



Democratic Services

Location: Phase II
Ext: 0833
DDI: 01895 250833
My Ref: RD

**To: COUNCILLOR MARTIN GODDARD
CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE**

**COUNCILLOR EDDIE LAVERY
CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT,
HOUSING AND REGENERATION**

c.c. All Members of Executive Scrutiny Committee
c.c. Chairman of the Social Care, Housing and Public
Health Policy Overview Committee
c.c. Perry Scott, Director of Infrastructure,
Procurement, Business Improvement,
Communications, Waste Services, and ICT
c.c. Helena Webster, Residents Services
c.c. Ward Councillors for Botwell, Cavendish,
Northwood, Northwood Hills, Pinkwell, and West
Ruislip
c.c. Conservative and Labour Group Offices
(inspection copy)

Date: 26 January 2021

Non-Key Decision request

Form D

CAPITAL RELEASE REPORT (January 2021)

DEPARTMENT: Residents Services

SERVICE AREA / PROGRAMME: Better Neighbourhood Fund 2020/21 Programme

RELEASE NO: 3

Dear Cabinet Member

Attached is a report requesting that a decision be made by you as an individual Cabinet Member. Democratic Services confirm that this is not a key decision, as such the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 notice period does not apply.

You should take a decision **on or after Wednesday 03 February 2021** in order to meet Constitutional requirements about publication of decisions that are to be made. You may wish to discuss the report with the Corporate Director before it is made. Please indicate your decision on the duplicate memo supplied, and return it to me when you have made your decision. I will then arrange for the formal notice of decision to be published.

Ryan Dell
Democratic Services Apprentice

Title of Report: Better Neighbourhood Fund 2020/21 Programme
RELEASE NO: 3

Decision made:

Reasons for your decision: (e.g. as stated in report)

Alternatives considered and rejected: (e.g. as stated in report)

SignedDate.....

*Cabinet Member for Finance / Cabinet Member for Environment, Housing and
Regeneration*

CAPITAL RELEASE REPORT (January 2021)

DEPARTMENT: Residents Services

SERVICE AREA/ PROGRAMME: Better Neighbourhood Fund 2020/21 Programme

RELEASE NO: 3

Cabinet Member(s)	Councillor Martin Goddard Councillor Eddie Lavery
Cabinet Portfolio(s)	Cabinet Member for Finance Cabinet Member for Environment, Housing and Regeneration
Officer Contact	Helena Webster, Residents Services
Papers with Report	Appendix A with capital release drawdown request for approval Appendix B with project details

HEADLINES

Summary	To seek Cabinet Member recommendation and approval for the allocation and release of funds.
Putting our Residents First	This report supports the Council objective of strong financial management.
Financial Cost	This report seeks the release of £39.1k from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Better Neighbourhood Fund 2020/21 budget to fund six projects improving Council owned housing estates, helping to instil a sense of pride in the community. The works will commence upon release of the funds and are due for completion by 31 March 2021.
Relevant Policy Overview Committee	Social Care, Housing and Public Health
Ward(s) affected	Botwell, Cavendish, Northwood, Northwood Hills, Pinkwell, and West Ruislip

RECOMMENDATIONS

That:

1. The Cabinet Member for Environment, Housing and Regeneration approves the allocation of £39.1k within the HRA Better Neighbourhood Fund from the 2020/21 programme and agrees to the six projects improving Council owned housing estates as set out in Appendix B.
2. That the Cabinet Member for Finance and the Cabinet Member for Environment, Housing and Regeneration agree to the capital release of £39.1k within the HRA

Better Neighbourhood Fund 2020/21 programme to fund the six projects improving Council owned housing estate (Appendix A).

Reasons for recommendations

Each year £156k from the Housing Revenue Account budget is earmarked to facilitate Council tenants and leaseholders suggesting improvements to their housing estate, helping to instil a sense of pride in the community. This local Hillingdon Council initiative is known as the Better Neighbourhood Fund.

Five proposals with a total value of £55.3k were approved on 18 June 2020 and have completed. Nine proposals approved 9 November 2020 with a total value of £51.8k are now being implemented. A further six proposals had been recommended by the previous Cabinet Member to be taken forward for implementation by 31 March 2021 as set out in this report.

Alternative options considered

The Cabinet Members could decide not to support the recommendations and/ or to defer any of the recommended projects to a later date.

If the release of funds is not approved, delivery of the six new proposals cannot be effectively and efficiently progressed as intended and the contribution towards improvements on Council housing land and estates would not be fully realised.

Policy Overview Committee comments

None at this stage.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Each year, £156,000 from the Housing Revenue Account budget is earmarked to facilitate improvements to Council owned housing estate helping to instil a sense of pride in the community. This local Hillingdon Council initiative is known as the Better Neighbourhood Fund.

Anyone aged 18 or over living in Hillingdon Council owned accommodation can propose an improvement. Ward Councillors and Council Officers are also welcome to submit a suggestion. The proposal should be for 'one-off' funding of up to £12k without creating any additional ongoing financial commitment from the Council.

Proposals must clearly demonstrate an improvement or benefit to the residents on the estate and support the Council's four broad themes which are: 'Our People', 'Our Natural and Built Environment', 'Our Heritage and Civic Pride' and 'Sound Financial Management.' Examples include gating and security improvements, bringing redundant spaces back into and protecting or enhancing green spaces.

