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| Decision Taker: | Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency, Clean Air and Streets |
| Date: | 15 May 2024 |
| Report title: | Funding decisions for Southwark Community Energy Fund – Round 1 |
| Ward(s) or groups affected: | All |
| Classification: | Open |
| Reason for lateness (if applicable): | Not applicable |
| From: | Acting Strategic Director, Environment, Neighbourhoods & Growth |

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency, Clean Air & Streets approves grant funding totaling £398,988 for community energy projects selected by the council's Southwark Community Energy Fund assessment panel (subject to conditions).
2. That the Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency, Clean Air & Streets requires officers to deliver Round 2 of the Southwark Community Energy Fund once appropriate funding and resourcing is in place.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The council's net zero declaration

3. Since declaring a climate emergency in 2019, the council has been taking urgent action to reduce carbon emissions in the borough. Our ambition is for the whole borough to become carbon neutral by 2030. The council is directly responsible for around 12% of emissions and so while the council is working hard to reduce these, it is also important for us to support our residents and communities to act in their neighbourhoods.

Community energy projects

4. Community energy projects are community-led renewable energy projects which reduce energy demand or increase energy supply to local communities wholly owned by the community or through partnerships. They are typically renewable energy schemes which are invested in by local people to generate renewable energy and there is a prospect for a return on funds.

5. The community energy sector is well established at the regional and local levels, with local community energy groups and not-for-profit membership organisations delivering projects and expanding sector capacity.

Cabinet decision to set up the fund

6. At the cabinet meeting of 18 July 2022 (Item 11), cabinet agreed to make £400,000 of grant funding available through a new Southwark Community Energy Fund (para 25) from the council's Climate Capital Fund. This was enabled by Recommendation 6 of the cabinet report which instructed officers to 'proceed with additional allocations from the Climate Capital Fund to deliver projects in line with the climate action tracker and several priorities set out by the Citizens' Jury.'

Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan

7. The council's adopted climate action plan sets a corporate action to support community energy projects within the borough. Specifically, action point N.2.i requires the council to 'Support community energy projects where a demonstrable carbon saving can be made'. The launch and delivery of the fund will deliver this action point. Climate Change Team officers will monitor and report on the delivery of the fund through the established climate action plan reporting processes.

Setting up the fund

8. Through spring and summer 2023, officers met local and pan-London community energy groups who deliver community energy projects and support new community energy groups. This developed the council's understanding of the sector and informed the design of the fund to ensure the fund would meet the needs of the sector alongside delivering on the council's own community energy ambitions. The groups officers met included Community Energy London, Repowering London, SELCE, SE24, and SE1 Solar. Officers also met internal colleagues from finance, legal, community engagement and property.
9. Officers developed the scope and processes of the fund based on existing internal grant-making processes and through meetings with boroughs and the GLA who already administer and deliver community energy funds (Hackney, Islington, Lewisham).
10. Officers briefed the Cabinet Member at Lead Member Briefings (LMBs) on 14 July 2023 and 27 September 2023 regarding: the scope, funding streams, objectives, administrative and decision-making processes, and launch of the fund, and agreement was given by the lead member on these. A further briefing took place at the LMB on 16 October 2023, when minor revisions to two of the funding streams took place.

Fund objectives

11. Five fund objectives were agreed by the Cabinet Member that would ensure that the fund delivers community energy projects within the borough and empower the local community energy sector. The five objectives are:

Objective 1: Fund community energy projects that reduce carbon emissions and provide benefit to the community

To meet the first objective, community energy projects must demonstrate a strong climate action focus by reducing local carbon emissions, take an inclusive approach to supporting communities by helping them to reduce the energy bills of community buildings, and maximise the income generating potential of local renewable energy. There is the opportunity to pioneer and trial innovative low and zero carbon technology and mechanisms.

Objective 2: Build the capacity of existing community energy groups and support the creation of new community energy groups in Southwark

Objective 2 requires the fund to support and stimulate existing and new community energy groups within the borough and support opportunities for links and networks between community energy groups and our community. The fund will harness local passion, expertise and investment, and seek to improve carbon literacy and tackle fuel poverty.

