

Committee: Policy and Resources	Date: 06 May 2021
Subject: Policy and Resources Contingency/Discretionary Funds	Public
Report of: Chamberlain	For Information
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Summary

This report provides the schedule of projects and activities which have received funding from the Policy Initiatives Fund (PIF), the Policy and Resources Committee's Contingency Fund, Committee's Project Reserve and COVID19 Contingency Fund for 2021/22 and future years with details of expenditure in 2021/22. The balances remaining for these Funds for 2021/22 and beyond are shown in the Table below.

Fund	2021/22 Balance Remaining after Approved Bids £	2022/23 Balance Remaining after Approved Bids £	2023/24 Balance Remaining after Approved Bids £
Policy Initiative Fund	650,807	687,000	717,000
Policy and Resources Contingency	282,719	300,000	300,000
Policy & Resources Project Reserve	343,000	0	0
COVID19 Contingency	676,546	0	0

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- Note the report and contents of the schedules and
- Agree to transfer a minimum of £500,000 to the COVID Contingency Fund.

Main Report

Background

1. The purpose of the Policy Initiatives Fund (PIF) is to allow the Committee to respond swiftly and effectively with funding for projects and initiatives identified during the year which support the City Corporation's overall aims and objectives.
2. The current process for identifying which items should sit within the PIF are if they fall under the below criteria:
 - Items that relate to a specific initiative i.e. research.

- Sponsorship/funding for bodies which have initiatives that support the City's overall objectives; and
 - Membership of high-profile national think tanks.
3. To restrict the depletion of funds in future years, a two-year time limit is in place on multiyear PIF bids, with three years being an option by exception. To ensure prioritisation within the multiyear bids, the PIF from the financial year 2019/20 and onwards has £600k of its total budget put aside for multiyear bids with the rest set aside (£650k) for one off allocations, with the option to 'top up' the multiyear allocation from the balance if members agree to do so. This will ensure that there should always be enough in the PIF to fund emerging one-off opportunities as they come up.
 4. PIF bids need to include a measurable success/benefits criterion in the report so that the successful bids can then be reviewed to see what the outcomes are and if the works/activities meet the objectives of the PIF. These measures will be used to review PIF bids on a six-monthly basis. This review will aide members in evaluating the effectiveness/benefits of PIF bids supported works/activities which can be taken into consideration when approving similar works/activities in the future.
 5. When a PIF bid has been approved there should be a reasonable amount of progress/spend on the works/activities within 18 months of approval which allows for slippage and delays. If there has not been enough spend/activity within this timeframe, members will be asked to approve that the remaining allocation be returned to the Fund where it can be utilised for other works/activities. If the Department requires funding for the same works/activities again at a later date, it is suggested that they re-bid for the funding. If there is a legitimate reason, out of the Department's control, which has caused delays, it is recommended that these are reviewed by Committee as needed.
 6. The Committee Contingency Fund is used to fund unforeseen items of expenditure when no specific provision exists within the Policy Committee's budget such as hosting one-off events.
 7. The Committee's Project Reserve is a limited reserve which has been established from funds moved from the Projects Sub Committee Contingency Fund as approved in May 2019's Policy and Resources Committee. The initial amount transferred to this reserve totalled £450,000 from the Project Sub Committee, this is not an annual Contingency but a one-off sum. It is suggested that this reserve is used for project type spend.
 8. The COVID19 Contingency Fund is a time limited fund established to meet any unforeseen items of expenditure due to the COVID19 virus such as; to enact contingency planning arrangements, support unforeseen expenditure required to support service community which cannot be met from local budgets and to support/implement guidance issued by the government where there is no other compensating source of funding. The Town Clerk and Chamberlain have delegated authority to approve bids to this fund that are under £250,000.

Current Position

9. Appendices 1 to 3 list committed projects and activities approved by this Committee for the current and future financial years with the remaining balances available for the PIF (Appendix 1), your Committee's Contingency (Appendix 2), and the Policy & Resources Project Reserve (Appendix 3). Bids against the COVID19 Contingency Fund (Appendix 4) has either been approved by the Town Clerk and Chamberlain under delegated authority or by this Committee.
10. The balances that are currently available in the Policy Initiatives Fund, Committee Contingency Fund and Committee's Project Reserve for 2021/22 are shown in the Table below. These amounts include uncommitted balances from 2020/21 of £527,082 and £719 under PIF and Committee's Contingency respectively:

Fund	2021/22 Opening Balance	2021/22 Approved Bids	2021/22 Balance Remaining after 2021/22 Approved Bids	2021/22 Pending Bids	2021/22 Balance Remaining after 2021/22 Pending Bids
	£	£	£	£	£
Policy Initiative Fund	2,204,555	(1,553,748)	650,807	30,000	620,807
Policy and Resources Contingency	684,214	(401,495)	282,719	0	282,719
Policy and Resources Project Reserve	353,578	10,578	343,000	0	343,000
COVID19 Contingency	1,079,546	(403,000)	676,546	0	676,546

11. The remaining multiyear allocation is shown in the Table below with details, as shown in Appendix 1, prior to any allowances being made for any other proposals on today's agenda.

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Balance remaining of Multiyear PIF allocation	£0	£87,000	£117,000

12. The COVID Contingency Fund currently has a balance of £76,546 non-ringfenced funds remaining. It is recommended that the COVID Contingency is topped up by £500,000. £200,000 from the uncommitted 2020/21 carry forward of PIF underspend with £300,000 from Finance Committee Contingencies.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

13. Although each PIF application has to be judged on its merits, it can be assumed that they may be helping towards contributing to a flourishing society, supporting a thriving economy and shaping outstanding environments as per the corporate plan.
14. Each PIF application should be approved on a case by case basis and Departments should look to local budgets first before seeking PIF approval, with PIF requests only being submitted if there is no funding within local budgets available.

Conclusion

This report provides an overview of the PIF contingencies. It is recommended the COVID contingency is topped up from PIF 2020/21 underspend and Finance Committee contingencies of £200,000 and £300,000 respectively.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – PIF 2021/22 and Future Years
- Appendix 2 – P&R Contingency 2021/22 and Future Years
- Appendix 3 – P&R Project Reserve 2021/22
- Appendix 4 – COVID19 Contingency 2021/22

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