Exceptional proposals, exceeding the £12k limit, in particular those which demonstrate a significant improvement in the wellbeing of residents of all tenures within a particular estate or community area may also be considered.

A further six proposals with an accumulative value of £39,117 including contingency have been submitted by residents and Council officers and, following informal approval by the Cabinet

Member on 22 December 2020, are recommended for support under the Better Neighbourhood Funding 2020/21 programme. Individual project details including costs are shown within Appendix B.

All project cost estimates have been calculated using the schedule of rates contained in the Council's Highways and fencing term contracts which include project contingencies.

Financial Implications

2020/21 Budget £156k, Previously Released £107.1k, Capital Release Requested £39.1k (Appendix A)

This report is seeking the release of £39.1k from the 2020/21 HRA Better Neighbourhood fund budget of £156k, for the six new projects detailed in Appendix A.

Previously, £107.1k has been released; and with the requested release of £39.1k contained within this report, the remaining budget is £9.8k and this is subject to the capital release procedure.

RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION

The benefit or impact upon residents, service users and communities

The projects will contribute towards a notable difference to the neighbourhoods of the residents in terms of improving community safety, enhancing the environment of the housing estates, and increasing community cohesion and civic pride.

Consultation carried out or required

Where consultations have been needed, the results are highlighted in Appendix B.

CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance has reviewed this report and confirms the budgetary position above, noting that the recommended capital release will support investment on Council-owned housing land which is financed from rental income.

Legal

The Borough Solicitor confirms that the Council is responsible for carrying out this function pursuant to section 12 of the Housing Act 1985. There are no legal impediments to authorising the necessary capital release.

Infrastructure/ Asset Management

There are no Infrastructure/ Asset management implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

Capital Release Protocol

The release of all capital funds, and certain revenue funds, held by the Council is to be made by a formal democratic decision (by the Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Business Services). No expenditure can be placed or committed by officers until this formal approval is given by Democratic Services. Release of funds must be for identified projects only and strictly not for the general release of funds for projects to be identified at a later date. No block releases of capital or funding will be allowed, except if authorised by the Leader of the Council in advance to Corporate Finance. The release of funds will only be made if previous Council, Cabinet or Cabinet Member agreement has been given to the project and only if there is an approved budget.

APPENDIX A

Better Neighbourhood Fund 2020/21 Release No. 3

Location	Project / Expenditure Title	Information	Funds Release Sought £000's	Approve	Hold	More Information Required
Botwell	Better Neighbourhood Fund	Rosedale Avenue Gating	1.3			
Cavendish	Better Neighbourhood Fund	Oxford Drive, Ruislip Gating scheme	4.4			
Northwood	Better Neighbourhood Fund	Grangedale Close Bin Storage area and new path	6.2			
Northwood Hills	Better Neighbourhood Fund	28 Joel Street Bin Storage gating	9.1			
Pinkwell	Better Neighbourhood Fund	Service Road leading to Bourne Farm Playing Fields resurfacing	14			
West Ruislip	Better Neighbourhood Fund	Southcote Rise vehicle barrier	4.1			
Total seeking release			39.1			
Previously released			107.1			
Budget			156			
Remaining budget			9.8			

Appendix B						
Better Neighbourhood Fund 2020/21 New Projects for approval						
Project	Date of Application	Cost	Requested by	Agreed by Tenancy Management	Ward	Background
Rosedale Avenue Gating	25/09/20	£1,310	Resident	Yes	Botwell	To install a lockable gate to prevent unwelcome entry into resident's gardens and stealing garden items. One of the residents is elderly and especially vulnerable. Gating will also help reduce the risk of rubbish being dumped in the alleyway.
Oxford Drive, Ruislip Gating scheme	23/10/20	£4,429	Resident	Yes	Cavendish	To install gating and 2m fencing at the access point leading to the garages at Oxford Drive, off Whitby Road. This is to reduce the amount of anti-social behaviour taking place within the garage area
Grangedale Close Bin Storage area	21/05/20	£6,220	Resident	Yes	Northwood	To refurbish the bin storage area in order to accommodate larger bins and help to keep the area tidier. A new path is also proposed for residents and Waste Services to be able to safely access the bin storage area.
28 Joel Street Bin Storage gating	17/09/20	£9,100	Leon Evans, Tenancy Manager	Yes	Northwood Hills	To install gates to prevent anti-social behaviour taking place within the bin storage areas at the rear of Joel Street. There have been reports of people loitering in and around the currently open bin store
Service Road leading to Bourne Farm Playing Fields	28/10/20	£14,000	Chairman Sandgate Football Club	Yes	Pinkwell	To resurface the Housing owned service road leading to Bourne Farm Playing Fields. This will improve access for the residents of Skipton Drive, the Green Spaces grounds maintenance team as well as users of Sandgate Football Club.
Southcote Rise Vehicle barriers	12/10/20	£4,058	Ward Councillor	Yes	West Ruislip	To install manual vehicle barriers to assist with the ongoing issue of cars parking within the communal parking area of the flats. In addition, signs and road markings are recommended to ensure that residents are not subject to inconsiderate parking.
	Sub Total	£39,117				
	BNF Total budget for 2020/210	£156,000				
	Value of BNF Projects already approved in 2020	£107,100				
	Balance of BNF funding 2021-22	£9,783				