

Ramsgate Levelling Up Fund: Third Party Grant

Cabinet	28 July, 2022
Report Author	Louise Askew, Director of Regeneration
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Reece Pugh, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Development
Status	For Decision
Classification:	Unrestricted
Key Decision	Yes
Reasons for Key	An executive decision which involves the incurring of expenditure exceeding £250,000
Ward:	Newington

Executive Summary:

This paper requests the approval of Cabinet to agree to provide a grant in order to deliver the Ramsgate Levelling Up Fund project Access to Opportunities. This project has already been identified and approved, and as the Accountable Body, Thanet District Council will receive the funding to be allocated against pre-agreed projects. In certain cases, these projects are proposed to be delivered by a third party, through a formally agreed grant, and in this situation the third party is the Newington Community Association. Where these grants exceed £250,000 Cabinet are required to approve these allocations.

Recommendation(s):

1. Approve the use of Grants which exceed £250,000 to third parties to deliver the agreed Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities funded project:
 - Up to £500,000 to Newington Community Association to deliver the Access to Opportunities Project in Newington Community Centre.
2. The grant agreement is signed under Deed, by the Director of Law and Democracy, and the Director of Finance and S151 Officer, and is witnessed by a Member of the Council.

Corporate Implications

Financial and Value for Money

The Council is the Accountable Body for the Levelling Up Fund. The Council has the below in place to deal with matters relating to the funding, management, and assurance protocols are in place to:

- Ensure decisions are made in accordance with good governance principles
- Ensure transparency requirements are met
- Provide a Local Assurance Process
- Receive and account for the funding allocation
- Monitor and evaluate the delivery of individual projects
- Submit regular reports to DLUHC

For the Levelling Up Funded Projects an internal Management Board has been established and a Programme Scrutiny Panel to ensure the projects are being delivered in line with good project management principles - keeping to time, budget, quality and reviewing the risks.

For this project, to substantiate payment, as part of the Grant Agreement there will be a requirement that reports and evidence of invoices are provided on a monthly basis.

The Section 151 Officer is required to scrutinise and approve regular monitoring returns (quarterly) to DLUHC. These returns will cover actual and forecast spend, alongside output metrics. These returns will cover actual and forecast spend, alongside output metrics. The grant documents will require the Monitoring and Evaluation reports to be completed by the third party.

Legal

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

Annex 1 is a standard grant document which was developed by an external legal team, to give the Council the confidence that the grant will be delivered in accordance with the requirements placed on the Council as the Accountable Body. This document has been shared with Regeneration, Finance and Legal Officers to agree the draft. Each of these grant agreements will include specific requirements relating to the project and the entity delivering the project. For Grants exceeding £1,000,000 this will be commissioned through the external legal team.

Corporate

The Ramsgate Levelling Up Fund Project delivers against the Council's corporate priority for Growth, including encouraging the rejuvenation of our towns, creating new opportunities to gain skills and therefore employment.

Equality Act 2010 & Public Sector Equality Duty

Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to the aims of the Duty at the time the decision is taken. The aims of the Duty are: (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, and (iii) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Protected characteristics: age, sex, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief and pregnancy & maternity. Only aim (i) of the Duty applies to Marriage & civil partnership.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

This report relates to the following corporate priorities: -

- Growth
- Communities

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1. One project within the successful Ramsgate Levelling Up Fund was the delivery of Access to Opportunities provision within Newington, which includes the creation of a training kitchen facility. As the monies are limited, the project needs to be based within an existing building, and the most suitable site identified is the Newington Community Centre. The Community Centre is leased to Newington Community Association who have agreed that, with support from Thanet District Council, they can directly deliver this project. With Thanet District Council being the accountable body for the funding streams, these funds will be passed onto the third party via a grant, to enable delivery.
- 1.2. Officers have been actively working with the Newington Community Association and Starling CIC to develop this project and develop the grant agreements referred to in the Legal section of this report (Annex 1), and funding has now been allocated by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.
- 1.3. Newington Community Association and Starling CIC have also requested a Thanet District Council officer to be part of their steering group to ensure continued involvement and support throughout the project.

2. Grant Agreements

- 2.1. To ensure accountability and to safeguard our responsibilities as the Accountable Body, Thanet District Council has commissioned Sharpe Pritchard LLP to develop two forms of grant agreements. These grants agreements aim to ensure we have safeguards in place including:
 - a. The achievement of the outcomes;
 - b. The delivery of the projects in accordance with our requirements;
 - c. The appropriate use of the funds;
 - d. Ensuring that reporting, monitoring arrangements are in place;
 - e. Auditing systems are in place;
 - f. Adherence to statutory duties including procurement, EqIA, Data Protection, Fraud and Corruption.
- 2.2. The first, is a generic grant agreement template which can be adapted for use for grants of below £1,000,000. The second is a bespoke agreement, developed specifically for a project, that is over £1,000,000.

3. Corporate Governance of the Grants

- 3.1. It is essential that as the accountable body Thanet District Council has established processes in place to ensure that this money is safeguarded. So in addition to the initial Grant Agreement, internal monitoring processes will be established, overseen by our internal projects managers, which will include:
- a. Receiving and reviewing all financial spends and forecasts;
 - b. Reviewing all project milestones to ensure these are being delivered in accordance with the project plan;
 - c. Ad hoc site visits;
 - d. Monthly progress meetings;
 - e. Audits to ensure appropriate reporting mechanisms are in place;
 - f. Financial audits to ensure propriety of funds.
- 3.2. All these reporting activities will then be reported to our internal governance structures including the:
- a. Levelling Up Funds Programme Management Board;
 - b. Levelling Up Fund Programme Scrutiny Panel for Ramsgate;
 - c. Corporate Management Team;
 - d. Cabinet.

4. Options

- 3.1 Cabinet approves provision of a grant of up to £500,000 to Newington Community Association, to allow the delivery of the Access to Opportunities Levelling Up Fund project funded by the DLUHC.
- 3.2 If this grant is not allocated to the Newington Community Association the Council will need to identify another delivery partner in order to deliver the project, or there would be a requirement to return the funding, and the benefits associated with this project would not be achieved.

Contact Officer: *Louise Askew, Director of Regeneration*
Reporting to: *Bob Porter, Director of Housing and Planning*

Background Papers

Cabinet: 8 June, 2021 - approved submission of a Levelling Up Bid to the 18 June 2021 deadline

Council: 12 January, 2022 - approval of addition of the Levelling Up Fund Projects For Ramsgate And Margate to the Capital Programme

Annex 1: Final Draft Grant Agreement

Corporate Consultation

Finance: Chris Blundell, Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer

Legal: Estelle Culligan, Director of Law and Democracy