

Committee(s): Resource Allocation Sub (Policy and Resources) Committee – For decision	Dated: 05/10/2023
Subject: Community Infrastructure Levy Neighbourhood Fund – Applications for Approval	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 10
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	N/A
Report of: Managing Director of City Bridge Foundation	For Decision
Report author: Jack Joslin, Head of the Central Grants Unit	

Summary

The City Corporation adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in 2014. National CIL Regulations require that 15% of CIL receipts be reserved for neighbourhood funding. Local authorities are required to consult with communities on how to best spend 15% of neighbourhood funding of from within the neighbourhood area. Local authorities are required to report annually on the collection and use of CIL funds, identifying separately the amount of funds allocated to neighbourhood funding.

The Community Infrastructure Levy Neighbourhood Fund (CILNF) application process is managed by the City Corporation’s Central Grants Unit (CGU), with officers assessing applications and providing support to Committee in the consideration of larger applications. The administrative cost incurred in operating the City CILNF is recoverable from the 5% of City CIL funds allowed to cover such costs in Regulations.

Members are asked to note the ongoing work of the CILNF Public consultation and the new timeline. Additionally members are asked to approve for the CILNF to re-open to large proposals, while the public consultation concludes.

Recommendation

Members are recommended to:

1. note the current position of the CILNF, the launch of the public consultation and the amendment to the timeline;

2. approve that the CILNF re-opens to large applications of between £50,000 to £500,000 while the public consultation reaches its conclusion and new criteria are launched in early 2024;
3. note the decision by the Planning and Transportation Committee to designate the Barbican and Golden Lane Neighbourhood Forum and Area. And approve interim arrangements to consult with the above Forum on applications to the wider CILNF.

Main Report

Background

1. Management of the City CILNF process is aligned with the City's existing grant allocation process, through the CGU. The City CILNF Funding Policy is set out at **Appendix 1**.
2. The City CILNF has been in operation since September 2020, providing a wide range of funding to support to City of London Communities. The Grant programme is open access and available to apply to throughout the year. In July 2022 the outcomes of a community consultation were outlined to the Policy and Resources Committee. The public consultation demonstrated strong support for the way the current programme operated.
3. At the meeting of this Sub-Committee in May 2023 Members agreed to close the CILNF to large applications over £50,000 to allow officers time to set up a public consultation on the grant programme.
4. At a meeting of the Planning and Transportation Committee in July 2023 members agreed an application to designate the Barbican and Golden Lane Neighbourhood Forum and Area.

Current Position

5. Since the meeting of the Sub-Committee in May 2023, CGU officers have worked with colleagues from across the City of London to develop a public consultation on the CILNF. The consultation invites City residents and workers to share their thoughts and ideas on how to shape the CIL Neighbourhood fund and, in anticipation of an increase in the number of applications, a steer on how to prioritise bids when there is an abundance of strong proposals.
6. To ensure that Public Consultations receive the most responses, they need to be delivered outside of the school holidays. For this reason, the CILNF consultation was delayed from July to the start of the new school year and went live on Wednesday 6 September.
7. The consultation will close on Wednesday 25 October and findings will be shared with this committee at its meeting on 30 November.

8. The CGU used the extra time to develop a communication plan drawing on internal and external networks across City of London both to maximise the number of respondents and to lay the foundations for future promotion of the CILNF and diversify the range of applicants. At the time of writing, the CGU has received triple the number of responses to last year's CILNF consultation.

Proposal

9. As stated above the Public Consultation and subsequent policy changes are likely to be agreed later in the calendar year with new criteria rolled out in early 2024. In order to ensure that the Community are not adversely impacted by the time extension to the CILNF public consultation, members are asked to re-open the CILNF under its current criteria to applications of between £50,000 and £500,000 to ensure that the fund can still respond to arising community needs, with a view to the new criteria taking effect in early 2024.

Barbican and Golden Lane Neighbourhood Forum and Area

10. At a meeting of the Planning and Transportation Committee in July 2023 members agreed an application to designate the Barbican and Golden Lane Neighbourhood Forum and Area. While the newly formed Forum looks to develop its neighbourhood plan, the Neighbourhood CIL would like to ensure that the Forum is consulted on applications that are delivered in the neighbourhood area, or where a City-wide proposal will benefit the area. If the neighbourhood forum has a neighbourhood plan in place, the amount of funding for consultation with them increases to 25% of the total Community Infrastructure Levy.
11. Under the current CILNF policy, where an application will have an impact on a specific ward, your Officers will consult with Members of that ward as part of the assessment process. An email is sent to all ward members requesting thoughts on a specific application with the fixed timeline to respond. The feedback provided by ward Members is then included into the assessment and recommendation process.
12. Members are asked to agree to the same process to allow for forum members of the newly approved Barbican and Golden Lane Neighbourhood Forum to be consulted on applications that will impact their specific agreed area, or where a City-Wide project will have demonstrable impact in the agreed area. This will allow for the CILNF to fulfil its statutory requirements while developing a good working relationship with the new Neighbourhood Forum.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

13. Corporate Plan Implications: the CILNF can resource community-led infrastructure improvements across the City and contribute towards meeting the 3 aims of the Corporate Plan 2018-23, particularly Contributing to a Flourishing Society and Shaping an Outstanding Environment. The CILNF can continue to contribute to the outputs of the new Corporate Plan and support its roll-out in 2024.

14. Security Implications: the CILNF fulfils a statutory requirement for the spending of CIL. There are no direct security implications, though future funded projects may bring security benefits.
15. Financial Implications: the CILNF makes use of that proportion of City CIL monies which are required by statute to be used to assist in the delivery of new infrastructure to meet community needs (15% of CIL funds). The costs of management of the grant application process will be met through the 5% of CIL funds set aside by statute to cover CIL administration.
16. Equalities and resourcing implications: the CILNF has been subject to an Equality Analysis Test of Relevance. This has concluded that there are no impacts arising from these proposals for protected groups and that a full Equality Analysis is not required.
17. Philanthropy implications: Projects funded by the CILNF may provide volunteering opportunities which can be offered to Officers via the Corporate Volunteering programme, 'LEAP', when appropriate.
18. Delivery of the Fund will be through existing staff resources in Departments. Staff resource requirements will be met through allocation of some of the City CIL funds set aside by statute to cover administration costs.

Conclusion

19. Community Infrastructure Levy legislation requires local authorities to reserve between 15% and 25% of CIL receipts for neighbourhood funding. Where there is no recognised parish or town council or neighbourhood forum, the local authority will retain the neighbourhood fund but must spend it on infrastructure which meets community needs. The local authority must consult the forum on how these funds will be used.
20. This report asks Members to note the ongoing work of the CILNF Public consultation and the new timeline. Additionally, members are asked to approve for the CILNF to re-open to large proposals, while the public consultation concludes.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – CIL Neighbourhood Fund Policy

Background Papers

Report to Planning and Transportation Committee 18/07/2023: Proposed Barbican and Golden Lane Neighbourhood Forum and Area

Report to Policy & Resources Committee 02/05/2019: City of London Community Infrastructure Levy – Approval of Neighbourhood Fund

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