

Decision Pathway – Report



PURPOSE: Key decision

MEETING: Cabinet

DATE: 08 February 2022

TITLE	Community Resilience Fund		
Ward(s)	Citywide		
Author: Penny Germon	Job title: Head of Service Neighbourhoods & Communities		
Cabinet lead: Cllr. Ellie King	Executive Director lead: Hugh Evans		
Proposal origin: Mayor			
Decision maker: Cabinet Member Decision forum: Cabinet			
Purpose of Report:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To seek delegated authority to invest £4m capital funding from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2026 to build the resilience of the community and voluntary sector and in doing so grow the power of communities experiencing the greatest inequity. To establish a reserve of £600k p.a. From 20/21 for the duration of the programme for the revenue funding approved by Cabinet on 25th Feb 2021. To approve a test and learn approach to deliberative and participatory decision making with communities. 			
Evidence Base:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> In February 2021 Cabinet agreed to allocate a total of £2.4m revenue over four years to:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend BIF funded activity to 30th September 2021 to give more time to the BIF 2 application process. Support the delivery of a Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector recovery strategy and enabling a proposed new Communities Resilience Fund (CRF) commencing 2021/22 £48k was allocated to extending BIF leaving a balance of £2,351,995 to deliver the VCSE strategy and the CRF. The Community Resilience Fund is a one-off capital grant fund established in response to recommendations of the Bristol VCSE Strategy Group and as part of an overall goal to build city resilience by growing the power of communities experiencing the greatest inequality. In June 2020 the City Council joined with partners (Black South West Network, VOSCUR, Locality, a Disability Equality Adviser, City Office and City Funds, Quartet Community Foundation, Power to Change Trust, Sirona, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group, and Police and Crime Commissioner) to establish the VCSE Strategy Group with the aim of understanding the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic on the community and voluntary sector and developing a strategic response. Black South West Network, working with Locality and Voscur, were commissioned to analyse the impact of COVID-19 on the VCSE sector in Bristol in order to assess how to foster and embed greater community resilience in the new operating environment, and ultimately provide evidence for planning a thoroughly informed and strengthened VCSE sector recovery strategy that looks beyond COVID-19 and to the long-term future (see appendix A). CRF will fund community and voluntary sector organisations to support their recovery and continue to support their communities. Priorities are likely to include changes to buildings or purchase of equipment which improve access (e.g. for disabled people or young people), save energy costs or increase income streams; for upgrading digital infrastructure and environmental sustainability. The CRF will be invested in community and voluntary organisations in areas of the city ranked 30% most deprived in the Index of Multiple Deprivation and citywide self-organised equality groups e.g. disabled people, black and minoritised communities, women and LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) communities, with an indicative budget of £3.2m for neighbourhoods and £0.8m for citywide equality 			

groups. The proposed approach is set out in appendix A.

8. The approach puts communities at the heart of the decision-making and builds on the Port Communities Resilience Fund and devolved Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) by inviting community and voluntary organisations to put forward ideas and proposals which are then shortlisted through deliberative and participatory decision-making. Funding agreements will be worked up to deliver the chosen community priorities.
9. Community and voluntary partners will facilitate the community conversations working with ward councillors to understand and decide on priorities. Building on learning from the Citizens Assembly, all those leading the process will be trained in participative and deliberative decision-making which will facilitate shared understanding, wide and diverse participation and ultimately well-informed decisions.
10. CRF will provide the opportunity to test and learn about participatory and deliberative decision-making at a local/community scale. There is real potential for the capacity and skills of the VCSE sector, local communities and ward Councillors acquired through CRF to be applied to other areas and provide a way in for partners wanting to work with these priority communities. CRF will take an action learning approach and evaluate the decision-making process itself.
11. Budget (for illustrative purposes - the allocations may change to manage the overall programme within the budget envelope)

	Year 1 22/23	Year 2 23/24	Year 3 24/25	Year 4 25/26
Capital Grants	0	1,700,000	1,700,000	600,000

Cabinet Member / Officer Recommendations:

That Cabinet:

1. Approves the use of £4m capital funds for the Community Resilience Fund to be spent over three years from 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2026 to support the recovery and sustainability of the community and voluntary sector as outlined in this report.
2. Approves a reserve of up to £600k from 20/21 in accordance with the Cabinet decision on 25th February 2021 to allocate up to £600,000 per annum (£2.4m over 4 years) to support the recovery of the community and voluntary sector.
3. Authorises the Executive Director for People in consultation with Cabinet Member for Communities (Public Health, Libraries, Parks), Events and Equalities Communities, to spend the funding to award grants necessary for the implementation of the Community Resilience Fund as outlined in this report.

