

Report to CABINET SUB-COMMITTEE

The Local Improvement Fund – February 2024 Capital Project Recommendations

Portfolio Holder:

Councillor Arooj Shah, Council Leader

Officer Contact: Steve Hughes (Assistant Director, Strategy and Performance)

Report Author: Jonathan Downs (Corporate Policy Lead)

19 February 2024

Reason for Decision

The Local Improvement Fund (LIF) in 2023/24 includes £400,000 allocated as “capital grants” for projects of £10,000 or more to improve Oldham’s neighborhoods for the benefit of 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.

Reviewing District Working in Oldham

1 Background

- 1.1 In 2023/24 the Local Improvement Fund (LIF) has again been divided into two, with £400,000 distributed as capital grants and £100,000 as “fast grants” of between £500 and £3,500. This paper focuses on the administration of the £400,000 capital grants.
- 1.2 The deadline for expressions of interest to the capital fund was 20th October 2023. In total 32 proposals were received. The Advisory Panel were asked to score the applications, using the same scoring matrix as in previous years. This involved rating each element of the bid out of five according to the extent to which the proposal:
- Addresses one or more key priority
 - Has clearly defined aims and objectives
 - Demonstrates the outcomes and benefits clearly
 - Evidences an understanding of project dependencies
 - Evidences resident consultation and support
 - Evidences project costing
- 1.3 The LIF Advisory Panel met in November and scored the expressions of interest, recommending that 19 of the expressions of interest be invited to submit full applications.
- 1.4 The deadline for receiving full applications was Friday 26th January 2024. In total we received 19 full applications for the capital fund.
- 1.5 The LIF advisory panel met in February 2024 and scored the full applications. Following the moderation of scores, the panel agreed that anything scoring over 21 should automatically go through to the sub-committee. The panel then had a conversation about any application that scored between 15 – 20, rejecting or recommending the applications based on their collective analysis.
- 1.6 The Advisory Panel’s recommendations and comments are included in Appendix 1. Please note, 14 applications have been recommended by the advisory panel totalling £430,108 of spend.
- 1.7 The LIF Cabinet Sub-Committee are asked to review the final recommendations and comments provided by the advisory panel and agree which applications should receive LIF funding, totalling no more than £400k.

2 Options/Alternatives

- 2.1 Do Nothing – This is not a preferable option as the funding needs to be allocated in this financial year.

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- 2.2 Review the full Advisory Panel recommendations and agree which should receive LIF Funding – The purpose of the LIF is to support district priorities, allocating funding to projects that demonstrate they meet the required scoring criteria.

3 Recommended Option

- 3.1 Review the Advisory Panel recommendations and agree which should receive LIF Funding.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The Capital Programme includes £0.400m to support the Local Improvement Fund for Districts as outlined in this report. Colleagues are reminded that expenditure on all approved schemes must meet the statutory definition of expenditure for capital purposes.

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

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- 10.1 None
 - 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 Capital Grants February 2024 – Advisory Panel Recommendations