

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 29 May 2019	Meeting Name: Cabinet Member for Housing Management and Modernisation
Report title:		Tenants & Residents Social Improvements Grant (TRSIG) 2019-20	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All wards and Southwark Estate Residents	
From:		Strategic Director of Housing and Modernisation	

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. That the cabinet member for housing and modernisation approves the Tenants & Residents Social Improvements Grant (TRSIG) programme recommendations for 2019-20 for a total sum of £162,044.03 to the 26 organisations detailed in Appendix 1.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. The Tenants & Residents Social Improvements Grant is an annual grants programme specifically for the provision of services and activities on council estates for the benefit of tenants and residents and to contribute to social regeneration.
3. The programme was established following Southwark's Tenants Conference held in 1999. The TRSIG budget is associated with the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). This means it can only be allocated for schemes run or run on behalf of the Tenants & Residents Associations (TRAs) and Tenant Management Organisations (TMOs) for the benefit of the tenants and residents of council estates.
4. A grants Panel is responsible for the assessment of the applications submitted to this programme and for making recommendations for funding. This year five residents who were nominated at Area Housing Forums were on this Panel.
5. Officers administer the programme and ensure criteria are complied with and that there is no duplication with other grants programmes. This year's application form now includes a question as to whether the TRA / TMO had applied to the council's Neighbourhoods Fund or Cleaner Greener Safer Fund for the same scheme. Following the Panel meeting, officers made further checks to ensure there would be no duplication of funding with these schemes.
6. Following a consultation exercise in 2015 the priorities of the programme were simplified and made more specific, enabling applicants to design schemes with particular beneficiaries in mind. Therefore an applicant is able to provide activities targeting children, young people, people who are economically inactive or older people.
7. TRSIG programme eligible activities are broad and enabling. They are:

- After-school activities for children
- Activities to alleviate isolation and loneliness among older people
- Activities to equip tenants and residents for volunteering and employment
- Activities to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, particularly among young people.

8. Eligibility requirements are that applicants must be from:

- Tenants & Residents Associations
- Tenant Management Organisations
- TRAs / TMOs can apply in partnership with service provider organisations, but the application must come from the TRA / TMO, who have overall responsibility for the scheme.

9. In addition, applications:

- Must be for revenue funding only. The maximum amount that can be applied for is £10,000.
- Must have at least two committee member signatures and one must be the chair's.
- Must include the minutes of the Management Committee meeting when their TRSIG application was discussed and agreed.
- Must also include a copy of the TRA's / TMO's safeguarding policy and confirm that they, and any proposed Service Provider, are compliant with disclosure and barring service (DBS) legislation.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

The 2019-20 TRSIG programme

10. The programme was advertised directly to TRA/TMOs on 4th March 2019 as well as via the Southwark Group of Tenants' Organisations (SGTO). Information about this opportunity was provided upon request to others eg potential service providers. The deadline for the submission of completed applications was 15th April 2019.
11. A workshop on the TRSIG programme was held on 14th March 2019 attended by a number of TRAs and potential service providers. The purpose of the workshop was to:
- Explain the programme criteria
 - Offer advice on completing applications
 - Offer presentations by TRAs and service providers who currently run TRSIG schemes
 - Answer questions from attendees about the programme.

TRSIG Panel Recommendations

12. A total of 44 applications were received totalling £311,029.57. Six organisations made more than one application for funding different schemes. The Panel

recommended 26 applications for funding and the total amount recommended for funding is £162,044.03.

13. In making its recommendations the Panel considered each application and whether the grant criteria were met. In order to avoid any potential conflicts of interest Panel members are required to declare any interest in a scheme and subsequently take no part in the discussions relating to that application. Officers keep a record of Panel discussions, conflicts of interest and where further clarification of information is required. Checks were also made against any Neighbourhood Fund applications to ensure the council was not double funding the same schemes.
14. In assessing the applications the Panel took the following into account:
 - Ensuring that there is a mixture of awards to new applicants, as well as awards to organisations that have previously delivered schemes successfully. 8 of the 26 awards recommended are for new schemes.
 - Whether the costs submitted were reasonable and provided Value for Money.
 - The number of stated beneficiaries of the scheme.
 - Subject to the criteria being met, ensuring that there is a good geographical spread of awards across the borough.
 - Whether there was evidence that previously funded schemes making a new application had delivered expected outcomes and complied with the monitoring requirements.
15. Where the Panel recommended a lower amount of funding than the amount applied for this was due to costs such as hall hire, insurance, publicity, printing and management costs being considered costs that the TRA or service provider would already be able to cover from other sources including Tenant Fund grants. In addition some budget items were unclear e.g. no hourly rates or session fees provided or offering poor Value for Money.
16. The Panel did not recommend 18 applications for funding for a variety of reasons. See Appendix 2 for the complete list. Reasons for declining to fund include:
 - Application did not include required documents i.e. correct signatures, minutes of meeting and safeguarding information despite officer requests.
 - Application did not clearly state budget breakdown/clear costings.
 - Costs were considered too high for proposed activity.
 - Application and budget/costings were not detailed enough.
 - Budget costings were for capital costs not revenue costs.
 - TRA/TMO and/or the proposed service provider did not have adequate safeguarding and DBS measures in place.

