

Decision Taker:	Cabinet Member for Leisure, Parks and Young People
Date:	18 July 2024
Report title:	Creation of Active Southwark Sport Fund
Ward(s) or groups affected:	All wards
Classification:	Open
Reason for lateness (if applicable):	Not applicable
From:	Head of Parks and Natural Environment

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the cabinet member for leisure, parks and young people approves new funding for voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations to apply for revenue grants in order to deliver community sport and physical activity in Southwark for residents in this Olympic year – building on the current investment through the Active Southwark Legacy capital fund.
2. The total funding amount will be £200,000 – a summary of the scheme is included in paragraphs 18-24.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. The Active Southwark Sport and Physical Activity strategy 2019-23 set out the ambition of the council and local stakeholders to create more Active People, Places and Communities – and in April 2020, £2 million of capital funding was ring-fenced for local organisations to apply for grants that would make a difference to sport in the community.
4. Many applications received through the Active Southwark Legacy Fund have requested revenue, not capital, highlighting a need to support revenue delivery costs within the community.
5. With 2024 being an Olympic year, the men’s European Football Championships, and London hosting the Champions League Football final, it is likely to be a summer with extensive interest in sport with the ability to motivate residents to be more active.
6. This funding will help established local sport clubs to increase delivery capacity of delivery to capture the increased interest in the summer and help create long-term participation. This might be expanding existing activities, or creating new sessions that have a sustainability plan.
7. Creating and sustaining community sport and physical activity opportunities is challenging within the current cost of living crisis, and the creation of this new

fund acknowledges that an important part of encouraging people to be more active more often is reliant on a vibrant local sport and activity sector being able to offer sessions to help increase participation.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

8. The Active Southwark Sports Fund will be open for local community providers to apply in July 2024.
9. The Fund could support over 13 significant projects starting in the late summer of 2024 and running across the next 12-month period, creating an opportunity to capture the heightened interest in sport across Southwark.
10. Each grant application will need to support the commitments of the Active Southwark strategy and demonstrate positive impact as defined by a Common Outcomes Framework, or as agreed by the grant officer.
11. The core purpose of the funding will be to enable clubs and organisations to provide increased and different sporting experiences that will inspire long-term participation in activities, which will contribute to stronger communities.
12. The types of use for revenue spend could include:
 - **Staff costs:** This includes extra time for instructors / coaches, and other support staff who help with the delivery of sport.
 - **Facility/equipment rental:** This can include the cost of renting additional space for activity programs, or equipment that would enable increased participation.
 - **Marketing/promotion:** This can include the cost of advertising sport programmes to more participants in new ways.
 - **Subsidising activity for individuals with finance as a barrier:** Funding to make sport programmes reach people who otherwise would not be able to afford them.
 - **Travel training for sport:** This can be innovative ways to help people gain the skills or support with accessing community sport programmes.
 - **Programme development and evaluation:** This can include the cost of developing new activity programmes that meet a local identified need, and evaluating the effectiveness of existing programmes to help inform the success of future sessions.
13. Data provided by London Sport based on Sport England Active Lives data highlights lower participation rates in sport and physical activity among specific demographics ([Inactivity among adult Londoners](#) report). These groups include:
 - Deaf and Disabled people or those with long term health conditions
 - Residents from lower socio-economic groups including those living in areas identified through the Index of Multiple Deprivation or where there are children and families living in poverty
 - Older adults aged 60 years plus
 - Females
 - People from Black, Asian and other Ethnic minority communities

