Local Area Fund Frequently Asked Questions

1. Q: How are priorities for the Local Area Fund identified?
A: Ward Councillors and Council service leads have identified broad priority areas. These may change over time and more specific priorities may be identified from local intelligence gathered at Community Conversations, the Community Engagement Outreach Team, and other local engagement. E.g. surgeries, local meetings. The responsibility is put on the applicant to demonstrate why their project is a local priority and the wider community backing and benefit that it will bring.

2. Q: How will residents / groups submit their ideas?
A: They will submit an initial idea form to their local Councillors and grant team to consider the idea against the ward priorities. Councillors will discuss the idea with officers to see if it is a viable option before asking residents to submit a full application, or to advise them on how the issue can be addressed either through referral to a Council department or alternative appropriate funding etc. Ideas can be submitted at any time and it is anticipated that the Council will respond to the initial idea within four weeks.

3. Q: What happens if the initial idea is rejected?
A: Residents are advised in writing of why project does not fulfil the fund criteria / ward priorities and will be given advice on alternative funding sources and support to develop their ideas. This may be through local services provided by Richmond CVS.

4. Q: If the initial idea is accepted, how does the applicant submit an application?
A: The application form will be sent directly to the applicant. The Grants Team will be able to support applicants with queries on completing the application. Richmond CVS can also provide advice on this and other possible areas of support.

5. Q: What happens if there is dispute over the decision on projects between Councillors?
A: The Chair or Vice Chair of the Finance, Policy and Resources Committee would mediate in any disputes.

6. Q: What happens after the resident submits their application?
A: The Grants Team will review and assess applications in consultation with service leads and will circulate a recommendation report to the Ward Councillors. Ward Councillors will input their view and the full assessment will go to Jon Evans (Assistant Chief Executive) for review and the final decision. Decisions will be made on a rolling basis.

7. Q: Can several wards join together to support a joint project?
A: Yes, this is possible, but will require all ward Councillors to agree to support a project.

8. Q: How soon will a decision be made?
A: This will vary depending on the project and whether further information is needed. We will try to assess initial ideas within four weeks of submission, although in some instances further information and discussion with you may be needed. Once an application has been received and we have all the information needed, a decision will usually be made within eight weeks.
9. **Q:** How will the resident/group receive their funding?

A: Through a transfer to their designated bank account after completion of a Funding Level Agreement.

10. **Q:** When will the project need to be completed?

A: The project should be completed within 12 months of receiving the funding.

11. **Q:** How will the project be monitored?

A: The applicant will be required to complete and submit a monitoring report to the Grants Team within a year of receiving funding.

12. **Q:** Will any remaining Local Area Fund be able to roll over to the following financial year?

A: If funding is committed it can be accrued to the new financial year.