Objective 3: Create a pipeline of community energy projects that can then proceed with further capital funding

Developing a pipeline of future capital projects is critical to building capacity and resilience in the Southwark community energy sector. This will unlock further future funding by proving 'seed funding' to make projects more financially viable and encourage community share offers. For example, £1 spent on feasibility can unlock three to ten times more funding through implementation. Our fund will join the range of available capital funding sources including London Community Energy Fund administered by the GLA, and community share offers.

Objective 4: Ensure the fund promotes equality, delivers social value and a just transition for our residents.

The council will require good governance to ensure that the community energy projects and groups that are funded match the diversity of our community and are located throughout the borough.

Objective 5: Ensure the fund works to expand the democratic and co-operative economy within Southwark.

The council will seek to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and skills to and within the community. In turn, this will help to ensure the community energy sector in Southwark is sustainable, and identifies new sources of funding and re-investment into community energy projects.

Eligible groups

12. The Southwark Community Energy Fund is open to all groups with charitable or not-for-profit aims which are based or work within Southwark, and who would like to carry out energy-related projects. Applications from community groups who have not been involved in energy projects are also welcomed. Groups which will be able to apply include:
 - Existing community and voluntary groups who wish to deliver energy projects
 - New and existing Community Energy Groups (CEGs)
 - Community Interest Companies (CICs), Community Benefit Societies (CBSs) or Cooperatives
 - Registered tenants' and residents' associations, or tenant management organisations charities
 - Schools
 - Faith groups
 - A group of residents, or neighbours who wish to form a community energy group or cooperative
 - Other organisations could also be considered if they are a properly constituted organisation, with a registered address in England.
13. The council also welcomed applications from experienced energy and environmental groups, and from community groups that wanted to start or continue energy-related projects. When assessing applications from partnerships the council would look for evidence that it is a genuine partnership. Applications should demonstrate meaningful leadership and control over project development delivery by a particular community partner.
14. Groups seeking funding are required to have a bank account. If applications were submitted by a consortium or partnership of groups, then the lead applicant must have a bank account.

Types of projects the fund will cover

15. Funding available through the four funding streams can cover costs relating to a project or activity including:
 - pre-feasibility or feasibility studies (e.g. to fund initial assessments of your building or to develop a project idea)
 - capital costs (to support the cost of a renewable installation or deep retrofit)
 - core costs (e.g. consulting fees, staff or office costs to support the project, but not for general staff or office costs)

- project costs (e.g. venue hire, project worker)
 - project management costs
16. Officers expect to see a wide variety of innovative ideas coming forward from the community alongside project ideas that meet the core aims of the fund. Innovation does not necessarily mean using new technology. It can also mean ‘thinking outside the box’ to create a project that uses existing technology in a new way or shows that the applicant is trying to bring new methodologies to a project.

Available funding for each funding stream

17. Southwark Community Energy Fund is split into four streams of grant funding with grants available in each stream. The scope of the streams ensure that each stage of a community energy project could be considered for funding. The four funding streams are:

Stream A – Pre-feasibility development

- Amount available: up to £5,000.
- A pre-feasibility study is an early screening aimed at identifying the most promising renewable or retrofit idea(s) and the suitability of technologies prior to business case development. This process reduces the number of options that are then chosen to proceed to a more detailed feasibility study and eventually capital delivery. This ultimately saves time and money.
- Funds to be spent within one year.

Stream B – Feasibility studies and business case development

- Amount available: up to £15,000.
- The purpose of the feasibility stream is to fund short-term activities that are working towards the capital stage of a project. This stream unlocks the development of community energy projects by removing financial barriers to project feasibility. Feasibility studies can be funded partially or in full.
- Funds to be spent within one year.

Stream C – Capital projects

- Amount available: up to 33% of the total cost of the project, limited to £50,000 per project. Full or part funding the cost of solar installation projects up to a peak output of 20 kilowatts (kWp).
- The purpose of the capital stream is to fund projects that have completed feasibility studies. Applicants could apply for a contribution to the capital cost of their project or for the full cost depending on the project.
- Funds to be spent within two years.

