

City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee(s): Resource Allocation Sub (Policy and Resources) Committee – For decision	Dated: 03/02/2025
Subject: Community Infrastructure Levy Neighbourhood Fund – Applications for Decision	Public For Decision
This proposal: • delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes	Diverse Engaged Community; Vibrant Thriving Destination; Flourishing Public Spaces
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: Simon Latham, Interim Managing Director of the Bridge House Estate	For Decision
Report author: Sheena Etches, Funding Manager, Central Funding and Charity Management Team	

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. Management of the City of London’s Community Infrastructure Levy Neighbourhood Fund (CILNF) process is aligned with the City’s existing grant allocation process, through the Central Funding & Charity Management Team (CFCMT). Members are asked to make decisions on CILNF Officer Panel recommendations from their meeting in January 2025, and, in light of the forthcoming election are requested to delegate authority to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, to consider CILNF applications of £100k and over until the Sub-Committee’s next meeting. Members are also asked to note the grants approved under delegated authority from December 2024 to January 2025, and to note the findings of the evaluation of the CILNF grant programme to date.

Recommendations

Members are recommended:

1. To note the current position of the CILNF with respect to funds available.
2. To approve the grants recommended at the meeting of the CILNF Officer Panel in January 2025 (**Appendix 2**): £101,600 over 12 months to the City of London Crime Prevention Association; £162,184 over 3 years (Year 1 £46,762; Year 2 £56,803; Year 3 £58,619) to Family Action; £195,971 over 5 years (Year 1 £51,192; Year 2 £46,643; Year 3 £45,039; Year 4 £34,873; Year 5 £18,224) to

Mental Fight Club; £390,419 funding to provide new community facilities at Middlesex Street Estate.

3. To delegate authority to the Town Clerk to consider CILNF applications of £100k and over, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman until the Sub-Committee's next meeting.
4. To note the approved grants under delegated authority at meetings of the CILNF Officer Panel from December 2024 to January 2025 (**Appendix 3**).
5. To note the findings of the evaluation of the CILNF grant programme to date (**Appendix 4**).

Main Report

Background

1. 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 engage with communities on how this neighbourhood funding should be used to support development of the 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 Central Funding & Charity Management Team (CFCMT), with Officers assessing applications and providing support to Committee in the consideration of larger applications. The administrative cost incurred in operating the CILNF is recoverable from the 5% of City of London CIL funds allowed to cover such costs in the Regulations.
2. The City of London's CILNF Funding Policy is set out at **Appendix 1**. Since the launch of the City of London's CILNF in September 2020, Members and Officers have worked together to commit £8,632,533 in funding to City communities.

Financial year	Funds committed as at 7.1.2025
2020/21	£406,410
2021/22	£1,985,084
2022/23	£3,099,542
2023/24	£1,609,037
2024/25	£1,532,460

3. The balance of the General CILNF and Barbican & Golden Lane Neighbourhood Funds as at 7 January 2025 was £9,081,322 of which grants totalling £850,174 are being presented to this Sub-Committee for decision. CFCMT is currently working with 17 organisations who are in the process of submitting applications with an estimated ask of £1.44m and a further 19 organisations who are developing grant bids for an estimated £1.26m.

Current Position

4. Management of the City of London's CILNF process is aligned with the City's existing grant allocation process, through the Central Funding & Charity Management Team (CFCMT). Applications to the CILNF undergo a process of due diligence and assessment by Funding Managers with detailed financial assessment undertaken by the Charity Finance Team before sign off by the Funding Director. Eligible applications are then presented to the CILNF Officer Panel for recommendation or delegated decision. The CILNF Officer Panel comprises of 11 Senior Officers from across the spectrum of CoL Services (Community & Children's Services, Libraries, Environment, Planning, Green Spaces, Town Clerk's, Chamberlain's, EEDI, Destination City) and is chaired by the Assistant Director - Planning. At the Officer Panel consideration is given to each proposal's outputs and outcomes, value for money in terms of social, environmental as well as financial value, equality considerations.
5. As agreed at your Committee on 22 February 2024, CILNF Officer Panel was given delegated authority to approve applications for up to £100,000 with decisions for all applications above £100,000 to be undertaken by this Sub-Committee. This delegation was agreed to keep CFCMT decision-making in line with the increased delegations across CoLC. Importantly, it also allows for the quick (12 week) turnaround of smaller grants to community and grassroots organisations to increase the diversity of applicants to the CILNF programme, with the decision-making for grants for over £100,000 taking up to 6 months.
6. At its meeting in January 2025, the CILNF OP considered four applications and are recommending that members approve the following grants. Full assessment reports are available at **Appendix 2**.
7. £101,600 over 12 months to the City of London Crime Prevention Association (CoLCPA) to fund a portfolio of crime prevention and reduction initiatives delivered through the 'Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls and Domestic Abuse Consortium for the City of London' (Consortium). CILNF funding will support the Consortium to employ a Project Manager, Business Engagement Officer and Marketing/Analyst role to establish an additional 40 Safe Havens in the City; sign up an additional 50 hospitality venues to the Ask for Angela scheme; deliver WAVE/Ask Angela and Safe Haven training sessions to 90 hospitality venues; provide NTE 'footfall' data provided by Oxford Partners and associated crime hotspot analytics which will be shared quarterly with City of London Police to inform their policing activities; and deliver 12 Bystander Intervention training sessions and Worker Protection Act 2023 training to City businesses and employees (estimated 480 individuals trained).
8. £162,184 over 3 years (Year 1 £46,762; Year 2 £56,803; Year 3 £58,619) to Family Action towards the expansion and enhancement of the Aldgate FOOD Club (AFC) through the staffing and provision of both a lunchtime and twilight FOOD Club session for 50 weeks each year at Artizan Street Library plus three annual member social events. The proposal, which will extend the AFC to support both residents experiencing food poverty and City workers in low

paid roles experiencing in-work poverty, is a key asset in delivering the CoL's Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2024-2028 supporting its members to build their financial resilience and prevent them from falling into crisis.

