

## Cabinet

30 June 2025

### Part 1 - Public

#### Executive Non-key Decision



Cabinet Member	Cllr Des Keers (Cabinet Member for Community Services)
Responsible Officer	Damian Roberts (Chief Executive)
Report Author	Gill Fox (Policy, Scrutiny and Communities Manager)

#### UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) – Community Development Grant Scheme

##### 1 Summary and Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To set out the scheme in detail and seek approval to launch in July 2025.

##### 2 Corporate Strategy Priority Area

- 2.1 Efficient services for all our residents, maintaining an effective council.
- 2.2 The grants will support local voluntary, community and charitable groups to deliver targeted services that meet residents' needs and enhance the quality of life in the community.

##### 3 Recommendations

- 3.1 To **ENDORSE** the priorities for the scheme as set out in the report
- 3.2 To **ENDORSE** the Guidance and Scoring Criteria as set out in Annex 1
- 3.3 To **AGREE** the launch of the scheme on 14 July 2025

##### 4 Introduction and Background

- 4.1 This will be the third round of the UKSPF Community Development Grant Scheme in addition to a recent TMBC 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Community Grant Scheme which has just completed. All schemes have been delivered along the same lines with the following principles and funding priorities:
- A specific project deliverable in the year the grant is awarded
  - Projects which are funded from a variety of sources where the Council can provide additional financial support

- Projects which help the Council meet one or more of the priorities set out in the Corporate Strategy
- Projects which address one or more of the following priorities:
  - **Helping vulnerable communities through the cost-of-living crisis**
  - **Supporting healthy lifestyles**
  - **Improving community safety**
  - **Helping people gain skills to access the workplace**
  - **Supporting environmental and carbon reduction initiatives**

4.2 All three previous Community Development Grant Schemes have been well received by the local voluntary, community and charity sector. Each scheme has attracted a lot of applicants and as a result many projects across the borough have been delivered, providing vital support to residents.

4.3 The schemes have been over-subscribed and to help manage this process, guidelines and scoring criteria have been provided to applicants to ensure they are aware of our funding priorities and to maintain a fair and consistent approach to grant allocation.

## **5 Proposal**

5.1 As the previous schemes have been so popular and achieved the objectives set out in the above priorities, it is proposed that we maintain the same process. However, to encourage new applicants, it is suggested that the scoring criteria is amended slightly, giving higher priority for any group who has not received TMBC funding in the previous two years. It is suggested that the maximum amount of grant that can be applied for is £2,500.

5.2 The guidance and suggested scoring criteria are set out in Annex 1. As before, applicants must submit an online application, to a strict deadline, providing the necessary supporting evidence. This will include follow up grant monitoring to ensure the projects have been delivered as planned along with taking part in any publicity to help promote the work of the scheme.

5.3 Subject to Member approval, the scheme will launch on 14 July 2025. As this is just before the main summer holiday period, an extended application timeframe of 9 weeks will be in place, with the deadline for applicants to submit bids being the 15 September 2025.

## **6 Other Options**

6.1 As previous rounds have worked well, the proposal is to continue with the same criteria and funding priorities. Consideration was given to offering a higher grant to a smaller number of applicants, however the scheme tends to attract small local groups and relatively small amounts make a huge difference to their operation. Offering grants up to a maximum of £2,500 will hopefully mean that more groups

are supported, less groups are turned down and we can cover a wider geography across the borough.

## **7 Financial and Value for Money Considerations**

- 7.1 For this round of the UKSPF Community Development Grant Scheme, we have a total amount of £76,660. Applicants will be able to bid for grants of up to £2,500.

## **8 Risk Assessment**

- 8.1.1 The application process has been designed to minimise risk, with assessments based on set criteria. Payments will only be made following this process and upon receipt of audited or signed accounts, along with a copy of the organisation's constitution.

## **9 Legal Implications**

- 9.1.1 Applications will be assessed against set priorities and scored against set criteria.

## **10 Consultation and Communications**

- 10.1 The grant scheme will be promoted via the website and ongoing social media posts. Applicants are asked to agree to any publicity regarding the grant during the application stage. Following receipt of funding, all recipients will need to complete a monitoring form to evidence completion of the project.

## **11 Implementation**

- 11.1 The scheme will launch on 14 July 2025 and close on 15 September 2025, when scoring and assessment will take place. Final approval of grant allocations will be at Cabinet on 14 October 2025, with funds distributed from the end of October 2025. Monitoring forms will need to be returned by March 2025.

## **12 Cross Cutting Issues**

- 12.1 Climate Change and Biodiversity

- 12.1.1 Limited or low impact on emissions and environment.

- 12.1.2 Climate change advice has been sought in the preparation of the options and recommendations in this report.

- 12.1.3 Included in the priorities for the scheme are “supporting environmental and carbon reduction initiatives”. Applicants will receive higher scores if they meet priorities of the scheme, including any projects that positively support carbon reduction, biodiversity or environmental improvements. Previous rounds have included projects making a positive contribution to this priority and it is hoped that this scheme will also deliver against this priority.

## 12.2 Equalities and Diversity

12.2.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

## 12.3 Other If Relevant

- Health and Safety
- Healthy Lifestyles

12.3.1 Priorities of the scheme include projects that improve community safety, support vulnerable people and support healthy lifestyles.

Background Papers	None
Annexes	Annex 1 – Guidance and Scoring Criteria