

Forward Plan reference number: Not applicable

Report title: Community Safety Initiatives Fund and Bleed Bag Funding	
Report to: Cllr Louise McKinlay, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Levelling Up, Communities and Business Engagement and Cllr Chris Whitbread, Chancellor of Essex and Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Finance	
Report author: Richard Puleston, Director, Policy	
Date: 12 March 2024	For: Decision
Enquiries to: Shammi Jalota, Head of Equalities and Partnerships, and Caroline Ellis, Community Safety Lead	
County Divisions affected: All Essex	

1. Everyone's Essex

- 1.1 The approach that this fund will take is designed to directly support grass roots community led action that will be aligned to our priorities in Everyone's Essex around improving the safety of Essex residents, including children and young people, and working in partnership to help make our communities safer and addressing key issues such as violence and vulnerability, and safety for women and girls.
- 1.2 The fund will also support our commitments around supporting local businesses and our town centres by encouraging community and partner led initiatives to improve safety in town centres, particularly after dark.
- 1.3 Working with and empowering communities are key components of Everyone's Essex with specific commitments across all four of our strategic aims and are enshrined in our key operating principles for how we will work as an organisation.
- 1.4 As such this fund will directly contribute to delivering our levelling up commitments as well as acting as a catalyst for closer working with specific communities in the future.
- 1.5 Separate one off funding of £6000 for bleed control bag also supports our priorities in Everyone's Essex around the safety of Essex residents, including children and young people, and working to work in partnership partners to help make our communities safer and addressing key issues such as violence and vulnerability.

2 Recommendations

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Levelling Up, Communities and Business Engagement:

- 2.1 Agree to create a fund of £100,000 which is to be allocated for a grants programme known as the Community Safety Initiatives Programme
- 2.2 Agree the criteria for the fund will be as set out in paragraph 3.11-3.32 and that the minimum grant will be £500 and the maximum will be £2,000
- 2.3 Agree to invite bids in funding rounds regularly with all money to be spent by 31 March 2025.
- 2.4 Agree that all funding decisions will be made by the Deputy Leader via a Cabinet Member Decision.
- 2.5 Agree that all grants will be subject to the set terms and conditions, approved by the Monitoring Officer.
- 2.6 Note that the grant conditions and criteria will be reviewed from time to time and that a further decision may be taken by the Deputy Leader to achieve this.
- 2.7 Agree that the Head of Equalities and Partnerships will carry out an analysis of the outcomes achieved at the end of the fund.

Chancellor for Essex and Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Finance:

- 2.8 Agree to the draw down of £50,000 from the Ambition Fund Reserve.
- 2.9 Agree to the virement of £50,000 from the Director, Legal and Assurance's budget to the Director, Policy's budget.
- 2.10 Agree to the draw down of £6,000 from the Levelling Up funding within the Everyone's Essex Reserve for the purchase of 60 bleed control bags in venues around the county.

3 Background and Proposal

Community Safety Initiatives Fund

- 3.1 The proposal is to establish a £100,000 Community Safety Initiatives Fund which will operate across the whole of the Essex County Council administrative area offering grants of between £500 and £2,000.
- 3.2 Crime is going down across Essex Police for area, with an overall reduction in offences of 5.7% in 2023 compared to 2022. However, after recently good performance, we are starting to see increases in some acquisitive crime types that impact on people the most including burglary (+9%) and vehicle offences (+10.5%).
- 3.3 Fear of crime also continues to have a greater impact on people than the factual likelihood of becoming a victim. For example, a recent Community

Safety Survey showed that whilst only 3% of respondents had been a victim of burglary, 83% said they were worried or fairly worried about becoming a victim.

- 3.4 Reports of anti-social behaviour (ASB) to the Police reduced by 37.6% in 2023 compared to 2022. However, the Community Safety Survey showed that 92% of respondents had seen at least one type of anti-social behaviour in the past 12 months, with only 18% reporting it to the Police and 16% to their local council.
- 3.5 The fund will be launched with an initial round of applications. Depending on the number of successful applications after the first round, further rounds of funding will take place until all funding has been allocated to suitable projects.
- 3.6 Successful applicants will be required to agree to a set of Terms and Conditions that include keeping receipts for purchases and contributing to future case studies and good practice including sharing of ideas through feedback from the community and photographs.
- 3.7 The fund will be formed through the amalgamation of identified underspends from other programmes coming to an end. This includes the use of £50,000 to be repurposed from the Violence Against Women and Girls Programme (approved on CMA FP3900422 and available in the Ambition Fund Reserve) and the use of £50,000 to be funded by a virement from the Legal and Assurance Budget.
- 3.8 The fund will be managed by the Equalities and Partnerships Team of Essex County Council within existing staff resources.
- 3.9 The number of applications received, the types of activities seeking funding, and the areas of the county where applications are coming from will be monitored after each round of funding to aid in targeting future promotional and engagement activities to increase applications from underrepresented areas of the county and to make recommendations to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Levelling Up, Communities and Business Engagement about any changes to criteria that might be required after the first round and at the six and twelve month point.
- 3.10 The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Levelling Up, Communities and Business Engagement will have the option to review the fund after each round of applications to determine:
 - a) whether the grant criteria will remain the same or should be changed for any further rounds of applications, and,
 - b) if the amount of funding remaining is enough to continue with any further rounds of applications.

