

Communities and Neighbourhood Committee

10am, Tuesday 10 February 2015

Community Grants Fund – Update Report

Item number	7.6
Report number	
Executive/routine	Routine
Wards	All

Executive summary

Neighbourhood Partnerships (NPs), as the local expression of Edinburgh's approach to community planning, provide an effective means of strengthening the local democratic process by providing opportunities for local people to have a say about services and influence decision making.

The devolved NP Community Grants Fund (CGF) aims to encourage small scale activity which benefits local communities and supports the implementation of the NP local community plans. Local constituted groups can apply for a grant of up to £5,000 for a project which demonstrates community benefit. Each NP Board manages the fund according to local structures and priorities but all NPs are using the Council's approved CGF criteria, standard application form, and Council Funding Conditions.

This report provides an update on the 2013/14 budget allocations and an analysis of the CGF grant spend. In addition, information is provided on various improvements to the CGF scheme which have been adopted by all NPs, together with details of the further development of the Community Funding Support Programme.

Links

Coalition pledges [P33](#)

Council outcomes [CO23](#), [CO24](#)

Single Outcome Agreement [SO4](#)

Community Grants Fund – Update Report

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Communities and Neighbourhoods Committee:

- 1.1 notes the details of the Community Grants Fund, number of grants awarded across the NPs in 2013/14 and the analysis of awards across themes;
- 1.2 notes the improvements to the CGF scheme which have been adopted by all NPs; and
- 1.3 agrees the further development of the Community Funding Support Programme.

Background

- 2.1 The Neighbourhood Partnership (NP) Community Grants Fund (CGF) is a small grants scheme provided by the City of Edinburgh Council. The CGF uses the Council's standardised generic application form, a set of published criteria approved by Council, and adheres to the Council's approved Funding Conditions for grant aided organisations. Local decision making arrangements have evolved since the CGF was devolved to NPs but the core criteria and the application process are unchanged. The total fund for each financial year is split across twelve NPs and is allocated by population.
- 2.2 The fund can provide grants of up to £5,000 to constituted voluntary and community groups undertaking projects which benefit local communities and support the work of NPs in the delivery of their local community plans. Grants are for locally targeted, one-off, activities aimed at improving and encouraging community activity in the NP area. Examples of the type of projects which can be funded include consulting the local community on their priorities for improving facilities in the NP area, providing activities for young people to divert them from potential anti-social behaviour, and organising community events which help to develop community capacity.
- 2.3 This report provides details of the budgets and spending across themes and NP areas in 2013/14. In addition, an update on the delivery of the scheme in NPs is included, highlighting good practice and summarising improvements which have been adopted by all NPs.

- 3.1 The CGF provides an important mechanism for strengthening local democracy through involving the community in the decision making process. In recognition of this significant role, NPs seek to develop new ways to increase involvement, for example through using participatory budgeting approaches in the allocation of the funds. Each NP manages the fund to realise the maximum benefit for the community, providing grants to deliver the priorities identified within the Local Community Plans. These priorities are determined through an extensive programme of engagement and ongoing dialogue with the community. The fund also supports community development through enabling the community to take direct action in addressing local issues.
- 3.2 As part of a programme of continuous improvement and to enable wider community access to this support, a number of process changes have been made across the NPs. These were agreed by the Communities and Neighbourhoods Committee at the meeting on 26 November 2013. These improvements, which are consistent with Council grant funding procedures, include:
- Managing repeat applications – To provide greater clarity across the NPs a Supplementary Guidance Note has been developed.
 - Standard Application Form and Funding Agreement - A revised shorter application form has been developed to streamline the process and increase the accessibility for applicants. Feedback from applicants shows that this has been positively received.
 - End of Project Report Form – Supplementary questions have been added to provide more information on the involvement and contribution of volunteers.
- 3.3 All NPs have adopted the generic forms, providing a standardised approach for applicants.

Analysis of spend by themes for 2013/14

- 3.4 The 2013/14 CGF budget allocation of £415,785 was distributed across twelve NPs based upon population. Table 1 below provides details of the NP CGF budgets and the number of grants awarded per NP. A total of 256 awards were made which represents a significant number of community projects taking place across the city supported by this fund.

