



Democratic Services

Location: Phase II
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**To: COUNCILLOR EDDIE LAVERY
CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT,
HOUSING AND REGENERATION**

c.c. All Members of the Environment, Housing & Regeneration Select Committee
c.c. Perry Scott, Corporate Director for Infrastructure, Transport and Building Services
c.c. Helena Webster, Infrastructure, Transport and Building Services
c.c. Ward Councillors for Barnhill, Botwell, Heathrow Villages, Ickenham, Northwood Hills, Townfield, West Ruislip, Yeading and Yiewsley
c.c. Conservative and Labour Group Offices (inspection copy)

Date: 25 November 2021

Non-Key Decision request

Form D

9 NEW ALLOCATIONS FOR THE BETTER NEIGHBOURHOOD FUND 2021/22 PROGRAMME (APPROVAL NO. 3) - NOVEMBER 2021

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 Friday 3 December 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.

Jack Roberts
Democratic Services Apprentice

Title of Report: 9 NEW ALLOCATIONS FOR THE BETTER NEIGHBOURHOOD FUND
2021/22 PROGRAMME (APPROVAL NO. 3) - NOVEMBER 2021

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 Environment, Housing & Regeneration

9 NEW ALLOCATIONS FOR THE BETTER NEIGHBOURHOOD FUND 2021/22 PROGRAMME (APPROVAL NO. 3) - NOVEMBER 2021

Cabinet Member(s)	Councillor Eddie Lavery
Cabinet Portfolio(s)	Cabinet Member for Environment, Housing & Regeneration
Officer Contact(s)	Helena Webster, Infrastructure, Transport and Building Services
Papers with report	None.

HEADLINES

Summary	To seek Cabinet Member approval for the allocation of funds for eight new project schemes under the Better Neighbourhood Fund 2021/22 Programme.
Putting our Residents First	This report supports the following Council objectives of: <i>Our People; Our Built Environment and Strong Financial Management.</i>
Financial Cost	This report seeks the approval of £40.3k from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Better Neighbourhood Fund 2021/22 budget to fund eight new projects improving Council owned housing estates, helping to instil a sense of pride in the community. The works will commence upon approval of the funds and are due for completion by 31 March 2022.
Relevant Select Committee	Environment, Housing and Regeneration Select Committee.
Relevant Ward(s)	Barnhill, Botwell, Heathrow Villages, Ickenham, Northwood Hills, Townfield, West Ruislip, Yeading, Yiewsley

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Cabinet Member for Environment, Housing & Regeneration approves the allocation of £40.3k from the 2021/22 HRA Better Neighbourhood Fund Programme for the following eight projects improving Council owned housing estates:

Ward	Project	Total Cost £000's
Barnhill	To create a gated access to the communal garden for residents of 1-6 Welbeck Court, providing a safe environment for children to play in. The new fence will not only keep the area secure but also improve the overall look of the area.	8.2

Ward	Project	Total Cost £000's
Botwell	5 and 6 Rosedale Avenue installing alley gates enabling residents to have continued access to the rear of their properties whilst reducing the anti-social behaviour impacting on their day-to-day living.	3.0
Heathrow Villages	Drayton Court is sheltered accommodation comprising 24 flats with a communal garden that is popular with the residents. There are a number of residents who enjoy gardening and they have requested a shed to be able to store all their gardening equipment safely.	2.9
Heathrow Villages/ Ickenham/Townfield/ West Ruislip & Yiewsley	With residents of sheltered accommodation reluctant to leave their homes as much these days due to Covid, they are utilising available outdoor space more than ever. There has been an increase in requests for raised planters, so that residents can have a dedicated and manageable area to garden. This is a joint initiative across five wards	5.0
Northwood Hills	Ascott Court is sheltered accommodation, consisting of 14 one-bedroom flats and 19 bedsits. The communal gardens include a patio which has fallen into disrepair and requires replacing, along with the patio furniture. There is also a handrail leading to the patio that needs to be refurbished.	12.0
Townfield	The proposal is to screen the existing fence to create a private garden area for residents of 1-15 Kelf Grove to enjoy without being overlooked. In addition, more trees will be planted as part of the councils Sponsor a Tree initiative to improve the air quality.	2.7
Yiewsley	Barr Lodge, Bond Close provides sheltered accommodation of 47 one-bedroom flats. The existing small patio is no longer looking its best and could benefit from upgrading and extending. Residents have also requested a shelter, so that they can enjoy use of the patio all year round regardless of the weather.	5.0
Yeading	Melbourne House has a redundant bin store. The proposal is to utilise this by repurposing the area to create a watertight bicycle storage unit with secure parking for up to eight bicycles.	1.5
Total requested to approve		40.3

Reasons for recommendation

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.

Eight new proposals for delivery within the 2021-22 programme with a total value of £40.3k have been informally approved by the Cabinet Member for Environment, Housing & Regeneration on 11 November 2021, to be taken forward for implementation by 31 March 2022.

Alternative options considered

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

If the allocation of funds is not approved, delivery of the eight 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.

Select Committee comments

None at this stage.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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 'Strong Financial Management.' Examples include gating and security improvements, bringing redundant spaces back into use and protecting or enhancing green spaces.
4. 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.
5. Two proposals with an accumulative value of £23.2k including contingency were formally approved by the Cabinet Member for Environment, Housing & Regeneration on 24 May 2021. Eleven proposals with an accumulative value of £92.5k including contingency were formally approved by the Cabinet Member on 16 August 2021
6. A further eight projects, with an accumulative value of £40.3k, are now recommended for support under the Better Neighbourhood Funding 2021/22 programme.

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

Financial Implications

2021/22 Budget £156k, Previously Approved £115.7k, New Approvals requested £40.3k

This report is seeking the approval of £40.3k from the 2021/22 HRA Better Neighbourhood Fund budget of £156k, for the eight new projects as detailed within the recommendations.

With these eight new projects, the £156k budget for 2021/22 would be fully allocated.

RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION

The benefit or impact upon residents, service users and communities

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

For example, the new secure bicycle storage at Melbourne House creating a dedicated space to store bikes will enable residents to free up space within their homes and on balconies and reduce the risk of fire hazards and enabling easy access in and out of properties.

There are a number of proposals to improve the outside play and communal gardens within specific neighbourhoods encouraging residents to be outside and active whilst also adding trees and soft landscaping to improve the environment.

Consultation carried out or required

Proposals have either been put forward by residents themselves or by tenancy officers on behalf of residents.

In terms of gating 5-6 Rosedale Avenue, a consultation was carried out with residents who live near to the access route, in September 2021 and of the 34 properties directly affected, 97% had no objection to the proposal.

The residents of 1-6 Welbeck Court were also consulted in September 2021. Two households wrote back with their support and gratitude and no objections were received.

A consultation was carried out with all 96 households within Melbourne House of whom only 3 % objected and seven households confirmed that they would want to use the secure bike storage facility

CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance has reviewed this report and confirms the budgetary position above, noting that the recommended budget allocation of £40.3k will support investment on Council-owned housing land which is financed from rental income.

Legal

The Borough Solicitor confirms that the Council has power to fund these improvements under sections 12 and 13 of the Housing Act 1985.

Infrastructure / Asset Management

The proposals support investment on Council-owned land and there are no specific property implications.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL.