


<b>Individual Mayoral Decision</b>  17 <sup>th</sup> June 2021	
<b>Report of:</b> Sharon Godman, Divisional Director, Strategy, Policy and Performance	<b>Classification:</b> Unrestricted
<b>Mayor's Covid Recovery Fund – Summer Programme</b>	

<b>Lead Member</b>	<b>Mayor John Biggs and Cllr Sirajul Islam, Statutory Deputy Mayor &amp; Cabinet Member for Community Safety &amp; Equality</b>
<b>Originating Officer(s)</b>	Afazul Hoque, Head of Corporate Strategy and Policy Emily Fieran-Reed, Senior Strategy and Policy Manager
<b>Wards affected</b>	All wards
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No
<b>Forward Plan Notice Published</b>	No
<b>Reason for Key Decision</b>	This report has been reviewed as not meeting the Key Decision criteria.
<b>Community Plan Theme</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a better deal for children and young people: aspiration, education and skills</li> <li>• good jobs and employment</li> <li>• strong, resilient and safe communities</li> <li>• better health and wellbeing.</li> </ul>

### Executive Summary

At the budget setting meeting of Full Council on the 4<sup>th</sup> March, 2021, it was agreed that the Council would establish a £3 million 'Covid Recovery Fund (CRF)' to be used to "kickstart our community's recovery from the pandemic over the next 12-24 months and help to ensure we build a brighter post-pandemic future for our borough".

This report presents proposals for funding four projects to support the Tower Hamlets community to recover from the impact of the pandemic with deliver starting in the Summer.

The areas that the fund will focus on were developed following council assessment of the impact of covid as reported to Cabinet and understand of residents and partners priorities.

Proposals will be set out in a report to Cabinet 30 June 2021 recommending projects

to be funded through the total Mayor's Covid Recovery Fund. This IMD seeks approval for summer programme to allow for sufficient time to mobilise ensuring delivery can take place in the Summer. Set out in paragraph 3.6 is a list of the four projects/programmes totalling £590,217 that are due to deliver summer activities and recommended for funding.

### **Recommendations:**

The Mayor is recommended to:

1. Agree the recommended projects for delivery over the summer. The total amount of recommended projects is £590,217. The projects are set out in paragraph 3.6.
2. Agree to add to the Small Grants Programme a new one-off cohesion theme in accordance with our current grants policy.
3. Authorise the relevant Corporate Director to enter into an agreement with East End Community Foundation (EECF) for the management of the fund referred to in recommendation 2 in line with the other small grants fund themes.
4. Authorise the relevant Corporate Director to enter into any other agreements to give effect to the recommendations in this report
5. Note that details of any grants awarded from Mayor's Covid Recovery Fund monies will be reported to Grants Determination (Cabinet) Sub-Committee.

## **1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS**

- 1.1 Throughout the summer and beyond, there is a need to support the Tower Hamlets community to recover from the impact of the pandemic and to address the damage caused by it. This report presents details of the Mayor's Covid Recovery Fund, including the proposed funding of projects to deliver through the Summer and allows us to plan for the relaxation of Covid regulations currently proposed for July. By taking the decision now this allows us to plan for the delivery of the summer programme and marking the impact of Covid.

## **2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 2.1 The Council can decide not to contribute to the borough's recovery. This is not recommended as our impact and engagement work, detailed below, has highlighted that it is crucial to support recovery of the borough in order to ensure that we can achieve the aims and objectives of the Council's Strategic Plan.
- 2.2 The Council could agree an alternative set of projects to be funded or ask

for some proposals to be reworked.

### **3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT**

- 3.1 The Council is committed to supporting its residents to recover from the impact of the pandemic. Feedback on the impact of the pandemic from residents and a range of partners, as well as wider research, has indicated a need to ensure there is support available for key priorities. The Council's priorities are set out in the strategic plan presented at cabinet in April 2021.
- 3.2 At the budget setting meeting of Full Council on the 4th March, 2021, it was agreed that the Council would establish a £3 million "Covid Recovery Fund (CRF)" to be used to "kickstart our community's recovery from the pandemic over the next 12-24 months and help to ensure we build a brighter post-pandemic future for our borough". This funding will seek to begin to address some of the damage caused by the pandemic, prioritising initiatives that support:
- residents to access jobs and our businesses and high streets recover
  - residents to address mental and physical health and wellbeing including people with disabilities
  - children and young people to deal with the impact of the pandemic on learning, physical and mental health and wellbeing, including those with disabilities
  - residents to access welfare, advice, and guidance
  - communities to come together in celebration and recognition
  - residents to access a range of VCS services
  - residents to manage future outbreaks

#### **Mayor's Covid Recovery Fund**

- 3.3 The Mayor's Covid Recovery Fund provides a one-off funding pot reflecting the priorities and values of the Council, demonstrating that we are putting residents at the centre of our approach to recovery. It adds unique value and does not duplicate government initiatives or funding packages.
- 3.4 The fund has six themes, as follows:
- **A community led recovery** - including a range of support for Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations
  - **A healthy recovery** – including healthy living initiatives, tackling trauma and loneliness
  - **A community recognised and celebrated** - a series of thank you events and awards for community members contributions during the pandemic
  - **An economic recovery** - including promoting high streets and markets with things like shop banners and deep cleans, as well as providing grants to support small businesses to become covid secure

- **Supporting children and young people recover** - a range of provision over school holidays, including additional tutoring during summer
- **Managing future outbreaks** - providing support needed for organisations and individuals continuing to be affected by Covid outbreaks and restrictions

3.5 The themes for the fund were developed following council assessment of the impact of covid as previously reported to Cabinet; the covid survey of local residents; on-going engagement of residents on impact and support to deal with the pandemic; and discussion and agreement on partnership borough wide recovery priorities with stakeholders, as part of the review and refresh of our Strategic Plan and partnership priorities.

### Proposed Summer Programme

3.6 **The table below** consists of a list of the component within the CRF recommendations consisting of projects that are due to deliver summer activities. Four proposals that include summer activities are recommended for funding, with the total for these proposals at £590,217. These projects are a component within the overall recommendations from the Mayor's Covid Recovery Fund that will be taken to 30 June 2021 Cabinet.

Proposed Project / Programme	Theme	Amount
Marking the pandemic	3 A community recognised and celebrated	£44,500
Bounce Back to Learning	5 Supporting children and young people recover	£172,950
Bounce Back to Play	2 A healthy recovery 5 Supporting children and young people recover	£322,767
Cohesion	1 A community - led recovery	£50,000
		<b>£590,217</b>

3.7 **Marking the pandemic** – Livestream/webcast of a memorial service at a COVID-19 secure venue inc. A/V, production, and technical support. Work with interfaith forum to coordinate something across all faiths. Tree planting.

3.8 **Bounce Back to Learning – Activities to support children including separate packages supporting 5 to 9 year olds and 10 to 13 year olds**

3.9 **Bounce Back to Play** – projects including walking football, children's football, basketball, holiday provision, arts activities, outdoor activities for all communities. This includes 'walking football' aimed at the over 50s and Fighting Fit sessions with specific sessions for younger, older and female residents as part of our work to tackle social isolation. In our report in June we hope to consider funding a project for outreach to harder to reach and disadvantaged groups.

- 3.10 **Cohesion** - funding for Voluntary and Community Sector organisations through a grants programme of community events over summer to bring people together. Support **towards** cross-cultural ward and area-based events, recognition of the work of carers and volunteers and consider how these may coincide with community, cultural and inter-faith events important to our residents that bring people together (if restrictions permit).
- 3.11 The promotion of the Mayor's Covid Recovery Fund will be promoted using bespoke branding **dedicated** to the fund. This will be designed to stand out so people in Tower Hamlets can appreciate the impact of the fund and see things happening out in the community over summer and autumn. Consideration will be given to how this is framed and the link to broader context and other things the Council is doing.

#### **4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The themes of the Mayor's Covid Recovery Fund provide opportunities to fund services and activities for people with a range of protected equalities characteristics. We have previously reported to Cabinet on the impact of covid on our communities and we will provide a further update on this in Autumn. We have also had a range of feedback from partners and the community through a range of engagement activity. At this stage, no disproportionate adverse impact from introducing the Mayor's Covid Recovery Fund has been identified. The development, prioritisation and delivery of the project proposals should ensure that opportunities for a positive impact for people with protected equalities characteristics are maximised.

#### **5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:
- Best Value Implications,
  - Consultations,
  - Environmental (including air quality),
  - Risk Management,
  - Crime Reduction,
  - Safeguarding.

- 5.2 There are no other specific issues relevant to consideration of this report.

#### **6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER**

- 6.1 A Mayor's Covid Recovery Fund (CRF) of £3m had been created from the New Homes Bonus reserve to be used to kickstart our community's recovery from the pandemic over the next 12-24 months.

6.2 There report seeks to approve 4 projects, to the value of £590,217 which are due to start in the summer of 2021. This is within the approved funding of the CRF.

## **7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES**

7.1 The Council has the legal power to undertake the activities referred to in this report.

7.2 Grants are usually awarded following a decision made by Grants Determination Sub-Committee. However, the GDSC acquires its decision-making power from the Mayor under the constitution and therefore in accordance with administrative law the delegator of a decision-making power may still take the decision him or herself. Therefore, the Mayor is entitled to make all of the decisions referred to in this report. In any event, where the funds are to be spent via commissioned activity, it is appropriate for the decisions to be made by the Mayor in Cabinet.

7.3 The EECF already has a contract for the management of the small grants fund. Therefore, it would be not proportionate or economic to run a competitive exercise for the management of this fund. An amendment to the services already provided by EECF is the most practical way to embed this new theme into the small grants programme.

7.4 The Council must ensure that it obtains Best Value in terms of economy efficiency and effectiveness. Therefore, the grants have been subject to an evaluated application procedure and will be supported by legally binding agreement terms and monitoring to ensure that the money is used in the anticipated manner to deliver the anticipated results.

---

## **Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents**

### **Linked Report**

### **Appendices**

None

### **Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012**

- NONE

### **Officer contact details for documents:**

- N/A