Any change will need a Cabinet Member decision.

- 3.11 If after 31 March 2025 there are still funds remaining from the launch of the first round of applications, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Levelling Up, Communities and Business Engagement will make a decision on whether to

continue with further rounds of funding or to reallocate funds to other related purposes.

3.12 Funding rounds will not be opened during the pre-election period.

What can be funded?

3.13 The CSIF is aimed at helping communities to reduce crime and support community safety initiatives that address the following themes:

3.14 Preventing crime, reducing anti-social behaviour and making people feel safer, with a particular focus on:

- a. Improving home and personal safety.
- b. Improving safety in the night-time economy.
- c. Tackling crime in rural areas.
- d. Physical improvements to areas known for criminal activities or anti-social behaviour.
- e. Diversionary activities aimed at stopping those at risk of becoming offenders from committing offences.

3.15 Supporting local communities, encouraging volunteers and community support, with a particular focus on:

- a. Raising awareness and encouraging community involvement in initiatives to improve community safety and making people feel safer.
- b. Promoting volunteering opportunities.
- c. Supporting community events attended by over 250 people which promote community spirit and offer opportunities for local businesses.

3.16 The Community Safety Initiatives Fund will be open to organisations which serve communities in the Essex County Council administrative area only and is one of the following:

- a. voluntary and community organisation with a proper constitution.
- b. registered charity
- c. charitable incorporated organisation (CIO)
- d. not-for-profit company limited by guarantee
- e. community interest company (CIC)
- f. town, parish, village or community council

3.17 We will not be accepting applications from:

- a. individuals
- b. sole traders
- c. organisations based outside the UK
- d. organisations that look to make profits and share these profits out privately. This includes companies limited by shares, organisations without the right asset locks, or organisations that can pay profits to directors or shareholders.

3.18 Applicants can apply for what they need to help them support a wide range of activities. Groups will need to tell us what they want to do, how the funding

will be spent, what positive outcomes the activity will provide and any longer-term legacy that the funding will enable.

- 3.19 Projects must demonstrate how they will improve or promote community safety within the local community and have a positive impact.
- 3.20 The Fund can meet the following costs as long as they are clearly linked to the applied for project:
- Project staff/volunteer training costs.
 - Transport costs.
 - Hiring of equipment / venue / rooms.
 - Small items of equipment linked to the project up to £500 per item.
 - Marketing and publicity costs including printing costs.
 - Volunteer expenses.
 - Funding to support community safety at community events
 - Raising community awareness / promoting educational safety initiatives
- 3.21 The CSIF cannot cover the following:
- Purchases of items of equipment or assets unless they cost under £500 per item).
 - Capital works, renovation or conservation projects.
 - Contingency costs, loans, endowments or interest.
 - Profit-making or fundraising activities.
 - Gifts, or payments for gifts, or donations (with the exception of incentives).
 - Unspecified contributions to general costs or a large project
- 3.22 Terms and conditions with which successful applicants must comply will be published.

Decision Making

- 3.23 Applications will be shared with the local district Community Safety team for feedback prior to approval by ECC. This is to ensure proposed activity reflects local priorities, links-in with existing commissioned or grant-funded activity and provides the ECC with value for money.
- 3.24 Decisions will be made using all available evidence. Applications will be approved if funding is available and the Deputy Leader considers that the application makes a strong contribution to meeting CSIFs objectives and meets the rules of the scheme.
- 3.25 ECC aims to ensure a fair and equitable distribution of funding across Essex, and between the priorities within the CSIF's objectives.
- 3.26 We aim to make a decision and respond to applicants in within five weeks of the closing date. Applicants will be notified in advance if there is likely to be a delay.

Payments

- 3.27 No payment will be made unless:
- a) the recipient has confirmed that it agrees to these terms and conditions
 - b) ECC has made a confirmed offer of funding
 - c) the recipient has provided details of a bank account which is used exclusively by the recipient.
- 3.28 No payment will be made other than by BACS to the bank account notified to ECC by the recipient.
- 3.29 Where funding is provided in advance there is a risk that it may not be spent on the expected objectives.

Use of Grant Money and Monitoring

- 3.30 The CSIF money cannot be spent on:
- a) Supporting an organisation which is political or undertakes any political campaigning.
 - b) Anything which has a significant ongoing maintenance or support liability.
 - c) Anything which benefits a particular individual, business or 'for profit' organisation.
 - d) Supporting anything which is unlawful.
 - e) Reimbursing someone for money they have already spent or committed to.
 - f) Funding an organisation's day to day running costs for which they have already budgeted.
- 3.31 On receipt of payment the recipient must spend the money no later than six months from the date of the award letter, and must return any unspent money to ECC on demand. The recipient must also maintain receipts should they be required at a later date.
- 3.32 The recipient must provide ECC with such information as ECC may reasonably require about how CSIF money has been spent and the community benefit which has arisen. This includes photographs and testimony from local residents as well as agreement to take part in a future case study.

