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## **LOCALITIES BID FUND PILOT - REVISION AND EXTENSION OF ROUND 2**

**Report by Service Director Customer & Communities**

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### **SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**

**29 November 2018**

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#### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 **This report sets out revised proposals for consideration with regards to the extension of the second round of the Localities Bid Fund pilot.**
- 1.2 The pilot model for the first round of participatory budgeting was agreed at Council on 28 September 2017, and set out the framework for the initial allocation of funding, with a carry forward of any underspend to 2018 being agreed.
- 1.3 This initial allocation of funding to promote community participatory budgeting through a Localities Bid Fund is part of a wider response to the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.
- 1.4 From the evaluation of the first round, which included feedback from Elected Members, Area Partnerships, Community Councils, Project Leads and 181 responses from a public survey, a report was approved by Council on 28 June 2018 which included revised criteria for the second round.
- 1.5 The second round of the Localities Bid Fund pilot was launched on 1 July and closed for submissions on 1 October 2018. 28 applications were received, and the Borders Assessment Panel met on 18 October 2018 to assess the applications. It was agreed that there were not enough sustainable bids to enable a public vote to take place across the 5 local areas, and that revised draft criteria be drafted for consideration by the Borders Assessment Panel and brought back to Council for approval.
- 1.6 Draft proposals for alternative criteria have been discussed with Elected Members over the last few weeks and the outcome of these discussions are reflected in the proposed criteria detailed at **Appendix A**.

1.7 The total allocation to this initial pilot was £500k. £208k was put forward for the 1<sup>st</sup> round with £204k awarded to community projects by the public. It was agreed that the balance of £296k could be carried forward to 2018 to fund the 2<sup>nd</sup> round. The breakdown of the fund is detailed at **Appendix B**.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **2.1 I recommend that Council:**

**(a) Notes:**

**(i) the financial breakdown of the pilot Localities Bid Fund as detailed at Appendix B; and**

**(ii) the proposed timetable detailed at Appendix C**

**(b) Agrees:**

**(i) to a relaunch of the Localities Bid Fund 2, and criteria as detailed at Appendix A;**

**(ii) to the virement of the remaining Localities Bid Fund pilot budget to 2019/2020**

### 3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The pilot model for the first round of participatory budgeting was agreed at Council on 28 September 2017, and set out the framework for the initial allocation of funding, with a carry forward of any underspend to 2018 being agreed. This initial allocation of funding to promote community participatory budgeting through a Localities Bid Fund is part of a wider response to the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.
- 3.2 The total allocation to this initial pilot was £500k. £208k was put forward for the 1<sup>st</sup> round with £204k awarded to community projects by the public. It was agreed that the balance of £296k would be carried forward to the current financial year and would fund the 2<sup>nd</sup> pilot round.
- 3.3 The financial breakdown of the £500k pilot is detailed at **Appendix B**, which shows the agreed allocation for each area.
- 3.4 From the evaluation of the first round, which included feedback from Elected Members, Area Partnerships, Community Councils, Project Leads and 181 responses from a public survey, a report was approved by Council on 27 June 2018 which included revised and more specific criteria for the second round.
- 3.5 This second round of LBF was launched on 1 July and closed on 1 October 2018. 28 applications were received, and the Borders Assessment Panel met on 18 October 2018 to assess the applications. It was agreed that there were not enough sustainable bids to enable a public vote to take place across the 5 local areas, and that revised criteria be drafted for consideration by the Borders Assessment Panel and brought back to Council for approval.
- 3.6 The proposed changes to the criteria are as follows:
- The fund will not be restricted to “new” projects
  - The cap for constituted groups has been raised from £10k to £15k
  - Staffing costs of 50% of the total application will be considered (but cannot be used to supplement funding core staffing activity/time)
  - The fund will consider structural changes to buildings
- 3.7 It is also proposed that projects must demonstrate within the application form **how** they will:
- Be **Inclusive** and give everyone in the local community the opportunity to participate
  - Be **Accessible** to any members of the local community
  - Make a **difference** and have an impact on the wider community
  - Be **deliverable** within the costings provided
  - Have appropriate **permissions** been obtained i.e. planning permissions or building warrants have been considered and factored into project plans and costings
  - Be **Sustainable** if the project is intended to carry on past LBF funding

