

COMMUNITY FUND 2016-17: INVITATIONS TO SUBMIT FINAL APPLICATIONS
WDA 10/16

Recommendations

That Members:

1. Approve the list of ten schemes detailed in paragraph 4.2 and Appendix 2 to be invited to submit final applications for Community Fund approval; and
2. Delegate powers of the Authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chairperson for the following:
 - Should any project be withdrawn or an invited applicant fails to submit a credible project plan within an agreed timescale, those applications will be rejected and further submissions invited from the next best placed projects at the EOI stage; and
 - Approve the final awards for funding.

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Report of the Chief Executive

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To inform Members of the Expressions of Interest received for the Community Fund 2016-17 and the outcome of the evaluation process;
- 1.2 To seek Members' approval to invite final applications in accordance with the projects listed in paragraph 4.2 and Appendix 2; and
- 1.3 To confirm Members' agreement to delegate powers of the Authority to the Chief Executive at the final application stage and to make final awards for funding.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Authority's Revenue Budget was approved by Members on 5th February 2016 which included £100,000 for the Community Fund. Veolia has also provided a £10,000 contribution through the WMRC contract which therefore makes the Community Fund for 2016-17 a total of £110,000. The 5th February report (WDA 02/16) advised Members of the outputs from the 2014-15 Community Fund. The 2016-17 Fund covers the Merseyside and Halton Waste Partnership area in line with previous years funding.
- 2.2 The breakdown of the scheme approved is for the following regional/district split for funding:
 - Regional Projects: £57,000 to be allocated for region wide projects with a maximum individual award of £25,000;
 - District Projects: £48,000 to support projects up to a value of £8,000 at individual district level.
 - The recommendations for district awards as in 2015 will be made on a spatial distribution with the best placed project for each district and then the second best until the maximum budget is spent whilst maintaining best value. Where there is any underspend in a district pot, the funding will be reallocated to the regional pot or vice versa and awarded to the next best placed project. The remainder of the

Fund will be used to support communications activity in relation to the successful projects.

- 2.3 This year's fund follows the two stage process introduced for the 2015-16 fund (Report WDA 03/15). The revised process has allowed successful projects to commence earlier in the financial year giving a full nine months for project delivery. The initial expression of interest (EOI) stage has reduced the time spent by applicants in completing an application and reduced the officer resource required to assess applications. This is followed by a second stage where Members are asked to agree the list of projects for invitation to submit final applications up to the value of the approved budget. This forms the key decision making stage in the process.
- 2.4 Subject to Member approval, final awards will be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chairperson. Should any project be withdrawn or an applicant fails to submit a credible project plan within an agreed timescale, the delegation allows the Chief Executive to reject these applications and invite submissions of final proposals to the next best placed projects at the EOI stage.
- 2.5 Food waste prevention has been re-introduced as an eligible activity in this year's fund as support for this topic from the WRAP Love Food Hate Waste 10 City Challenge ended in March 2016.

3. Community Fund 2016-17 Stage 1: Expressions of Interest

- 3.1 The Community Fund for 2016-17 was launched on 9th February 2016 with Expressions of Interest (EOI) being accepted up to 2nd March 2016. 32 Expressions of Interest for funding were received, including 3 applications received after the deadline but which were subsequently accepted as the evaluation process had not commenced. The total value of the projects received was £314,523 and these are listed at Appendix 2. This is one application more than in 2015 and once again the Fund is significantly oversubscribed. A breakdown of the geographical areas proposed to be supported by the Expressions of Interest can be found at Appendix 1.
- 3.2 The EOIs received have been evaluated using the policy framework and the 2016-17 criteria as agreed by Members. The principles set out in the policy are that the Community Fund will:
 - Be limited to achieving the aims and objectives of the Authority's Corporate Plan;

- Not go beyond the Authority's incidental powers for Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste;
- Eligible bodies will be restricted to community and voluntary sector not for profit organisations including social enterprises, schools, colleges and universities;
- Community Fund applications will not be supported for the same schemes that are already being funded by the Authority in the same financial year; and
- All awards are subject to the Authority's Financial Procedural Rules including the mechanism for recompense (clawback) should the agreed project outputs not be met.

3.3 The Expressions of Interest were evaluated and ranked within the regional/district allocations in terms of provision of maximum outputs for tonnages diverted from landfill (based on recycling, re-use and/or waste prevention), carbon benefits, levels of engagement with the community and economic benefits (jobs created or safeguarded and volunteering opportunities). Additional social benefits, in-kind support and other sources of funding for projects which maintain best value were also taken into account.