- Children and young people at risk of offending.
14. A key difference between this fund and the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund lies in its focus on addressing the inactivity and lower participation rates from these underrepresented groups and increasing organised sporting activity delivery. Applications for this fund will need to demonstrate how the investment will specifically enable residents who are currently insufficiently active to participate for the associated benefits.
 15. Successful applications will need to provide data on participation and gather information on wider benefits to people – e.g. changes to health and wellbeing, happiness/mood related to participation.
 16. In response to the need identified by the Active Southwark Legacy (Capital) fund, this program is open to all non-profit organisations seeking revenue funding.
 17. The approval process will be open and transparent in delivery, with an advisory panel including an external assessor (London Sport). The panel will agree on recommendations for funding to be approved by the cabinet member for leisure, parks and young people (or appropriately identified cabinet member).
 18. The Active Southwark Sports Fund will be made up of three funding levels – *Small Grant*, *Medium Grant* and *Large Grant*. A summary of these levels is shown in the Table on page 3:

Grant Size	Amount	Types of projects	Target Participants
Small	£500 - £10,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff costs to run activities over a short period (weeks). • Venue hire to run activities over a short period (weeks). • Example; 6-week programmes, taster sessions, startup sessions. • Minimum of targeting residents from 1 Southwark ward 	25-50
Medium	£10,000 - £25,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff costs to run activities over a period (months). • Venue hire to run activities over a period (months). • Example; 12-week programmes+, • Sessions with exit routes and sustainability plans. • Sessions to target new users, specific groups, or new sports to existing users. • Targeting a minimum of residents from a minimum of 2 Southwark wards 	50-250
Large	£25,000 -£50,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff costs to run activities over a period (year). • Venue hire to run activities over a period (year). • Additional benefits such as courses, workshops, mentoring, life skills programme etc. • Sessions with exit routes and sustainability plans. • Sessions to target new users, specific groups, or new sports to existing users. • Delivery across multiple wards Borough 	250+

19. The grant application window will be open for four weeks.
20. Due to the limitations of the fund, only one organisation would be eligible for the large grant, and two to three for the medium. The rest will be allocated within the small grant range.
21. A large grant application would need to deliver substantial long-term activities that benefit whole communities, multiple target groups and have strong alignment to the Active Southwark strategy. At least 20% of matched funding will be required to ensure that there is a commitment from applicants to deliver the project.

[Organisations needing capital funding will be signposted to the Active Southwark Legacy Fund programme – next funding expected to be opening in the second half of 2024]

22. All applicants must provide a financial plan and project plan, which outlines who is delivering the activity, how the grant funding enables/improves community participation, and an explanation of how the activity will be made sustainable.
23. The aim is to encourage a broad range of community organisations to apply for the funding, and welcome new pioneering partnerships that grow activity across the community that contribute to the Active Southwark strategy.
24. Organisations that apply must be constituted and demonstrate that they meet the criteria as shown in paragraphs 22-24.

Funding criteria

25. The grant criteria will help to ensure that the funding awarded benefits Southwark residents. An application form and selection criteria will be created to inform the funding decisions to be made. Initial points for the criteria are shown below:
 - All funded projects must be delivered in the London Borough of Southwark
 - Applications must show a clear demand / need for the investment with supporting evidence (e.g. survey)
 - Applications must have a strong commitment to being more inclusive of groups identified in paragraph 13, e.g. Deaf and Disabled people, females, people from low-income families etc.
 - All funded projects will be required to record participation data and supply monitoring information showing the impact of the improvements
 - Applications must align to one of the Active Southwark strategy themes and have a clear stated outcome(s) for residents.
 - Evidence of match funding to enable a large grant application to benefit sport in Southwark.
 - The project must help residents to be more physically active as a core aim.

- Activities should be free or affordable and have no limitations on access including discriminatory or membership policies.
- Applications must support the commitments made by the council through the Council Plan 2022-26, and Southwark Stands Together.
- Applications must demonstrate a sustainable delivery model that will not require ongoing / regular funding for maintenance or other costs, and does not impact the Council pledge to tackle the climate emergency.
- Applications must be from a non-profit making club / organisation, and re-invest any surplus revenue back into the sports club / organisation.
- Applicants must declare any other funding grants received and provide evidence of up to date accounts.

