

Forward Plan reference number: Not applicable

Report title: Local Community Fund: Seventh round of funding proposals	
Report to: Councillor Louise McKinlay – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Levelling Up and the Economy	
Report author: Paul Turner, Director, Legal and Assurance	
Date: 12 March 2024	For: Decision
Enquiries to: Paul Turner, Director, Legal and Assurance; Joanna Boaler, Head of Democracy and Transparency, Emma Hunter, Senior Democratic Services Officer – locality.fund@essex.gov.uk	
County Divisions affected: County Divisions affected: Bocking, Braintree Eastern, Braintree Town, Halstead, Hedingham, Three Fields with Great Notley, Witham Northern, Witham Southern, Abbey, Constable, Drury, Maypole, Mersea and Tipree, Mile End and Highwoods, Parsons Heath and East Gates, Stanway and Pyefleet, Wivehoe St Andrews, Canvey Island East, Canvey Island West, Hadleigh, South Benfleet, Thundersley, Dunmow, Saffron Walden, Stansted and Thaxted.	

1. Everyone's Essex

- 1.1 The approval of these applications, received in response to the Councils' Local Community Fund (LCF), will directly support projects which are targeted at the following three areas:
 - Levelling Up
 - Tackling Climate Change
 - Youth Services
- 1.2 Levelling up and working with and empowering communities are key components of Everyone's Essex with specific commitments across all four of our strategic aims and as key operating principles for how we will work as an organisation.
- 1.3 This decision sets out the nominations received before the 2 February 2024 where we have received full information from nominated groups. Further decisions will be taken as more proposals are received. The final deadline for proposals to be submitted was 1 February 2024.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Agree to make awards from the Local Community Fund (LCF) as set out in Appendix 1.
- 2.2 Agree that no payments may be made with respect to a particular award unless the recipient agrees to the terms and conditions of the award and provides sufficient evidence of the expenditure.

3. Background and Proposal

- 3.1 Following a decision made in May 2023 the Council established a £300,000 fund called the Local Community Fund. The Council has established criteria for making awards under this Fund.
- 3.2 The Local Community Fund operates as twelve separate funds each covering the area of a district council. The fund for each district will be £4,000 for each county councillor in that district. The fund must be spent on one of the following three areas:
- Levelling Up
 - Tackling Climate Change
 - Youth Services
- 3.3 The process for considering proposals is that:
- Members representing electoral divisions in the relevant district consider how best to spend the money and submit an application to the fund.
 - The proposal is considered by officers in the relevant service.
 - The proposed recipients are asked to provide information about the project.
 - The Cabinet Member decides on an award via this report.
- 3.4 Under this process we are now asking the Cabinet Member to consider the recommendations made by members and make a decision on the applications set out in the appendix to this report.
- 3.5 These proposals in this decision would see a total of **£34,030** being approved, meaning that a cumulative total of **£254,059** out of the **£300,000** fund committed to date, with the deadline for nominations being early February 2024.

4 Links to our Strategic Ambitions

- 4.1 This report links to the following aims in the Essex Vision:
- Strengthen communities through participation
 - Unite behind a sense of identity
- 4.2 This report links to the following strategic priorities of 'Everyone's Essex'
- Health, wellbeing and independence for all ages
 - A good place for children and families to grow.

5 Options

Accept the recommendations from members as set out in appendix 1.

- 5.1 This option is recommended, because the awards have been nominated by members in line with the scheme. The Cabinet Member is required to be happy with the decision and is free to accept or reject any recommendation as they think fit.

Do not make some or all of the awards

- 5.2 The Council could decide not to make any awards in this round. This would have a negative impact on the projects and they are unlikely to go ahead.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1 A cabinet member action was agreed in May 2023 to approve transfer of £200,000 from the Youth Services policy line to the Locality Fund policy line, both within Communities, Partnerships and Performance portfolio, for 2023/24 only. In addition, the cabinet member action agreed the draw down of £450,000 from the Ambition reserve. This funding is split into two parts: £350,000 is for the Locality Fund and £300,000 is for the Local Community Fund.
- 6.2 Members make recommendations for their district areas on how the money is to be spend on projects.
- 6.3 The fund opened for nominations on 15 May 2023 and proposals will not be accepted after 2 February 2024.
- 6.4 The value applications recommended for approval to date are as follows:

Local Community Fund			
Awards Recommended by District	Previously approved	Approval now sought	Total award
Brentwood	£16,000	-	£16,000
Uttlesford	£9,000	£3,000	£12,000
Rochford	£20,000	-	£20,000
Epping Forest	£8,800	-	£8,800
Maldon	£11,508	-	£11,508
Basildon	£36,000	-	£36,000
Braintree	£22,629	£5,850	£28,479
Chelmsford	£36,000	-	£36,000
Colchester	£11,800	£10,000	£21,800
Tendring	£32,000	-	£32,000

Castle Point	£4,820	£15,180	£20,000
Harlow	£11,472	-	£11,472
Total Awards Recommended	£220,029	£34,030	£254,059

The remaining balance yet to be awarded in 2023/24 financial year: £45,941.

7. Legal implications

- 7.1 All nominations made by members have been checked against the criteria, before recommendations are brought to the Cabinet Member for approval and no payments will be made without sufficient evidence and information regarding expenditure.

8. Equality and Diversity Considerations

- 8.1 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.
- 8.2 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, 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).
- 8.3 The Equalities Comprehensive Impact Assessment (ECIA) indicates that the proposal in this report will not have a disproportionately adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic.