Stream D – Capacity building for community energy organisations, training, awareness events and engagement on community energy matters

- Amount available: up to £20,000, depending on type.
- This is a broader stream that will fund a variety of community energy projects. In order to make Southwark carbon neutral by 2030 and to tackle fuel poverty, it is essential that Southwark residents from all backgrounds have the opportunity to participate in community energy projects. More project will increase awareness and encourage behaviour change to

reduce energy demand and emissions. The council recognise that increasing the capacity of the Southwark community energy sector and establishing new community energy groups can take time, particularly through grassroots development. This stream offers the opportunity to 'seed' or support new community energy groups, and the council encourage partnerships and collaboration for this.

- Funds to be spent within two years.

18. The application and decision-making process follows existing Southwark grant-making processes and is informed by the established community energy funds of other London boroughs and the GLA.

Application documents and fund prospectus

19. Officers prepared a prospectus for applicants that set out relevant details of the fund and the application and scoring process. Application forms were also prepared for each funding stream. These documents were available to download from a new community energy webpage on the climate change section of the council's website.

Launch and engagement

20. The application window for the fund for the submission of applications was open for 12 weeks from 30 October 2023 to 11:59pm on 22 January 2024.
21. An online launch event took place on 14 November 2023, where officers delivered a presentation on the fund alongside speakers from external community energy groups. The fund was promoted via email, meetings and social media to community energy groups, community groups and relevant stakeholders from the launch date of the fund.
22. Officers set up a new, dedicated community energy email address that was used for engagement with interested parties. Online meetings were arranged to discuss project ideas groups and the application process.

Review of applications received

23. In total, the council received 50 applications seeking funding amounting to £904,245. These applications came from a diverse range of organisations, including existing community energy groups (SE1, SE24, RAFT, SELCE), schools, community centres, churches, and other charitable organisations.
24. The total number of applications and amount requested illustrates the scale of community ambition for energy projects within the borough and the need for support and funding to get projects started.

25. Table 1 below provides a breakdown of applications by funding stream:

Table 1. Review of applications by funding stream

| Funding Stream | Project type | Number of applications | Funding Requested | % |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|
| A | Pre-feasibility | 4 | £17,750 | 2% |
| B | Feasibility | 24 | £358,753 | 40% |
| C | Capital | 12 | £345,445 | 38% |
| D | Capacity Building | 10 | £182,297 | 20% |
| Total | | 50 | £904,245 | 100% |

Assessment and decision-making

26. The administration and assessment process for the submitted applications commenced at end of the application window in late January 2024. It consists of five stages.

Stage 1 – Initial sift of applications

27. Climate Change Team officer(s) checked that applications met the basic eligibility requirements such as evidence to prove eligibility and carbon savings. Eligible applications were reviewed by officers with relevant internal input from council teams. Officers contacted applicants for any further project or application details if they were needed.

Stage 2 – Review and scoring applications

28. Climate Change Team officers then scored each applications against assessment criteria for the relevant funding stream and prepared their recommendations for assessment panel. Each application was scored based on a range of weighted criteria.

29. A summary of the assessment criteria for each funding stream is set out in the following table

Table 2. SCEF scoring criteria

| Stream A – Pre-feasibility development of new projects |
|---|
| Criteria 1: Applicant experience (Weighting 1) |
| Criteria 2: Planning a successful project (Weighting 1) |
| Criteria 3: Route to delivery (Weighting 1) |
| Criteria 4: Additionality (Weighting 2) |
| Criteria 5.1: Outcome and impact – carbon saving and next steps (Weighting 2) |
| Criteria 5.2: Outcome and impact – community and jobs (Weighting 2) |
| Criteria 5.3: Innovation (Weighting 1) |

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| Stream B – Feasibility studies for new projects and business case development |
| Criteria 1: Applicant experience (Weighting 1) Criteria 2: Planning a successful project (Weighting 1) Criteria 3: Route to delivery (Weighting 1) Criteria 4: Additionality (Weighting 2) Criteria 5.1: Outcome and impact – carbon saving (Weighting 4) Criteria 5.2: Outcome and impact – community and jobs (Weighting 2) Criteria 5.3: Innovation (Weighting 1) |
| Stream C – Capital funding for project implementation and delivery |
| Criteria 1: Applicant experience (Weighting 1) Criteria 2: Planning a successful project (Weighting 1) Criteria 3: Route to delivery (Weighting 1) Criteria 4: Additionality (Weighting 2) Criteria 5.1: Outcome and impact – carbon saving (Weighting 4) Criteria 5.2: Outcome and impact – community and jobs (Weighting 2) Criteria 5.3: Innovation (Weighting 1) |
| Stream D – Capacity building, training, events and engagement |
| Criteria 1: Applicant experience (Weighting 2) Criteria 2: Planning a successful project (Weighting 1) Criteria 3: Route to delivery (Weighting 1) Criteria 4: Additionality (Weighting 2) Criteria 5: Outcome and impact (Weighting 2) |

30. After all assessments were made, Climate Change Team officers prepared summary sheets for each application and these were sent to the assessment panel prior to the assessment panel meeting.

Stage 3 - Assessment panel and recommendations

31. The assessment panel met on Thursday 28 March 2024 to review the scoring and agree which application to recommend for funding.

32. The assessment panel was formed of officers from the Climate Change and Corporate Facilities Management teams and an officer from Hackney Light and Power – Hackney Council's energy services arm – who has run two community energy funding rounds for Hackney Council. This ensured the right knowledge and skills were within the panel.

33. The panel reviewed the applications and summary sheets for each funding stream and agreed on the list of projects that were recommended for grant funding as detailed at paragraph 42 below.

Stage 4 – Council decision to award grant funding

34. The final decision to agree the grant funding will taken through this IDM report and its associated constitutional processes.

35. Applicants will be contacted by officers in writing at the publication of this IDM report to advise whether their bids have been successful. Unsuccessful applicants will also receive feedback on their application.

Stage 5 – Awarding the grant

36. Successful applicants will be required to agree and sign the council's Grant Conditions form. Any offers of funding that are conditional will need to be agreed before the Grant Conditions form is signed. The council usually pays grants in advance and usually in instalments, but this dependent on the size of the grant and length of project. Some projects may receive phased payments depending on project scope. For example, part funding for achieving planning permission (if needed) and part funding for capital delivery once planning permission is achieved.

Monitoring and reporting on project delivery

37. In addition, applicants will be expected to follow the monitoring process and provide regular project updates to the council through the lifetime of the project. Where relevant, the Climate Change Team will undertake site visits for the projects.
38. Officers will undertake a review of submitted applications while the application window is open. Officers may contact applicants for any further project or application details which need clarifying.
39. Officers will provide support to applicants to complete applications forms and answer questions. External community energy companies have also offered to provide technical support. The Climate Change Team will deliver online applicant workshops and applicant support meetings through the application window.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Applications selected for funding

40. The assessment panel selected 22 community energy projects across the four funding streams to recommend for grant funding totalling £400,438. The assessment panel's recommendations are based on the quality of the application, the scoring of the application against the published scoring criteria and how the application would meet the five objectives of the fund (See paragraph 12 above).
41. The applications that the assessment panel selected and recommend for grant funding are listed in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Projects recommended for grant funding

| Applicant | Project | Amount |
|---|--|---------|
| Funding Stream A – Pre-feasibility | | |
| Central School of Ballet | Pre-feasibility study of current energy consumption | £3,000 |
| Kingswood Arts | Energy efficiency feasibility study for the development of the building | £5,000 |
| St Paul's Church, Herne Hill | Explore options for LED lighting; Solar PV; INFH | £5,000 |
| Tuke School, Peckham | Explore the option of using a renewable heating source for the school hydrotherapy pool | £4,750 |
| <u>Stream A Total: 4 applications, £17,750</u> | | |
| Funding Stream B - Feasibility | | |
| St Saviour's and St Olave's C of E Secondary School and Retrofit Action for Tomorrow (RAFT) | Feasibility study to address high levels of fabric heat loss in the language teaching space. | £15,000 |
| Repowering London | Feasibility study for Rye Oak Children's and Family Centre; Camelot Primary School; Bessemer Grange Junior & Infant School | £14,974 |
| Repowering London | Feasibility study for Alfred Salter Primary School; Southwark Park Athletics Track and Gym, Phoenix Primary School | £14,974 |
| St Mary Newington Church | Low-carbon heating and retrofit feasibility assessment | £15,000 |
| SE1 Solar | Feasibility study for Solar PV for the Kipling Estate garages (2 buildings) | £15,000 |
| SE1 Solar | Feasibility study for Solar PV on low rise building on the Kipling Estate. | £15,000 |
| <u>Stream B Total: 6 applications, £89,948</u> | | |

| Funding Stream C – Capital | | |
|--|---|--------------------------------|
| Pempeople Livesey Exchange | Solar PV project | £49,800 |
| Surrey Docks Farm | Solar PV project | £33,318 |
| Harris East Dulwich Girls' Solar Project and SE24 Community Energy | Solar PV project | £50,000 |
| Westminster House Youth Club | Completing second phase of a carbon zero project to include: Battery storage, building management and electrical system; LED lighting project; Infrared Heating | £29,700* (*Part-funded) |
| Bermondsey Central Hall and SE24 Community Energy | LED lighting project | £3,675 |
| <u>Stream C Total: 5 applications, £166,493</u> | | |
| Funding Stream D – Capacity Building | | |
| South East London Community Energy (SELCE) | Training on DIY Solar PV and micro-wind for residential boat owners | £12,905 |
| Retrofit Action for Tomorrow (RAFT) Deep Energy Engagement | Project to engage and collaborate with four school communities via a new version of RAFT's established workshop programme. Targeting understanding of school energy use, energy-saving actions and potential short/medium-term efficiency and decarbonisation measures. | £20,000 |
| Repowering London | Recruit, train, and employ a local community lead in Southwark to build capacity and enthusiasm around an inclusive community energy movement and build capacity for community energy sector in Southwark. | £19,992 |
| Restorative Justice for All (RJ4All), Rotherhithe Community Centre | Energy group development, community outreach, CEP workshops, mentorship, and training | £18,550 |

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| SE1 Solar | Part time paid worker for project and programme management of SE1 Solar PV programme, 1.5 days per week. | £19,800 |
| Southwark Diocese Board of Education Schools Air Source Heat Pump Programme | Air Source Heat Pump optimisation, troubleshooting and monitoring programme. | £20,000 |
| Flashy Wings Ministry, Peckham | Fuel poverty and community energy outreach programme. | £13,550 |
| <u>Stream D Total: 7 applications, £124,797</u> | | |
| Total Applications: 22 applications, £398,988 | | |

Applications not selected for funding

42. The overall quality of applications submitted to the fund was excellent and the council is grateful for the time and energy put into the preparation and submission of the applications by all applicants. However, it is not possible to fund all fifty of the applications that were submitted requesting £904,245 in total.
43. 28 applications were not selected to be recommended for grant funding and are listed in Table 4.

Table 4. Applications not recommended for grant funding

| Applicant | Project | Amount |
|---|---|---------|
| Funding Stream A – Pre-feasibility | | |
| N/a | N/a | £0 |
| <u>Stream A Total: 0 applications, £0</u> | | |
| Funding Stream B - Feasibility | | |
| Walworth Methodist Church (SE24 + RAFT) | Low-carbon heating feasibility assessment for the church | £15,000 |
| 1stplace charity, Burgess Park | Heat Decarbonisation and Solar Feasibility Development Project: Solar PV; ASHP; LED, INSULATION | £15,000 |
| SE1 Solar | Feasibility study for Solar PV for Solar PV Guinness Court (SE1) | £15,000 |