17. Unsuccessful applicants will be written to and given reasons why their applications do not meet the grant criteria. Feedback is offered with a view to building knowledge and awareness of the criteria and to enable other organisations to be funded in the future.
18. A comparison of applications submitted and applications recommended for funded is below.

Year	Applications submitted	Applications recommended for funding
2014/15	28	20
2015/16	50 (via x 2 TRSIG rounds)	28
2016/17	41	27
2017/18	30	27
2018/19	48	31
2019/20	44	26

19. The table below provides an overview of the number of awards broken down by Area Housing Forum. The number of awards per area is broadly speaking similar to last year.

Area Housing Forum	Number of awards				
	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16
Bermondsey East	2	2	0	1	2
Bermondsey West	1	2	1	1	1
Borough & Bankside	4	4	2	2	2
Camberwell East	3	6	5	3	2
Camberwell West	0	3	1	3	1
Dulwich	1	2	1	1	1
Nunhead & Peckham	4	4	4	4	3
Peckham	6	3	5	5	6
Rotherhithe	2	2	2	3	4
Aylesbury	0	0	0	0	0
Walworth East	0	0	2	0	1
Walworth West	2	1	3	3	4
Borough wide	1	2	1	1	1
Total	26	31	27	27	28

Monitoring, outcomes and impact

20. Impacts of the 2018-2019 programmes have been identified through provision of monitoring information.
21. Midway monitoring reports provided in 2018/19 set out the impacts the schemes were already having. As there was a wide variety of schemes, like for like comparisons cannot be made but it can be shown that half way through the schemes:

- Some projects for children and young people covered various activities and multisport sessions including football and saw a full attendance of over 200 participants.
- There was a successful art session with contemporary visual artists, where the children made sculptures out of recycled materials. Whilst another scheme provided youth club sessions along with plant-based, healthy eating workshops and looked at recipes that could be made at home.
- Projects for older people promoted tea dances in order to reduce isolation and combat loneliness, by encouraging pensioners to come together to have fun by dancing and singing.
- Other projects saw a number of coffee mornings and activities such as board games, jigsaws, card games, indoor, seed sowing, bingo, pancake topping/decorating, flower arranging, chair yoga and a jumble sale.
- IT workshops were provided every Friday, these workshops are popular because they are tailored to meet the needs of older people. Some of those attending have never used a computer before but now they can do the basics of typing a short paragraph about themselves or any chosen topic, creating an email address and emailing friends and relatives.
- Activities specifically aimed at women were held; events included inspirational presentations, motivational talks, and discussion about health topics, parenting, financial management and emotional well being. The scheme was attended by over 100 residents.
- A Film and Music Academy project included an animation course where students have produced a first “timeline” to which they will add events and comments from the residents who tell their story in the documentary and be published on the organisation’s website.
- The Sewing Class project has a regular attendance of 15 Southwark residents aged from 12 years to over 65 years old. Everyone undergoes basic sewing machine operation at the beginning before commencing sewing.

22. Examples of comments on schemes:

- According to one of the 16 year old students, “The sewing class had led me to challenge myself in many aspects such as making dresses that are complicated yet detailed and attractive. When I look back, I am proud of myself”.
- It was noted that “Some children are really looking forward to attending the three days football tournament in May 2019”.