26. We will **not** support the following:

- Activities that do not benefit people residing in the area
- Commercial activities (e.g., where there is no public benefit)
- Religious activities
- Statutory duties or medical or academic research
- Political parties or lobbying groups
- Grant-making bodies to distribute grants through a different process.
- Projects that do not link to the Active Southwark Sport and Physical Activity Strategy and its intentions
- Projects that do not relate to sport and physical activity
- Individuals as opposed to organisations. Any individuals with an idea must work with a local community organisation to make an application.
- Organisations not established in the UK
- Projects that have already received funding of £20,000 or more from the council in the past year

Applicant eligibility

27. In order to protect the council from fraudulent claims there will be eligibility criteria for applicants. Examples of the terms for this are listed below:

- It is recommended that any sports or physical activity organisations should meet the council minimum requirements process as currently required by organisations using council facilities (e.g. has a constitution, safeguarding policy, insurance).
- Grants are only payable to constituted groups with the correct governance and structure , e.g. Tenants and Residents Associations, Community Interest Groups, Sports clubs, Schools and Local Charities.
- A set of accounts will be required to show the funds and income/expenditure for that financial year demonstrating a record of existence and sustainability.

Recommendation for approving applications

28. A panel will be created to review all applications that will consist of two council officers from the Outdoor Recreation team and an external representative (London Sport is first consideration). This gives a broader perspective on the applications being received.

29. The panel will make recommendations for funding based on a 0–3 point scoring system (0 – not eligible for funding; 1 – could be funded with more work; 2 –meets the criteria for funding; 3 - has exceeded all criteria).
30. Any project that affects a council or community asset will need comment from the relevant department(s) or organisation(s) stating whether they support it and if there are any implications for the project going ahead.
31. The decision on the grant award will be made by the cabinet member for leisure, parks and young people in an IDM report, and is likely to be in August 2024.
32. The date for a decision on Active Southwark Sports Fund awards will be listed on the Forward Plan.

Application process

33. A new grants management portal is in development, if the development time makes it possible then this will be used. If this is not possible, an alternative process will be applied.
34. We will provide support for any applicants that will have difficulties in making a web-based application so that this does not prevent a project from being submitted.
35. The Active Southwark Sports Fund will adopt the same standard terms and conditions for grant payments to successful applicants that the council uses for other schemes.

Policy framework implications

36. The provision of the Active Southwark Sport Fund supports the council's delivery plan – Fairer Greener safer 2022-2026 for the following themes:
 - Transforming our borough – creating thriving neighbourhood's through locally led sport projects
 - Investing in communities – creating a new fund for communities to create or expand sporting activity
 - Supporting families – creating new activities for children or entire families to have shared experiences that contribute to health and relationships
37. The Fund is a key contributor towards delivering the Active Southwark Strategy theme of Active people – and would align to many other agendas such as public health, community cohesion, and crime reduction.

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

Community impact statement

38. Project applications for the Active Southwark Sports Fund will come from the local community, the majority via a simple project nomination form available in electronic or paper format. Promotion of the opportunity will be circulated widely using the VCS sector and other community groups to ensure all communities know that they are able to access this funding.
39. An equality analysis comprising a review of the geography and demographics of people that are benefitting from the fund will be undertaken.
40. A core purpose of the fund is to get people that are insufficiently active (as measured by Sport England) to increase their physical activity. As part of the application process the council asks organisations to estimate the percentage of their service users that will be from key under-represented community groups.

Equalities (including socio-economic) impact statement

41. There is no fundamental equalities impacts from creating the grant, though each application will be judged in terms of its impact on improving equalities and access for key demographics (noted in paragraph 25 as a criteria).
42. There is a legal duty on local authorities to promote equal opportunities, eliminate discrimination and to promote positive community relations.

Health impact statement

43. This fund is about creating new sporting activity for the community, and the provision of such activity has numerous evidenced benefits for individuals, families and wider society, including:
 - Improvement in cardio-vascular health
 - Maintenance of bone density and reduction in falls
 - Improvements in mental health and social connections
 - Opportunities for skill acquisition and economic development

Climate change implications

44. There is no fundamental climate impacts from creating the grant, though each application will be judged in terms of its green credentials (noted in paragraph 25 as a criteria).