- Have **other funding requirements** in place or in process if required
- 3.8 A 10% cash contribution from each bid is being proposed which is in alignment to other LA's participatory budgeting models in Scotland. This demonstrates commitment and engagement to the project and a test of the robustness of the project idea.
- 3.9 The proposal for the public vote is both an online voting tool and ballot papers only available at a voting event (one per locality). There will be no ballot boxes out in the community due to the challenges experienced of the distribution and collection of 79 ballot boxes. Ballot papers can also be sent out to individuals on request if they cannot attend a voting event.
- 3.10 Only those who are over 16yrs of age and live in the Borders will be able to vote in the second round. This will streamline the postcode validation process.
- 3.11 The pre-assessment check will comprise the Communities & Partnership Team ensuring that the application forms have been completed satisfactorily, meet the priorities and outcomes of the SBC Corporate Plan and the CPP Community Plan and are appropriate for the Localities Bid Fund, or if there are other, more appropriate funding streams. All applications will be presented to the Borders Assessment Panel with a recommendation for the Panel's consideration.
- 3.12 The Borders Assessment Panel will be chaired by the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Locality Services and include all Area Partnership Chairs, Vice Chairs and key SBC officers. Applications will be assessed by the Borders Assessment Panel against the proposed criteria. The projects that do not meet the proposed criteria will not go forward to the public vote and appropriate feedback will be given by the Communities & Partnership's Team to applicants.
- 3.13 The same voting process from the first round (i.e. funding allocated to those projects with the most votes) will be used for those agreed projects going forward to a public vote, and funding will be awarded to the most successful bids and publicised on the SBC website, at Area Partnerships and through social media.
- 3.14 The Localities Bid Fund **will not** fund:
- Trips abroad
  - Activities which only benefit individuals
  - Organisations who aim to make a profit
  - Political or religious activities
  - Any retrospective costs already incurred by the applicant
  - Projects that disadvantage any groups or individuals in the community
  - Public sector provision that is required by statute (law)
  - Payments towards areas generally understood to be the responsibility of statutory authorities, including schools, i.e. projects that take place

in school, during school hours and/or only for the benefit of the pupils will not be considered. PTAs/Parent Councils can apply, but must evidence the project has genuine wider community benefit outwith the school

- Projects not aligned to Council and/or Community Planning Partnership policies, strategies and priorities
- Applications from groups based outwith the Scottish Borders

#### Staffing/Salary/Consultancy – including covering the costs of external trainers

- A maximum of 50% of your application costs can be used for staffing/salary/consultants/external trainers, but cannot be used to fund core staffing activity/time

## **4 PROPOSED TIMETABLE**

- 4.1 A proposed timetable is included at **Appendix C**. This timetable is for guidance only, and in order to allow for application support if required, the final timetable for each of the 5 areas will be decided by the members of each Area Partnership.
- 4.2 It is proposed that the fund opens for applications from January 2019 through to the end of February 2019. Assessment will take place in March 2019, and voting will take place Mid-April 2019 with successful applicants being notified in May 2019.
- 4.3 A second public survey will be conducted at the end of round 2, along with feedback collated during the process, and this will be used in conjunction with the monitoring and evaluation from LBF Round 1 to bring a full evaluation for Members consideration in summer 2019.

## **5 IMPLICATIONS**

### **5.1 Financial**

- (a) The funding awarded for the 2017 Localities Bid Fund Round 1 was £203,759. Funding being allocated for this round is £296,241.30 which includes £2,050 being rolled over for Berwickshire and £26,191 rolled over for Eildon (**Appendix B**).
- (b) Due to the extension of the fund, it will not be possible to award the outstanding LBF pilot budget within 2018/2019, and therefore the balance outstanding at the end of the current financial year will be required to be vired into 2019/2020.

### **5.2 Risk and Mitigations**

A risk management approach will be applied consistently and appropriately across the programme, based on existing grants & funding schemes and best practice. Decisions taken on the allocation of the Localities Bid Fund

should not expose the Council to any unfunded ongoing future financial commitment.

### 5.3 Equalities

- (a) An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out on this proposal and it is anticipated that there are no adverse equality implications.
- (b) It is anticipated that there are no adverse impact due to race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation or religion/belief arising from the proposals in this report.

### 5.4 Acting Sustainably

There are no significant impacts on the economy, community or environment arising from the proposals contained in this report.

### 5.5 Carbon Management

There are no significant effects on carbon emissions arising from the proposals contained in this report.

### 5.6 Rural Proofing

This report does not relate to new or amended policy or strategy and as a result rural proofing is not an applicable consideration.

## 6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Service Director HR, and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted and their comments have been incorporated into the final report.

### Approved by

**Jenni Craig**

**Service Director Customer & Communities Signature .....**

### Author(s)

Name	Designation and Contact Number
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**Background Papers:** Nil

**Previous Minute Reference:** Scottish Borders Council, 28 September 2017

**Note** – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Shona Smith can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

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