

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cabinet

30th June 2021

Report of the Director of Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning

Andrew Thomas

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: All Wards

The Members Community Fund (protocol for relaunch)

Purpose of the Report

1. To update Cabinet on the relaunch of the Members Community Fund, and seek approval to resurrect the programme within the confines of a condensed timeframe.

Executive Summary

2. In its first term (14.06.18 to 31.03.20), the Members Community Fund supported 135 projects across all 42 NPT Wards. The projects addressed local needs and supported projects and initiatives that contributed towards creating vibrant and sustainable communities.

A Report evaluating the performance of the Fund in its first term, refinements to the Fund criteria and the way in which project proposals

were to be reported in the Fund's second term, was approved by Cabinet on 25.06.20.

Due to the significant impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, the timescales for the Fund's second term as presented to Cabinet on the 25.06.20, as well as the continuation of the Members Community Fund itself, took lesser precedence and the programme was shelved. However the Council is now in a better financial position and after careful consideration the Members Community Fund can be re-launched.

This report serves as a means of communicating the 'new' timescales associated with the Funds second term, and seeks approval from Members to relaunch the Fund on that basis.

Background

3. The Project Development & Funding Unit (PDFU) within ELLL successfully carried out the governance of the Fund in its first term, acting as the Grant Management Organisation, and would look to do the same in its second term.

The relaunch of the Members Fund in its second term builds upon experience and the interpretation of the Fund in its first term.

A new reporting arrangement was approved by Cabinet on 25.06.20. This was arrived at to foreshorten the volume of paper associated with each bid tabled at Cabinet.

The 'Guiding Principles' Paper, also approved by Cabinet on 25.06.20, governs the management and stipulates the refined eligibility criteria for the Fund. This document has been recently amended to reflect the changes to the time lines associated with the Fund in its second term and is attached at Appendix A.

Notable alterations include:-

A condensed time frame to make bids and to report proposals to Cabinet (launch 1st July 2021, for PDFU to receive bids up until 14th February 2022).

The deadline for submitting bids will be the 14th February 2022. The deadline for seeking Cabinet approval for projects will be 23rd March 2022.

The PDFU will project manage proposals that have been tabled by the current Administration, i.e. those that have sought approval at Cabinet prior to purdah on the 28th March 2022.

Highways infrastructure projects must be submitted by the 31st December 2021 to allow sufficient time to advertise for approval, to explore objections and to facilitate delivery of the projects going forward.

The 'Guidance Notes for Members', which follows the same vein as the 'Guiding Principles' Paper but in a more condensed format, and 'The Members Fund Application Form' (Appendices B and C respectively) gained approval at Cabinet on 25.06.20, and have also been amended to reflect the new timescales.

With these refinements the Members Fund is again deemed to be 'fit for purpose' and an appropriate vehicle to be used to promote inward investment.

Financial Impact

4. No implications as the Members Fund is already a budget line found from the Council's Reserve Fund.

Equality Impact Assessment

5. A first stage impact assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its legislative duties (under the Equality Act 2010), the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

The first stage assessment has indicated that a more in - depth assessment is not required as the summary concludes there are positive outcomes for the sustainable development principle, collaboration and involvement, with no impact on equalities or the Welsh language.

Workforce Impacts

6. There are no workforce impacts associated with this report.

Legal Impacts

7. The delivery of the Members Community Fund will come within the purview of the Local Government Act 2000 which introduced well-being powers which enable every Local Authority to have capacity to do anything which it considers likely to promote an improvement to economic, social or environmental well-being in the area. Under section 56 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 sanction is given for both Executive and Non - Executive Members to invest within their own Ward.

The Council's Constitution should be referred to for explicit guidance on governance.

Risk Management

8. There are no risk management issues associated with this report.

Consultation

9. There is no requirement for external consultation on this item.

Recommendations

10. That the content of this report is noted and the approval given by Members to relaunch the Members Community Fund within the confines of a condensed timeframe.

Reasons for Proposed Decision

11. To facilitate the governance and delivery of the Members Fund in its second term.

Implementation of Decision

12. The decision is proposed for immediate implementation with the agreement from the relevant Scrutiny Chairperson and therefore not subject to the 3 day call in period.

Appendices

13. The refreshed 'Guiding Principles' Paper that will be used to govern the Members Fund in its second term.

The refreshed 'Guidance Notes for Members' that accompanies the Members Fund Application Form.

The Members Fund Application Form that will be used to capture information on bids made to the Members Fund in its second term.

List of Background Papers

14. None

Officer Contact

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