Corporate Strategy alignment:

The challenges facing citizens, communities and the city in the wake of the pandemic include increasing inequity, the climate emergency, pressure on NHS and Adult Social Care services, emotional distress (including loneliness and isolation) and are set out in the draft Corporate Strategy 2022-2027. Community infrastructure which enables social connection, self-organisation, access to support and being part of decision-making is a crucial building block for city resilience and our ability as citizens, communities and anchor institutions to meet these challenges.

City Benefits:

1. This proposal is about investing in the sustainability and resilience of the community and voluntary sector working with communities experiencing greatest inequity. We have seen in the pandemic these community groups are a vital part of the city and community ecosystem.

Consultation Details:

1. The CRF is designed to respond to the findings and recommendations of the VCSE research ‘Designing A New Social Reality’ and the resulting strategic action plan.
2. The proposed approach has been developed with VCSE partners including Voscur, Black Southwest Network, Locality, and neighbourhood and equalities-led organisations.
3. 3 meetings with ward councillors

4. Meeting with VCSE Strategy Group
5. Meeting with Bristol Funders Network to consider opportunities for alignment

Background Documents:

Designing a New Social Reality

Revenue Cost		Source of Revenue Funding	
Capital Cost	£4m	Source of Capital Funding	BCC Capital Programme.
One off cost <input type="checkbox"/>	Ongoing cost <input type="checkbox"/>	Saving Proposal <input type="checkbox"/>	Income generation proposal <input type="checkbox"/>

Required information to be completed by Financial/Legal/ICT/ HR partners:

1. Finance Advice:

This report seeks delegated authority to invest £4m capital funding over three years from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2026 to build the resilience of the community and voluntary sector.

In allocating the capital funding, it is essential that the funding principles and resulting decisions ensure:

- that monies are only deployed for capital purposes and that organisations are clear on the definition of capital and time frames for delivery.
- the process followed is clear and transparent in how resources will be allocated in terms of approval and prioritisation and the decision / acceptance criteria.
- clarity on the benefits / improved outcomes that will be achieved from the funding
- that the governance process ensures that due diligence is carried out on bids / organisations seeking funding.

BCC Finance advice and support should be sought as part of the Community Resilience Fund oversight group to assist in the governance process.

Finance Business Partner: Denise Hunt 15 December 2021

2. Legal Advice:

On the basis the proposed arrangements comprise grant agreements (and not contracts for services), the grants will not be subject to the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. Officers should seek legal assistance to ensure this is the case.

Legal Team Leader:

Husinara Jones, Team Leader/Solicitor 7 December 2021

3. Implications on IT:

I can see no implications on IT in regards to this activity.

IT Team Leader: Gavin Arbuckle – Head of Service Improvement and Performance

4. HR Advice:

The report is seeking delegated authority to invest £4m capital funding over three years from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2026 to build the resilience of the community and voluntary sector. This does not in itself represent any significant HR implications for Bristol City Council employees, however further proposals on the spend of the £4m may require further comment in due course.

HR Partner: Lorna Laing 03/12/21

EDM Sign-off	Hugh Evans	8 December 2021
Cabinet Member sign-off	Councillor Ellie King	16 December 2021
For Key Decisions - Mayor's Office sign-off	Mayor's Office	10 January 2022

Appendix A – Further essential background / detail on the proposal	YES
Appendix B – Details of consultation carried out - internal and external	NO
Appendix C – Summary of any engagement with scrutiny	NO
Appendix D – Risk assessment	YES
Appendix E – Equalities screening / impact assessment of proposal	YES
Appendix F – Eco-impact screening/ impact assessment of proposal	YES
Appendix G – Financial Advice	NO
Appendix H – Legal Advice	NO
Appendix I – Exempt Information	No
Appendix J – HR advice	NO
Appendix K – ICT	NO
Appendix L – Procurement	NO