9. List of Appendices

- 1.1. Appendix 1 - A summary of applications for approval.
- 1.2. Appendix 2 – ECIA

10. List of Background papers

10.1 [Local Community Funds and Locality Funds Arrangements 2023/24](#)

I make the following decision:	Date
LCF36 – Approve LCF54 – Approve LCF61 – Approve LCF62 – Approve LCF64 – Approve LCF65 – Approve LCF66 – Approve Councillor Louise McKinlay – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Cabinet Member for Levelling Up and the Economy	18.03.24

In consultation with:

Role	Date
Michael Neumann on behalf of Nicole Wood, Executive Director, Corporate Services (S151 Officer)	15 March 2024
Paul Turner, Director, Legal and Assurance (Monitoring Officer)	14 March 2024

Appendix 1 - Applications for approval.

Application	LCF36
Date Nomination Received	19 December 2023
Member Agreement	All Uttlesford Members are in agreement.
Amount	£3,000
Name/Group	Uttlesford District Council Youth Initiatives Working Group
Type of organisation	Local Authority
Location	Uttlesford
Service Area	Youth Provision
Purpose of funding	Improvements to the MUGA and outdoor floodlighting for Thaxted Youth Club.
Community Benefit	Positive impact on the provision of outdoor equipment used by young people in the area.

Application	LCF54
Date Nomination Received	17 January 2024
Member Agreement	All Colchester members are aware of the proposal and no concerns have been raised.
Amount	£10,000
Name/Group	Gilberd School
Type of organisation	School
Location	Colchester
Service Area	Levelling Up the Community
Purpose of funding	Students from Gilberd School will design artworks and murals for the external brickwork of the Highwoods Community Centre. The costs involved are materials including anti-graffiti sealant. Any underspend would be used to brighten up the area surrounding the underpass approaching Highwoods Tesco.
Community Benefit	Improve look and feel of the area, improving confidence and sense of wellbeing, helping with a personal and community pride in place. Developing skills useful in later life for the students.

Application	LCF61
Date Nomination Received	2 February 2024
Member Agreement	All Braintree Members are in agreement

Amount	£5,850
Name/Group	ECC – Essex Forest Initiative
Type of organisation	Local Authority
Location	Braintree
Service Area	Climate Action
Purpose of funding	<p>Mature tree planting.</p> <p>Cost includes the tree, tree planting, stakes, mulch, watering bag and watering every summer for the first 3 years of establishment.</p> <p>Essex Forest Initiative would liaise with the local greenspace landowner (likely the relevant borough/district council) to agree tree species with all interested parties, procure and plant the trees and arrange watering.</p>
Community Benefit	Climate and place improvements.

Application	LCF62
Date Nomination Received	2 February 2024
Member Agreement	All Castle Point Members are in agreement
Amount	£4,040
Name/Group	Evolve Intervention
Type of organisation	Community Interest Company
Location	Castle Point
Service Area	Youth Provision
Purpose of funding	<p>In partnership with EDUCE, provision of assemblies with follow up targeted intervention for a variety of different themes aimed at Year 9 and 10.</p> <p>Every school will receive an assembly on: ‘Who am I? What do I need to thrive? And what are my strengths?’</p> <p>Students then pick one of the following as a further assembly and targeted workshops: keeping myself safe, reducing violence against women, financial resilience, proactive mental health</p> <p>Costs are £2000 to Educe and £2040 to Evolve for the administration of the project.</p>
Community Benefit	Increased resilience of students and knowledge of subjects such as personal safety, community safety and mental health.

Application	LCF64
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Date Nomination Received	2 February 2024
Member Agreement	All Castle Point Members are in agreement
Amount	£8,485
Name/Group	Canvey Island Youth Project
Type of organisation	Charity
Location	Canvey Island
Service Area	Youth Provision
Purpose of funding	To employ a specialist Youth Worker to support young people's mental health and well-being. The youth worker will offer one to one mentoring, advice, support and informal education. They will also support the youth clubs and Outreach programme.
Community Benefit	Helping young people to develop resilience, knowledge, confidence and life skills.

Application	LCF65
Date Nomination Received	2 February 2024
Member Agreement	All Castle Point Members are in agreement
Amount	£1,500
Name/Group	Canvey Island Youth Project
Type of organisation	Charity
Location	Castle Point
Service Area	Youth Provision
Purpose of funding	Young Carers project to allow young carers to access provisions on the Island. Costs are: Senior Youth Worker, Sports Coach, Youth Worker, Materials, Cooking and Catering, Equipment.
Community Benefit	Assisting young carers on Canvey Island.

Application	LCF66
Date Nomination Received	2 February 2024
Member Agreement	All Castle Point Members are in agreement
Amount	£1,155
Name/Group	Trust Links
Type of organisation	Charity

Location	Castle Point
Service Area	Youth Provision
Purpose of funding	<p>Youth Links: A project to provide gardening opportunities after school to support young people's mental health. Youth Links will be weekly and will incorporate gardening and other positive activities, helping young people improve their confidence, self-esteem and wellbeing, thereby improving their mental health.</p> <p>Costs:</p> <p>Youth Links sessions run by 3 staff x £15/hour x 4 hours per week x 6 weeks = £1,080.</p> <p>£75 for compost and seeds for the gardening activities.</p>
Community Benefit	Increased awareness of mental health concerns, positive impact on environment. 12 young people will benefit from this project.