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| SE1 Solar | Feasibility study for Solar PV for 2 buildings, Hamilton Square (SE1) | £15,000 |
| SE1 Solar | DHN optimisation at Haddonhall (SE1) | £15,000 |
| SE1 Solar | Feasibility study for Solar PV for 2 buildings: Cluny Estate and Mendham House | £15,000 |
| SE1 Solar | Feasibility study for Solar PV 1-10 Lockyer | £15,000 |
| SE1 Solar | Feasibility study for Solar PV for 2 buildings - Slippers Place, Matson | £15,000 |
| SE1 Solar | Feasibility study for Solar PV - Bermondsey Village Hall | £15,000 |
| SE1 Solar | Feasibility study for Solar PV - Falcon Point Phase 2 | £15,000 |
| SE24 and RAFT | Feasibility Study for Rockingham Community Centre Retrofit: solar PV; LED | £15,000 |
| Bermondsey Artists Group | Solar PV; ASHP; LED, Insulation | £15,000 |
| The Boutcher C of E School | Feasibility study to address fabric heat loss in the school hall | £15,000 |
| SE1 Solar | DHN optimization - Solar Heat Network Kipling Low Rise | £15,000 |
| SE1 Solar | Feasibility study for Solar PV - Slippers Place, Arica and Moreton | £15,000 |
| SE1 Solar | Feasibility study for Solar PV - Cluny Estate, Archdale House | £15,000 |
| SE1 Solar | Feasibility study for Solar PV - 64-75 Lockyer (SE1) | £15,000 |
| South East London Community Energy (SELCE) | South Dock Marina Solar Photovoltaic Feasibility | £13,805 |
| <u>Stream B Total: 18 applications, £268,805</u> | | |

| Funding Stream C – Capital | | |
|--|---|---|
| Dulwich Wood Primary School & SE24 | LED project | £11,624 |
| The Dockland Settlements - 400 Salter Road | LED and energy savings BMS | £10,000 |
| Streatham and Marlborough Cricket Club, Dulwich | ASHP, LED, insulation for a new building | £50,000 |
| Michael Faraday school | LED lighting project (33% of total cost) | £27,383 |
| SE1 Solar | Falcon Point Solar PV | £8,845 |
| ASCC Albion Street Community Charity LED | LED Project | £800 |
| Dulwich Village Infants School | Air Source Heat Pump | £50,000 |
| Westminster House Youth Club | Completing second phase of a carbon zero project to include: Battery storage, building management and electrical system; LED lighting project; Infrared Heating | £20,300* (*This figure represents the amount not recommended for this funding. The applicant is recommended for £29,700 of funding as detailed in Table 3 above) |
| <u>Stream C Total: 7 applications, £178,952</u> | | |
| Funding Stream D – Capacity Building | | |
| RAFT | Schools Premises Manager Programme - Training for school premises managers | £20,000 |
| RAFT | The RAFT Action Builder Initiative - Piloting a new tool for schools to enable them to audit their buildings | £17,500 |
| RAFT | Southwark Diocese Board of Education (SDBE) Schools RAFT Structured Energy Savings | £20,000 |

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| | Initiative - St George's, Camberwell (SE5 7TF) St Paul's Walworth MAT (SE17 3DT) The Boutcher (SE1 3BW) Peter Hills (SE16 5ED) | |
| <u>Stream D Total: 3 applications, £57,500</u> | | |
| Total Applications: 28 applications, £505,257 | | |

Policy framework implications

44. None

Community, equalities (including socio-economic) and health impacts

Community impact statement

45. The community energy fund will deliver extant community benefits in terms of delivering the benefits of renewable energy, carbon reductions, capacity building for existing and new community groups, encouraging and projects

Equalities (including socio-economic) impact statement

46. The fund has clearly established and published objectives to promote community benefit. It is open to all eligible groups within the borough and to groups who work in the borough, as they may be best placed and experienced to deliver fund objectives within the borough.

47. Officers will deliver their public sector equality duty by monitoring the demographics of applicants and ensure the fund awards funding to a diverse group of applicants in terms of demographics and locations across the borough. Applications will be scored on the published criteria for each funding stream which include information on what the projects are, where they are, and who they are for and working with.

48. Funding Stream D will fund a variety of community energy projects and provide Southwark residents from all backgrounds the opportunity to participate in community energy. More projects will increase awareness of energy use and fuel poverty, and encourage behaviour change to reduce energy demand and emissions. This stream offers the opportunity to 'seed' or support new community energy groups, and we encourage partnerships and collaboration for this.