4. Invitations to Submit Final Applications

4.1 A significant number of good quality projects were received but the Authority only has £110,000 available to fund projects, communications and support to promote the schemes. Members are asked to consider the recommendation in paragraph 4.2 below and approve the list of projects at Appendix 2 to be invited to submit full applications to the Authority. It is anticipated that these projects will be the ones to be awarded funding subject to agreement of a final project plan from each applicant. The delegation proposed to reject applications and to make the final funding awards is set out in paragraph 2.4 above and is in line with the Community Fund Policy Framework.

4.2 Recommendation

The following organisations should be invited to submit final applications for a total community fund award of £107,690 as listed in Appendix 2:

- **Regional Projects:** to invite the three projects delivering the highest outputs namely Neighbourhood Services (Ref: CF26), Children’s Food Trust (CF15) and Faiths4Change (CF27) a total of £63,690. Two organisations, Faiths4Change and Groundwork (CF18) had equal ranking in 3rd place. Of the two proposals, Faiths4Change had a lower grant request sufficient, if funded, to allow an additional District project to be supported. On that basis, Faiths4Change are recommended for funding as this proposal facilitates greater overall value from the Fund. The first scheme develops the environmental education work at Home Farm covering Liverpool and Knowsley. The second project supports food waste prevention across all districts and the third scheme supports reuse, again across all districts.
- **District Projects:** to invite seven projects up to a total value of £44,000. The second Liverpool application brings the potential value of awards up to the full budget. Any unallocated budget in each district reverts to the pot to support the funding of the regional projects above.
- One in Halton (Halton Play Council Ref CF9);
- One in Knowsley (Centre 63 Ref CF21);
- Two in Liverpool (Granby Toxteth Development Trust Ref CF17 and Liverpool Guild of Students Ref CF19);
- One in St Helens (HoneyRose Foundation Ref CF1);
- One in Sefton (Emmaus Merseyside Ref CF25); and
- One in Wirral (Sustrans Ref CF3).

5. Risk Implications

Identified Risk	Likelihood Rating	Consequence Rating	Risk Value	Mitigation
Challenge by unsuccessful bidders at EOI stage who are not invited to	2	3	6	Members approve a policy framework and output criteria to be met. This ensures that the assessment

submit final full applications for the grant.			<p>is equitably applied to all applicants based on a spatial approach to funding.</p> <p>The EOI stage and amended criteria have streamlined the process for applicants and removed the competitive element of the fund and reduced the impact of time and resources put into EOIs compared to full proposals which may be rejected.</p> <p>Members do have to consider the political implications of the geographical distribution of the proposed invitations to submit final applications.</p>
Lack of value for money and quality from applications awarded funding.	1	3	<p>3</p> <p>The policy framework approved by Members has clear criteria, financial thresholds and delegations to officers where appropriate. Officers will monitor project delivery.</p> <p>Funding has been determined as part of the overall budget setting process.</p>

6. HR Implications

- 6.1 The recommended grant allocation in paragraph 4.2 will reduce funds set aside for communications support to projects compared with the 2015-16 Fund. However, the need for communications support may be mitigated since 50% of the projects recommended for funding have received Community Funding in previous years and have improved awareness and resources for effective communications as a result. Should additional levels of communications support be required then this may need increased support from internal staff resources.

7. Environmental Implications

- 7.1 The recommended list of applications to be invited to the next stage of the process all aim to deliver the Authority's corporate objectives and provide high environmental outputs and improvements.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 Based on the Community Fund scheme being applied as proposed in this report, the projects being taken forward will account for £107,690 of the £110,000 allocated budget with the remaining £2,310 being used for communications to promote the projects. Should any of the projects not proceed to final award, consideration will be given to any substitute applications taking into account the impact on funding available particularly for communications which could be significantly reduced.

9. Legal Implications

- 9.1 In providing the Community Fund, the policy framework establishes that the Authority will not go beyond its incidental powers for Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste (i.e. waste from households, as well as other wastes, which because of its nature or composition is similar to waste from households).

10. Conclusion

- 10.1 The policy framework and control measures continue to prove effective in protecting the public purse and meeting Best Value requirements.
- 10.2 The 10 schemes that are recommended to be invited to proceed to final application stage provide the maximum outputs and value for money to the Authority from the 32 applications submitted.

- 10.3 Pending Authority approval to invite schemes to the final application stage projects should be awarded in May/June 2016 allowing a full nine months for project delivery. Members will be advised of the final projects awarded.

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The background documents to this report are open to inspection in accordance with Section 100D of The Local Government Act 1972 - Nil.