

Meeting date: 14 March 2023

Report to: Stronger Communities and Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Board

Report title: Summary and Assessment of Bids for Funding from the Neighbourhood Proportion of The Community Infrastructure Levy

Report from: Assistant Director – Growth and Development

Report author/lead contact officer: Gary Palmer – Group Manager, Policy and Engagement
gpalmer@solihull.gov.uk

Wards affected:

All Wards | Bickenhill | Blythe | Castle Bromwich | Chelmsley Wood |
 Dorridge/Hockley Heath | Elmdon | Kingshurst/Fordbridge | Knowle |
 Lyndon | Meriden | Olton | Shirley East | Shirley South |
 Shirley West | Silhill | Smith's Wood | St Alphege

Public/private report: Public

Exempt by virtue of paragraph: Not applicable

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL) and to seek views from Scrutiny Board in respect of the draft allocations for funding for onward reporting to the Cabinet Member for Communities and Leisure.
- 1.2 A total of 21 bids were received and following their assessment against the agreed scoring matrix, it is proposed that 13 bids be recommended for funding approval. A total of £402,404 of NCIL funding was available, with £401,538 worth of bids being submitted.

2. Decision(s) Recommended

- (a) To note the current position for allocating NCIL funds.
- (b) For Scrutiny Board to make comments to the Cabinet Member on the bid assessments, as measured against the agreed scoring matrix.

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3. Matters for Consideration

- 3.1 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was introduced in 2010 as a transparent, flexible and fair way of raising developer contributions as part of the planning process. It is a tariff-based planning charge, levied on new development by local authorities to fund infrastructure to support the development in their area.
- 3.2 The level of CIL contribution is set out by the local authority based upon the needs identified through infrastructure planning but is also tested to ensure that it will not detrimentally affect the viability of development. Solihull's levy rates are set out in an adopted Charging Schedule, approved by Full Council on 12th April 2016, with the levy being applied to applicable planning approvals from 4th July 2016.
- 3.3 Once funds have been received, at least 15% is apportioned to either a parish fund (if the development is within a parished area), or a ward fund (if within a non-parished area). In parished areas, the monies are paid directly to the Parish Council who are responsible for spending or allocating the local proportion of the levy. Where there is no Parish Council to manage the local funds, the responsibility lies with the Council as the Collecting Authority. This report deals with allocating the local funds for the non-parished wards within the borough that have accumulated at least £10,000 in local funds.

4. Background

- 4.1 The Neighbourhood Proportion of the levy in a non-parished area is expected to be used to fund:
- The provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure; or
 - Anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area.
- 4.2 The Charging Authority should engage with the communities where development has taken place and agree how best to spend the neighbourhood funding.
- 4.3 2022 is the fourth year that funding will be allocated to communities in non-parished areas. Whilst there has been a slight delay to the process this year in order to consider potential options for how cross ward boundary projects could be addressed, the process will continue to be carried out as an annual cycle as follows:
- April – CIL receipts for the previous financial year are analysed to determine how much funding is available in each ward;
 - May/June – Publicity and communication to inform communities of what funding is available;
 - July/August – Funding bids are submitted to the Council;

- September/October – Bids are assessed against an agreed framework (as amended in March 2020);
- December/January – the Cabinet Member agrees allocation of funds.

4.4 Any monies not spent in one year will be rolled over into the next funding year.

4.5 In 2022, there was £402,404 available for bidding, £128,007 of which was 'rolled over' from 2021/22. The total sum available was split into the following wards:

- Blythe - £11,907
- Dorridge - £88,125
- Knowle - £19,576
- Lyndon - £10,334
- Olton - £20,212
- Shirley East - £11,028
- Shirley South - £60,544
- Shirley West - £33,803
- Silhill - £64,760
- St Alphege - £82,115

4.6 Following consultation with Members at the Stronger Communities and Partnerships Cabinet Member session on 30 January 2019, the scoring matrix and bidding process was agreed for use in 2019/20. A review was carried out in March 2020 following the first round of allocations. This review aimed to resolve a small number of issues that were encountered in the NCIL initial round of bidding. A summary of the current scoring matrix and guidance is provided in Appendix A.

