

Small grants fund

Context

Many smaller organisations are rooted in their local areas which brings with it a detailed knowledge and understanding of those neighbourhoods' strengths and needs. They can play a role in building social networks and in creating positive relationships between people. They can help to build local social capital and develop links within and between communities. Importantly smaller community organisations are considered to be uniquely placed to engage directly with those that the statutory sector perceives as hardest to reach.

A small grants fund enables projects such as older people's coffee mornings, arts and cultural events and activities, intergenerational projects, health and self-care support groups, peer support groups, exercise and healthy walks, environmental projects etc to be run.

However, over 150 different funding opportunities available to organisations in the borough have been identified which means that there should be less of a need to rely on council funding for these local projects.

Budget

One overall fund of up to £0.080m could be made available each year from 2023/24 to 2026/27 subject to annual budget approval with organisations being able to apply for grants of up to a maximum of £5,000.

Proposed funding priorities

The focus for small grants would need to reflect the council's priorities – creating good jobs, tackling the climate crisis and fighting inequality.

Small grants can provide a **contribution** to the cost of new activities, projects and services planned by the organisations which are consistent with our priorities, however, it would be expected that the organisations applying would do additional fund-raising to support their activities.

Main changes from 2019/23 funding arrangements

There are currently no proposed changes however, as part of the consultation process, views will be sought on the value of the council having a small grants programme in light of the other local funding opportunities that are available to the sector. The outcome of this will determine the future need for a specific council small grants programme and the potential level of budget required going forward.