a Lead Member Briefing.

Legal implications

22. Please refer to the comments from the Assistant Chief Executive - Governance and Assurance

Financial implications

23. Please refer to the comments from the Strategic Director of Finance and Governance

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Assistant Chief Executive - Governance and Assurance

24. Under Part 3D of the council Constitution the approval of grants to voluntary organisations over £2,500 is one of a number of matters which are expressly reserved to the Cabinet Member. Part 3D also authorises the Cabinet Member to promote effective partnerships, between the council and other agencies and bodies affecting the community, in relation to their areas of responsibility.

Strategic Director of Finance and Governance CAP22/004)

25. This report seeks the approval from the Cabinet Member for the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development of capital funding for the installation and two-year operation of a Library of Things in the borough.

26. The funding was approved by the Cabinet Member for the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development and consists of £43,000 from the Climate Change Capital Fund and ongoing revenue charges as part of the open book policy set out in the License to Occupy.

27. The total expenditure and sources of funding for the scheme will be monitored and reported on as part of the overall Capital Programme.

28. The Strategic Director of Finance and Governance notes the resource implications in the report and that the proposed allocations will be contained within the council's capital programme.

29. It is also noted that officers' time and any other costs connected with this recommendation will be contained within existing departmental revenue budgets.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
None		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
None	

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Chris Page, Climate Change and Sustainability Director
Report Author	Tom Taylor, Research and Policy Officer
Version	Final
Dated	07/03/23
Key Decision?	No
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER	
Officer Title	Comments Sought
Assistant Chief Executive Governance and Assurance	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	Yes
Public Health	Yes
Cabinet Member	Yes
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	
7 March 2023	