4.7 A further review was considered by the Cabinet Member for Communities and Leisure in July 2022. This was in relation to potentially creating a non-ward specific ward fund to support cross boundary bids. This potential change was put on hold with the result that the 2022 bids would be considered just against their host ward.

4.8 The availability of the CIL funding was promoted by the Communications Team across the Council's social media channels (Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn) between October 2022 and January 2023. Five separate posts were issued across all three channels and these reached a combined total of 14,151 people. These posts linked to a news release on the Council website which had 988 views. Three email bulletins were also distributed between the same time period to a combined total of just under 18,000 subscribers.

4.9 The Community Development Team also used their distribution network of community groups and others (almost 700 contacts) to raise awareness of the funds and this

included utilising the Warwickshire and Solihull Community and Voluntary Action (CAVA) network.

4.10 In 2022, 21 bids (seeking some £401,538), arranged by ward, were received by the 3rd February 2023 deadline:

Ward	Bid reference	Applicant	Project	Amount
Dorridge	NCIL22-002 DOR	Bentley Heath Allotments	Removal of green waste to enable installation of compostable toilet and communal area	£3,000
	NCIL22-008 DOR	Dorridge Cricket Club	Development of second pitch at the main ground and accompanying new pavilion with changing facilities	£48,000
	NCIL22-012 DOR	Dorridge Scouts	Dorridge Scout Hut Roof Modification and Replacement	£15,000
	NCIL22-016 DOR	SMBC Public Realm	Dorridge Park – multi-play equipment replacement	£15,481
	NCIL22-018 DOR	Knowle and Dorridge Cricket Club	Clubhouse Redevelopment Project	£20,000
	NCIL22-020 DOR	Dorridge and District Residents Association	Dorridge Park Pathway Project - Replace footpath in Dorridge Park from the Arden Road park access eastwards to the end of the wood	£19,450
Knowle	NCIL22-011 DOR&KNO	Knowle Dorridge and Bentley Heath (KDBH) Neighbourhood Forum	KDBH Community Engagement and Social Infrastructure Building Project	£10,000 ^{1*}
	NCIL22-019 KNO	Visit Knowle	Northern Gateway to Knowle - landscape and public realm improvements	£9,960
Olton	NCIL22-013 OLT	Solihull & District Hebrew Congregation	Solihull Jewish Community Centre Insulation and Energy Saving	£7,500
	NCIL22-015 OLT	Langley Primary School	Repair school drive	£5,000

¹ £10,000 requested as £5,000 from each of the Dorridge and Knowle ward pots given that the project covers both areas.

Ward	Bid reference	Applicant	Project	Amount
Shirley East	NCIL22-005 SE	Ralph Road Allotment Society	Creation of wildlife and community area	£4,616
	NCIL22-007 SE	Shirley Methodist Bowling Club	Purchase of an Electric Mat Winder for the short mats used by Shirley Methodist Bowling Club	£5,056
	NCIL22-017 SE	SMBC Public Realm	Jacey Park – accessible roundabout replacement	£8,500
Shirley South	NCIL22-014 SS	Solihull Municipal Club Sports and Social Club	Resurface Road Entrance Solihull Municipal Club t/a Solihull Sports and Social Club	£4,120
	NCIL22-021 SS	Solihull Municipal Cricket Club	Repair to Garage Roof at Cricket Club	£4,680
Shirley West	NCIL22-003 SW	Shirley Institute	Car park resurfacing	£25,000
	NCIL22-006 SW	St. James Primary School Shirley	Building an inspirational library	£3,325
	NCIL22-009 SW	Haslucks Green Junior School	Outdoor classroom with garden area	£25,000
St Alphege	NCIL22-001-STA	Nurture Parenting Collective C.I.C - Happy Mamas Solihull	Peer group support for new mums to improve mental health by providing mentoring and wellbeing sessions	£7,670
	NCIL22-004 STA	SMBC Public Realm	Malvern Park play area improvements	£80,000
	NCIL22-010 STA ²	Tudor Grange Academy	Tudor Grange Academy Solihull Tennis and Netball	£80,000

² This bid has since been withdrawn

Ward	Bid reference	Applicant	Project	Amount
			Community Hub. Resurfacing to create a hub.	