Resource implications

45. A one off revenue budget of £200,000 has been identified for this fund, it is not anticipated that this opportunity will be repeated.

46. Promotion of the fund will be undertaken through existing council communication outlets across the community, including newsletters and social media.
47. Applications will need to demonstrate sustainability. Therefore, there are no expected ongoing revenue implications to the environment, neighbourhoods and growth department or other divisions.
48. Active Southwark Sports Fund projects must be completed within designated timelines specified at the point of awarding funding (unless dispensation is given). Variations in submitted funding timelines will be discussed ongoing, with the council holding the right to withdraw the funding commitment for undue delay.
49. The total expenditure and sources of funding for the scheme will be monitored and reported on as part of the overall revenue programme.

Consultation

50. No formal consultation has been undertaken for the establishment of this fund. Recent experience of receiving capital funding applications has highlighted a need for revenue funding to support the operational delivery of activity. This is a repeated message from local groups who have sought funding from us informally, and the establishment of this one-off fund is in response to that demand and other feedback from local community organisations involved in sports in Southwark.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Assistant Chief Executive, Governance and Assurance

51. This report seeks approval of the proposals for establishing and administering the Active Southwark Sports Fund (revenue) programme for distribution in 2024.
52. The decision to approve the Recommendations is one which is expressly reserved to the cabinet member under the council Constitution.
53. The report sets out details of the aims and objectives of the Fund, which are consistent with corporate policy in this area. It also sets out a detailed explanation of the transparent and robust process that is to be carried out, both for the purposes of attracting applications from interested eligible clubs and organisations and evaluating those applications.
54. The intention of the Fund is to engage all individuals and groups within the local community by offering the opportunity to apply for funding and to benefit from the projects that arise from the funding allocations; in particular, those people who do not meet the government guidance for physical activity, outlined in paragraph 13. This aligns with the requirements of the council's statutory duty (the Public Sector Equality Duty) as prescribed by the Equality Act 2010.
55. Following the allocation of the Fund to successful applicants appropriate legal terms and conditions will regulate the various grant awards.

Strategic Director, Finance

56. This report is requesting the cabinet member for leisure, parks and young people to approve new funding of £200,000 for Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisation to apply for revenue grants in order to deliver community sport and physical activity in Southwark for residents in this Olympic year – building on the current investment through the Active Southwark Legacy capital fund. Details of the scheme, the principles behind the application framework, decision making and other processes are included in the report above.
57. The strategic director of finance notes that the costs of the proposed grant allocation will be met from (a) £100,000 from the ‘Sport grants’ reserve set up at the end of 2023-24, and (b) £100,000 from the Neighbourhood’s fund (cost code RK191).
58. The total expenditure for the scheme will be monitored and reported on as part of the departmental revenue budget monitoring.
59. Staffing and any other costs connected with this report to be contained within existing parks and leisure division revenue budgets.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Active Southwark Strategy	160 Tooley Street London SE1 2QH	Jardine Finn Tel: 020 7525 3944
Link (please copy and paste into your browser): www.southwark.gov.uk/assets/attach/9405/Southwark-Council-Sports-Strategy-Document-2019-2023.pdf		
Southwark Common Outcomes framework	160 Tooley Street London SE1 2QH	Jardine Finn Tel: 020 7525 3944
Link (please copy and paste into your browser): www.southwark.gov.uk/assets/attach/5686/Common-Outcomes-Framework-with-KPIs-6-July-2021.pdf		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
None	

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Tara Quinn, Head of Parks and Natural Environment	
Report Author	Jardine Finn, Outdoor Recreation Manager	
Version	Final	
Dated	26 June 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, Finance	Yes	Yes
Cabinet Member	Yes	Yes
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team		16 July 2024