Health impact statement

49. Overall, an increase in local renewable energy production and reductions in energy demand will reduce the burning of fossil fuels over time. This will have a positive impact on local air quality.

Climate change implications

50. Delivery of Southwark Community Energy Fund has positive climate implications for the borough and our community. Funded projects will reduce carbon emissions by generating renewable energy and reducing energy demand.

Resource implications

51. The delivery of the fund and successful projects will be supported by officers the Climate Change Team as part of their ongoing workstreams, with general support being provided by relevant council teams as part of the existing workstreams.
52. There will be some resource implications for other teams within the council to assist with the administration of several of the projects where the council is the freeholder of the building/s.

Legal implications

53. Please see the concurrent report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Governance and Assurance) below.

Financial implications

54. Grant funding will be distributed to successful applicants once a grant agreement form has been agreed and signed by the applicant and council.

Consultation

55. The application window for the fund was open for 12 weeks from 30 October 2023 to 22 January 2024. The launch of the fund was promoted via email, meetings and social media to community energy groups, community groups and relevant stakeholders from the launch date of the fund.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Assistant Chief Executive (Governance and Assurance)

56. This report seeks approval of funding allocations to the organisations listed in Table 3 at paragraph 41 to enable them to deliver their projects under round 1 of the Southwark Community Energy Fund.
57. Paragraphs 11 to 18 set out the details of the grant funded programmes, which align with the corporate climate change strategy and Action Plan. The report notes that a transparent, robust and accessible process has been followed in order to attract and evaluate applications for funding, and paragraphs 36 and 37 confirm the proposed arrangements for payment of grant allocations and performance monitoring.

58. Paragraphs 44 to 49 note that the grant fund is intended to deliver a wide range of community benefits and the opportunity to participate will be open to all sections of the local community. The report also notes that officers are mindful of the Public Sector Equality Duty prescribed by section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 which requires the council to have due regard to the needs of individuals and groups having a protected characteristic under the Act. Compliance with that duty will be demonstrated through monitoring the demographics of applicants and ensuring diversity in the allocation of the fund.
59. The decision to approve the Recommendations is one which is expressly reserved to the Cabinet Member under Part 3D of the council Constitution.
60. The funding allocations made to the successful organisations will be regulated by appropriate legal terms and conditions.

Strategic Director of Finance (ENG24/025)

61. The report requests that the Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency, Clean Air & Streets approves grant funding totaling £398,988 for community energy projects selected by the council's Southwark Community Energy Fund assessment panel (subject to conditions).
62. The SDF notes that the grants will come from earmarked Southwark community energy fund already allocated for this purpose, and that subject to new funding being secured, a second round of grant funding is intended, which will require a separate approval as part of the Councils governance process.
63. Officers within the Climate change team will both administer the grant allocation following a successful bidding process in which 22 of 50 have been recommended to the Cabinet member for a grant award ranging from £3 - £50k depending on the nature of the bid submitted as detailed in paragraph 16 to 19. It is important that the Council grant policy is followed and that conditions of award are explicitly to ensure that grant recipients are aware of their obligation and liability for any claw back that the council may seek if found in breach of grant conditions.
64. The SDF notes that all the staffing costs and professional fees incurred to enable this new grant awards will be covered from within existing service budgets.

Other officers

65. Not applicable

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

| Background Papers | Held At | Contact |
|-------------------|---------|---------|
| None | N/a | N/a |

APPENDICES

| No. | Title |
|------|-------|
| None | |

AUDIT TRAIL

| | | |
|---|--|--------------------------|
| Lead Officer | Tom Sharland - Head of Climate Change and Sustainability | |
| Report Author | Julija Kiva - Climate Change, Project Officer Tom Buttrick - Climate Change Programme Manager | |
| Version | Final | |
| Dated | 13 May 2024 | |
| Key Decision? | Yes | |
| CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER | | |
| Officer Title | Comments Sought | Comments Included |
| Assistant Chief Executive (Governance and Assurance) | Yes | Yes |
| Strategic Director of Finance | Yes | Yes |
| Cabinet Member | Yes | Yes |
| Date final report sent to Constitutional Team | | 15 May 2024 |