4.11 Each project bid was assessed against the agreed scoring matrix so that:

- It could be determined whether the bid reached the minimum criteria; and
- In the event that there are insufficient funds within a ward pot to fund all of the projects, the projects could be prioritised based on the scoring matrix.

4.12 Each application's assessment and score is detailed in Appendix B.

Proposed Allocations

4.13 Using scores from the approved matrix and based on the funding available in each ward, the following 13 bids are recommended for approval and funding:

Dorridge

- NCIL22-008 DOR - Development of second pitch at the main ground and accompanying new pavilion with changing facilities
- NCIL22-018 DOR - Knowle & Dorridge Cricket Club – Clubhouse Redevelopment Project
- NCIL22-012 DOR - Dorridge Scout Hut Roof Modification and Replacement
- NCIL22-011 DOR&KNO - KDBH Community Engagement & Social Infrastructure Building Project³.

Knowle

- NCIL22-019 KNO - Northern Gateway to Knowle - landscape and public realm improvements.

Olton

- NCIL22-013 OLT - Solihull Jewish Community Centre Insulation and Energy Saving.

Shirley East

- NCIL22-005 SE - Creation of wildlife and community area
- NCIL22-007 SE - Purchase of an Electric Mat Winder for the short mats used by

³ £50% of this funding will also come from the Knowle ward pot.

Shirley Methodist Bowling Club.

Shirley South

- NCIL22-014 SS - Resurface Road Entrance Solihull Municipal Club t/a Solihull Sports and Social Club
- NCIL22-021 SS - Repair to Garage Roof at Cricket Club.

Shirley West

- NCIL22-003 SW - Shirley Institute Car park resurfacing
- NCIL22-006 SW - Building an inspirational library.

St Alphege

- NCIL22-004 STA – SMBC Public Realm: Malvern Park play area improvements.

4.14 A total of £237,437 is recommended for allocation this year. Following allocation of funds, £164,967 would remain and will 'roll over' for bidding in 2023.

4.15 A summary of the scores for each project by ward and in priority order is set out in Appendix C.

5. What options have been considered and what is the evidence telling us about them?

5.1 The options as to how NCIL would be allocated were considered by the Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities and Partnerships in January 2019. Following the assessment of bids using the approved scoring matrix, the following options still remain:

- The option to part fund a project from adjacent and/or multiple ward pots where the project serves the wider community
- On occasion, there may be opportunities for funding from more appropriate/other sources within the Council. In addition, where funding could not be fully secured through the NCIL fund, it may be appropriate that these other sources of funding should be pursued.

6. Reasons for recommending preferred option

6.1 The bids recommended for approval were assessed in accordance with the approved scoring matrix, which ensures that the ranking of preferred bids is supported by evidence provided in application forms and supporting documentation. This seeks to ensure that the scoring of bids is open and transparent, with robust reasoning behind the recommended projects for funding.

6.2 Where applications are seen to benefit communities in the borough but have not successfully secured NCIL funding, the Community Development Team can work with the applicant to identify alternative sources of funding or other opportunities to deliver.

The team have access to a range of resources including Grantfinder procured by the Council in 2022. Grantfinder is one of the largest online databases of grants and funding opportunities, including information on loans, awards and venture capital. Consideration will also be given to matching any social value being offered by contractors.