How the Fund will be advertised

- 3.33 To ensure we reach eligible organisations across the county, we will effectively communicate regularly while the fund is open. We will release details of the fund directly to organisations using our existing channels and networks. We will also share on our social media channels and existing communications channels. We will also communicate about the fund directly to partners and promote to the local media.

Bleed Control Bag Funding

- 3.34 In addition to the funding allocated to the Community Safety Initiatives Fund (as set out above) it is proposed that a separate £6000 be drawn down from the Levelling Up funding within the Everyone's Essex reserve, to fund 60 bleed control bag kits in public locations around the county.

- 3.35 Bleed Control Bags are portable kits containing specialist equipment that can be used in the event of an accident or injury leading to a catastrophic bleed and are used to stem the blood loss until professional medical assistance can arrive on the scene.
- 3.36 The kits have received increased public attention for helping victims of knife crime and violent crime but can also be used to address a range of other causes of injuries in public such as vehicle accidents or severe falls that lead to heavy bleeding.
- 3.37 Each kit costs £100 with funding made available to provide five kits per district council area, to compliment kits already available in priority areas. Identification of suitable locations in our communities and supply of kits will be undertaken by The Liam Taylor Legacy, a local charity established by the family of Liam Taylor who lost his life to knife crime in 2020.
- 3.38 Funding will be made as a one-off payment to The Liam Taylor Legacy Charity.

4 Links to our Strategic Ambitions

- 4.1 This report links to the following aims in the Essex Vision
- Strengthen communities through participation
 - Connect us to each other and the world
- 4.2 Approving the recommendations in this report will have the following impact on the Council's ambition to be net carbon neutral by 2030:
- 4.3
- 4.4 This report links to the following strategic priorities in the emerging Organisational Strategy 'Everyone's Essex':
- A strong, inclusive and sustainable economy
 - A good place for children and families to grow

5 Options

5.1 Community Safety Initiatives Fund

Option 1a (Preferred)

- Create the Community Safety Initiative Fund as detailed above, commencing from the 21 March 2024.

Option 1b

- Choose not to establish the Community Safety Initiatives Fund

5.2 Bleed Control Bag Funding

Option 2a (Preferred)

- Approve the draw down of £6000 from the Levelling Up Reserve to fund 60 bleed control bags through The Liam Taylor Legacy Charity.

Option 2b

- Do not fund the provision of bleed control bags as detailed above.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 The total cost of the scheme is £106,000 in 2023/24 and it is proposed to be financed by the following means:

- The use of £50,000 to be repurposed from the Violence Against Women and Girls Programme (approved on CMA FP3900422 and available in the Ambition Fund Reserve in 2023/24
- The use of £50,000 to be repurposed from the 2023/24 Essex County Council Locality Fund, as previously approved by CMA FP1100423 to be vired from the Director, Legal and Assurance Budget to the Director, Policy Budget.
- The use of £6,000 for the bleed control bag funding from the levelling up funding within the Everyone's Essex Reserve in 2023/24

6.2 The Community Safety Initiative Fund will be allocated and run as set out in Section 3 of this report.

6.3 All grants will be made on terms and conditions approved by the Monitoring Officer.

6.4 Any award of funding by way of a grant will be accompanied with a grant letter for signature by the beneficiary. This will include conditions to ensure that it is unlawful for the funding not to be spent in the way agreed within the grant award letter.

6.5 Grant funding will normally be paid after the expenditure is incurred unless this will prejudice the delivery of the proposal in which case ECC may agree to pay in advance.

6.6 The release of the funding for agreed applications will be subject to separate decision papers approved by the Deputy Leader.

6.7 The fund will be managed by the Equalities and Partnerships Team of Essex County Council from within existing staff resources.

6.8 Legal implications

6.8.1 As with any scheme of this nature it's important to ensure proper and transparent decision making and to ensure that funding is properly allocated. It's also important to ensure proper terms and conditions are in place to ensure that things are spent properly.

7 Equality and Diversity Considerations

- 7.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:
- (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful
 - (b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - (c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
- 7.2 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil Partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).
- 7.3 The Equalities Comprehensive Impact Assessment indicates that the proposals in this report will not have a disproportionately adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic.

8 List of Appendices

Equalities Comprehensive Impact Assessment

9 List of Background papers

None.

I approve the above recommendations set out above relating to my portfolio for the reasons set out in the report.	Date 18.03.24
Councillor Louise McKinlay, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Levelling Up, Communities and Business Engagement	
I approve the above recommendations set out above for the reasons set out in the report.	Date 18.03.24
Councillor Chris Whitbread, Chancellor of Essex and Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Finance	

In consultation with:

Role	Date
Michael Neumann on behalf of Nicole Wood, Executive Director, Corporate Services (S151 Officer)	15.03.24

Director, Legal and Assurance (Monitoring Officer) Paul Turner	14 March 2024
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