23. For the 2019/20 programme, key outcomes from the council’s new Common Outcomes Framework (COF) have been identified for successful applicants and they will be expected to report on progress made in meeting them. These include:

- Safer Communities
 - (A3) Children & young people feel safer in their neighbourhoods & in Southwark
 - (A5) Residents feel treated with respect & listened to through ongoing engagement & collaboration
- Healthier Communities
 - (B1) Residents have improved access to community services
 - (B3) Residents feel that they have access to services to improve their wellbeing
 - (B6) Children, young people & families feel more supported & able to access appropriate health & wellbeing services for the best start in life
- Engaged Communities
 - (C2) Residents have increased opportunities & support to volunteer
 - (C3) Residents have the skills & confidence to increase their use of online services & there is less digital exclusion
 - (C7) Residents & organisations have greater access to community spaces & premises
- Greener Communities
 - (D1) Residents are more able & willing to access community spaces especially local green spaces
 - (D2) Residents & organisations are more able to look after designated green spaces
 - (D4) Residents & organisations feel more able to use green spaces to support social action & health & wellbeing activities
 - (D5) Increasing numbers of residents & organisations support initiatives to make Southwark greener
- Vibrant Communities
 - (E1) More young people feel ready to engage with their education
 - (E7) Residents across communities have access to a broad range of cultural activities & organisations in the creative economy are more able to access support

24. See Appendix 1 for further details.

25. The TRSIG programme was part of an internal audit of the Commissioning of Community Grants last year. No areas of concern were identified.

Policy implications

26. TRSIG schemes principally target interventions and resources to improve social problems linked to quality of life indicators such as anti-social behaviour, poor social and environmental wellbeing and inequality for tenants and residents.

Community impact statement

27. The Panel consists of representatives from across the borough. The involvement of the Panel strengthens the level of community participation in the assessment process and provides a level of community challenge and insight. Representatives are drawn from Southwark's tenants' movement and reflect the diversity of the borough.
28. The scheme brings a number of service providers who have a high profile in the borough to work in partnership with the TRAs to provide services to estate residents who may be marginalised and isolated. For 2019-20 these include: Westminster House Youth Club, The Purple Ladies, Millwall for All Trust, Avant-Gardening, South Young Advisors, Southwark Park Cricket Club, B Fitness and InSpire at St Peters Ltd.
29. It is anticipated that the outcomes of TRSIG schemes will prove beneficial to tenants and residents of the estates and surrounding areas, particularly those from marginalised, disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. The majority of proposed schemes in 2019-20 target children and young people, isolated and lonely older residents and vulnerable groups.
30. One of the main objectives of the programme is to promote inclusion and cohesive communities. The programme seeks to advance equality of opportunity and help to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. The monitoring of the programme includes data on the scheme beneficiaries.

Resource implications

31. TRSIG is managed by the Communities division of the council's Housing and Modernisation department.

Financial implications

32. The recommendations in this report are funded by way of a dedicated 2019-20 grants budget of £190,585.

Consultation

33. There is communication with the TRSIG Panel before any significant changes are made. The application form was recently re-designed in consultation with the current providers of schemes. The simplified priorities of the programme were consulted on before implementation.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Director of Law and Democracy

34. The Localism Act 2011 enables the council to do anything that individuals generally may do, which would include incurring expenditure, giving financial or other assistance to any person or entering into arrangements or agreements with any person. This power can be used even if legislation already exists that allows the council to do the same thing. However the council cannot do anything which it was restricted or prevented from doing under that previous legislation.

35. The provision of grants from within the funds identified for the TRSIG programme falls within the scope of the activities the council can undertake under the Localism Act 2011.
36. Under the decision making arrangements set out in Part 3 of the council's constitution, the decision on the recommendation in paragraph one of this report is one that the cabinet member is able to take.
37. The council is under an on-going duty, in exercising all of its functions, to have regard to the public sector equality duty (PSED) in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. The duty requires the council to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation or other prohibited conduct, and advance of equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (such as age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership) and those who do not.
38. When making a decision on the recommendations in this report the cabinet member must actively consider the PSED including considerations of the potential benefits of the proposed grants to particular groups in relation to the duty and community impact.

Strategic Director of Finance and Governance

39. The Strategic Director of and Governance confirms that there is sufficient budget to fund the proposed allocation of grants totalling £162,044 from the TRSIG grants budget (total allocation is £190,585) held in the HRA for 2019-20.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Summary of Tenants & Residents Social Improvements Grant (TRSIG) Panel recommendations	Communities division, Housing & Modernisation, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH	Charlotte John 020 7525 3173

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Tenants & Residents Social Improvements Grant – Funding recommendations
Appendix 2	Tenants & Residents Social Improvements Grant – Recommendations not to fund

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Stephen Douglass, Director of Communities	
Report Author	Charlotte John, Assessor	
Version	Final	
Dated	15 May 2019	
Key Decision?	Yes	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Law and Democracy	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	Yes	Yes
Cabinet Member	Yes	Yes
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	21 May 2019	