

**Report to CABINET SUB-COMMITTEE**

## **The Local Improvement Fund – December 2022 Fast Grant Project Recommendations**

**Portfolio Holder:**

Councillor Amanda Chadderton, Council Leader

**Officer Contact:** Shelley Kipling (Assistant Chief Executive)

**Report Author:** Guy Parker (Policy Manager)

**08 December 2022**

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### **Reason for Decision**

The Local Improvement Fund (LIF) in 2022/23 includes £100,000 allocated as “fast grants” for projects of £500 - £3,500 to improve Oldham’s neighborhoods for the benefit of local residents. The LIF Cabinet Sub-Committee are asked to review the final scores and comments provided by the advisory panel and agree which applications should receive funding.

### **Recommendation**

Review the Advisory Panel recommendations and agree which should receive LIF funding.

## **1 Background**

- 1.1 The Local Improvement Fund (LIF) was established in 2019 with the aim of supporting Districts to:
- a. Encourage the active participation of residents and local organisations in improving the quality of life in the local area.
  - b. Improve community buildings, equipment and other facilities.
  - c. Engage with residents to prioritise schemes that matter to them.
- 1.2 In 2019/20 the LIF distributed £499,260 to twenty projects across Oldham that reflected the specific and diverse needs of people in our borough, ranging from an outdoor gym in St Mary’s, to making a footbridge safer in Royton, to street scene improvements in Lees.
- 1.3 The LIF was included in the Council’s budget again in 2021/22, with £500,000 made available. In 2021/22 a total of £467,807 was allocated to 18 projects across the borough, with the remaining £32,193 retained as a contingency fund to accommodate project overspend. Councillors were asked to focus on projects that would help Oldham’s residents to recover from the pandemic.
- 1.4 In 2022/23 the LIF is divided into two, with £400,000 distributed as capital grants as in previous years. The remaining £100,000 is to be used for “fast grants” of between £500 and £3,500, distributed as revenue to support one of three key priorities:
- Helping those adversely impacted by the cost-of-living crisis
  - Providing / improving facilities for children and young people
  - Supporting the Don’t Trash Oldham campaign
- 1.5 The £100,000 must be completely allocated in the financial year 2022/23, with bidding for projects taking place over multiple rounds as needed.
- 1.6 In the first round, 22 bids were received with a total value of £49,196. A cross-party advisory group has reviewed these bids and made recommendations as detailed in Appendix 1. This paper asks the Cabinet Sub-Committee to review the bids and the recommendations of the advisory group and allocate funds accordingly.

## **2 Options/Alternatives**

- 2.1 Do Nothing – This is not a preferable option as the funding needs to be allocated in this financial year.
- 2.2 Review the advisory group recommendations and agree which should receive LIF funding.

## **3 Recommended Option**

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- 3.1 Review the advisory group recommendations and agree which should receive LIF funding.

#### **4 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 There is a set aside of £100k, which is a one-off revenue resource to be utilized in 2022/23 for LIF faster grants.
- 4.2 The first round of applications totaled £49,196 with £31,016 recommended to be approved. This would leave a balance to allocate for further rounds of £68,984.

(Nicola Harrop – Finance Manager)

#### **5 Legal Services Comments**

- 5.1 Following the consideration of recommendations from the Local Improvement Fund Advisory Panel, the purpose of the Local Improvement Fund Sub-Committee is to allocate funding from the Local Improvement Fund to projects across the borough which promote and pursue the aims and objectives of the individual District Priorities.
- 5.2 The Sub-Committee is a constituted meeting of the Council and is subject to the Council's procedure rules, Cabinet procedure rules and the access to information procedure rules, as set out in the Council's Constitution, unless stated otherwise in the terms of reference. (Colin Brittain, Assistant Borough Solicitor).

#### **6 Co-operative Agenda**

- 6.1 As a co-operative council, we are committed to reforming public services and encouraging innovation, leading to better outcomes and delivery. The Local Improvement Fund will ensure that Districts are best able to meet the needs of both elected members and the residents they represent. (Jonathan Downs, Corporate Policy lead).

#### **7 Human Resources Comments**

- 7.1 None

#### **8 Risk Assessments**

- 8.1 None

#### **9 IT Implications**

- 9.1 None

#### **10 Property Implications**

- 10.1 None

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**11 Procurement Implications**

11.1 None

**12 Environmental and Health & Safety Implications**

12.1 None

**13 Equality, community cohesion and crime implications**

13.1 None

**14 Equality Impact Assessment Completed?**

14.1 No

**15 Key Decision**

15.1 No

**16 Key Decision Reference**

16.1 N/A

**17 Background Papers**

17.1 Establishing a Local Improvement Fund for Districts – 24.06.2019

17.2 The Local Improvement Fund 2022/23 – 14.11.2022

**18 Appendices**

18.1 Appendix 1: Local Improvement Fund Fast Grants Round 1 – Advisory Panel Recommendations