7. Implications and Considerations

7.1 State how the proposals in this report contribute to the priorities in the [Council Plan](#):

Priority:	Contribution:
<p>People and Communities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improving outcomes for children and young people in Solihull. 2. Good quality, responsive, and dignified care and support for Adults in Solihull when they need it. 3. Take action to improve life chances and health outcomes in our most disadvantaged communities. 4. Enable communities to thrive. 	<p>Helping to contribute positively towards the mitigation of the impacts of new development in the borough.</p> <p>Sustainable, quality, affordable provision for adults and children with complex needs.</p> <p>Take action to improve life chances in communities through the improvement of access to facilities for wheelchair users/disabled people.</p> <p>Creating the conditions for communities to thrive, enabling communities to be more self-reliant and to work together in local areas to solve problems.</p> <p>Create an environment in which quality care and support can be provided for adults and children with complex needs, through the utilisation and development of outdoor and indoor environments.</p> <p>Supporting access to opportunities for all.</p> <p>Promoting being outdoors and getting involved in sport, including the associated wellbeing, social and health benefits.</p>
<p>Economy:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Develop and promote the Borough's economy, with a focus on revitalising our town and local centres. 6. Maximising the opportunities of UK Central and HS2. 7. Increase the supply of affordable and social housing that is environmentally sustainable. 	<p>Some of the projects will have a positive contribution towards revitalising town and local centres.</p> <p>Some of the projects will also contribute towards enhancing Solihull's natural and physical environment.</p>

Priority:	Contribution:
Environment: 8. Enhance our natural environment, improve air quality and reduce net carbon emissions.	A proportion of the projects that have been recommended for funding have the ability to deliver enhancements to the natural environment at a community level. Some projects will actively encourage the use of car cycling and walking. Some projects make buildings and their use more eco-friendly.
9. Promote employee wellbeing	Not applicable.

7.2 Consultation and Scrutiny:

7.2.1 As part of the assessment of the bids, those seeking funds are encouraged to indicate what support projects they have in the community and/or if they are supported by Members. This process helps to establish what support the projects may have, whilst providing challenge to the effectiveness and deliverability of projects that have been proposed. Council Members for the relevant wards are informed of all bids that have been received and have the opportunity to comment upon them.

7.3 Financial implications:

7.3.1 Up to 5% of funds collected via the levy can be retained by the Charging Authority to recover the cost of the administration and management of the levy. The costs associated with engagement work with communities, scoring of bids and writing of reports will be recovered by the administration proportion of CIL.

7.4 Legal implications:

7.4.1 Regulation 59A-59C of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 detail the Council's responsibility for the spending of the Neighbourhood proportion of CIL. The preferred option will ensure that the Council allocates funding appropriately and meets its obligations under the Regulations.

7.5 Risk implications, including Risk Appetite:

7.5.1 Without appropriate spending of the levy, the Council will not be undertaking its statutory duty as a Charging Authority to spend funds in conjunction with communities.

7.6 Equality implications:

7.6.1 As part for the review of the process for allocating NCIL in non-parished areas, a Fair Treatment Assessment has been carried out.

7.6.2 One of the advantages of NCIL allocations being delegated to the Cabinet Member for Communities and Leisure is that it helps to set this opportunity in the wider context of funding availability from other sources administered through this portfolio. This allows

bids and/or bidders to be redirected towards opportunities that may be more appropriate for that project.

7.6.3 In wards that lie in the North of the Solihull where NCIL in non-parished wards will not be available due to a zero levy, it is especially important that additional targeting of other sources of funding is carried out.

7.6.4 Overall, it is considered that NCIL should benefit communities within the borough, however it will be important to continuously review the process for allocating NCIL in non-parished areas over the coming years.

7.7 Linkages to our work with the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), Local Enterprise Partnership, or the Birmingham & Solihull Integrated Care System (ICS):

7.7.1 No implications as a result of this report.

8. List of appendices referred to

8.1 Appendix A – Scoring Matrix and Guidance

8.2 Appendix B – Individual Project Scores

8.3 Appendix C – Final Score Summary

9. Background papers used to compile this report

9.1 Report to the Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities and Partnerships – Spending Mechanism for Neighbourhood Proportion of the Community Infrastructure Levy, [30 January 2019](#).

10. List of other relevant documents

10.1 None.