9. £195,971 over 5 years (Year 1 £51,192; Year 2 £46,643; Year 3 £45,039; Year 4 £34,873; Year 5 £18,224) to Mental Fight Club an award winning organisation that promotes social inclusion of City residents and City workers experiencing mental health issues thereby pre-empting the onset of serious mental illness, supporting early recovery and maintaining recovery in the long term. Funding will support the delivery of 22 fortnightly Dragon in the City Cafes (DCC) each year, expand DCC session capacity in line with its relocation from Shoe Lane Library to a larger space at One New Change and support DCC to become financially resilient through building corporate sponsorship and donations.
10. £390,419 funding to provide new community facilities at Middlesex Street Estate (MSE) including a Garden Community Room, Community Gym, refurbished MUGA and play space, enhanced green spaces and community gardening facilities to improve the health and wellbeing of the estate's residents. The CILNF funded enhancement of the MSE podium garden, community gardening equipment and new play and exercise facilities seizes an opportunity to improve the wellbeing of residents by providing a community adversely affected by the impacts of external development with much needed new community infrastructure which will create lasting social impact. The application has been driven by MSE Residents Association and based on extensive formal consultation with residents and external stakeholders.
11. The forthcoming election period has the potential to create a 4.5 month hiatus in the decision-making on CILNF grants of £100k and over. The CFCMT has focused on completing as many large grant assessments for RASC decision as possible in advance of the recess. There are two further large grants currently under assessment: Ozero Arts £285,590 for three-year support for Classical Pride Festivals in the City of London; and XLP £354,723 for a two-year employability programme supporting young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) or at risk of becoming NEET to secure long term employment. Given the fund's rolling deadline, it is also possible that a time-critical application is submitted during the recess that requires a decision before the next meeting of the Sub-Committee. Accordingly, Members are requested to delegate authority to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, for decisions on CILNF applications of £100k and over during this election period and until the Sub-Committee's next meeting, to enable CFCMT to keep within the CILNF published decision timelines and not adversely affect potential time sensitive projects.
12. At its meetings from December 2024 to January 2025, the CILNF OP considered two applications. A schedule of the grant decisions that were made under delegated authority for the Aldgate Business Partnership's public realm project featuring the display of migration stories of local residents and Tower Hamlets Youth Sport Foundation's support to increase sports provision for City of London youth is available in **Appendix 3** for information.

13. Additionally, Members are asked to note a recent analysis that was conducted by the CFCMT on the Neighbourhood Fund grant portfolio. The paper is the first comprehensive analysis of the grants awarded by the CILNF since its launch in 2020. Key findings and an analysis of all the CILNF grants awarded to date is included at **Appendix 4** for information.
14. 68 CILNF grants have been awarded over the funding programme's initial 45 months of operation (December 2020 to August 2024 inclusive) - a total of £8,155,330. Grants awarded over this period have ranged in value from £7,885 (St Michael Cornhill) to £774,000 (Barts Heritage). At the request of members, in April 2024 the CFCMT initiated a programme of outreach to increase the diversity of applicants to the CILNF with a particular focus on supporting applications from community and grassroots organisations. Such applicants tend to have a low turnover and often new to grant funding applicants tend to request smaller value and shorter-term initial grants. These initial pilot phase and scoping grants are anticipated to be followed by requests for 3-4 year continuation grants once demand for, and impact of, projects has been evidenced.
15. In response to the CILNF outreach work there is a predicted 56% increase in the total number of grants for 2024/25 compared to the previous year. This correlates to the increase in pre-application advice sessions which have more than tripled each month. The outreach programme is still in its infancy and its outputs are not expected to be fully felt until at least April 2025.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

16. **Corporate Plan Implications:** the CILNF can resource community-led infrastructure improvements and activity across the City and contribute towards meeting the four aims of the Corporate Plan 2024-29 - Diverse Engaged Communities, Providing Excellent Services, Vibrant Thriving Destination and Flourishing Public Spaces.
17. **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.
18. **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.
19. **Equalities and resourcing implications:** the CIL Neighbourhood Fund and revised policy have been subject to a full Equalities Impact Assessment. The Equalities Impact Assessment has concluded that there are no adverse impacts arising for equality groups and social mobility. The CFCMT has developed an Equalities Action Plan outlining the actions it will take to improve the positive equalities impact of the CILNF.

Conclusion

20. Community Infrastructure Levy legislation requires local authorities to reserve between 15% and 25% of CIL receipts for neighbourhood funding. The CILNF application process is managed by the City Corporation's Central Funding & Charity Management Team, with Officers assessing applications and providing support to Committee in the consideration of larger applications. Members are asked to approve the grant award recommendations and note the delegated decisions of the CILNF Officer Panel. Considering the gap in meetings caused by the upcoming elections, Members are asked to delegate authority to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, to consider applications of £100k and over until the Sub-Committee's next meeting. Members are also asked to note the key findings of the evaluation of the CILNF grant programme to date.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – CIL Neighbourhood Fund Policy (Nov 2004)

Appendix 2 – CILNF Assessment Pack January 2025

Appendix 3 – CILNF Applications Approved and Rejected under Delegated Authority December 2024 to January 2025

Appendix 4 – Analysis of CILNF grants – Key Findings (Oct 2024)

Background Papers

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

Report to Policy & Resources Committee 22/02/2024: Community Infrastructure Levy Neighbourhood Fund –Approval of updated Community Infrastructure Levy Neighbourhood Fund Policy

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