NP Area	Budget in 2013/14	Number of grants
City Centre	£21,808	5
Craigtintny /Duddingston	£22,810	18
Portobello/Craigmillar	£21,737	18
Liberton /Gilmerton	£29,595	13
South Central	£58,806	34
South West	£51,187	31
Pentlands	£43,583	23
Western	£43,791	20
Almond	£21,904	14
Forth	£26,444	16
Inverleith	£29,161	20
Leith	£44,959	44
Total	£415,785	256

Table 1: NP CGF Budgets and number of grants awarded

- 3.5 The CGF across the city supports a wide range of activity as shown in Table 2. The largest number of awards were made for projects supporting young people and children. This included the establishment of a new toy library, provision of playground equipment, cookery classes, and diversionary activities during the school holidays. Projects developing community involvement were the next largest group. The projects supported included community events such as summer and Christmas festivals, community noticeboards, newsletters, improvements to community halls and the establishment of new community groups. It is noted that the CGF has also supported projects for groups with protected characteristics. These included a course in English as a Second Language, multicultural events, and special events marking Black History month.

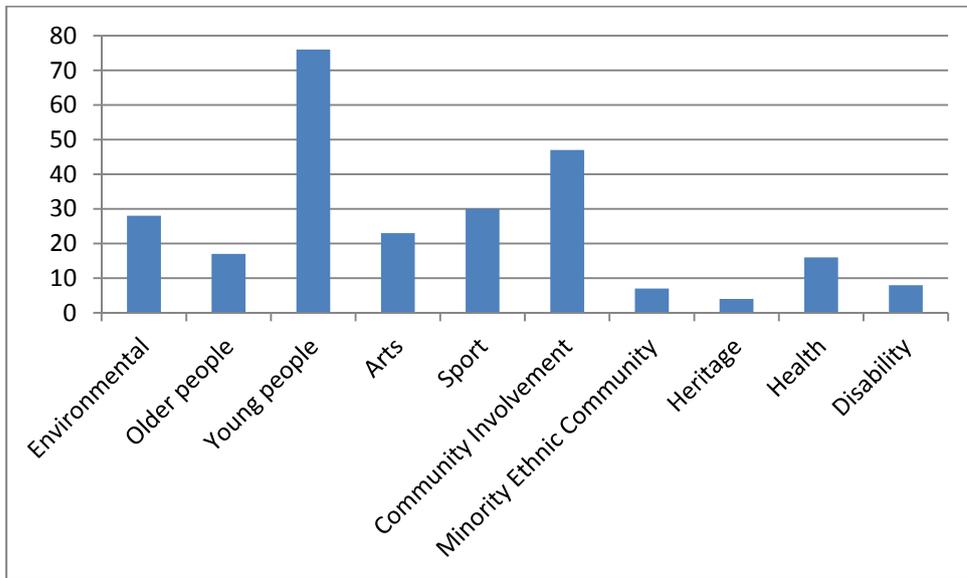


Table 2: Number of projects by theme

Specific examples of the projects funded include:-

- 3.6 A small grant in Craigmillar had a big impact. Portobello and Craigmillar NP awarded £500 to the Craigmillar Literacy Trust as a contribution towards the child care costs for parents attending a ‘Growing Confidence’ course. The course focussed on exploring emotional well being and how to promote this in the family setting. This certificated course, which was run in partnership with Greendykes Early Years Centre, lasted 7 weeks and benefited 13 local people from the Books for Babies Project. The participants’ success was marked at the weekly rhymetime session, leading to other parents expressing an interest in participating and more courses being organised to meet this demand.
- 3.7 Portobello and Craigmillar NP also made CGF awards to St Teresa’s Youth Club for outings and activities for young people and Niddrie Community Youth Group for the development of a new healthy living/food project. These projects met the aim of promoting activities which help people to stay well by being involved in social or community networks and enabling young people to have the best start in life.
- 3.8 South Central NP funded the Muslim Women’s Centre to organise a multicultural event to enable people from different backgrounds to get to know each other in a friendly setting. A Summer Youth Programme was also supported and delivered by the Canongate Youth Project, 3ms Youth Partnership, the Braidwood Neighbourhood Centre, Cameron House Community Centre and Southside Community Centre.

- 3.9 In Liberton and Gilmerton NP activity programmes for around 450 children were offered by the Inch Community Centre and Liberton After School Club. The Liberton After School Club was also awarded a grant of £2,075 to provide a series of dance, drama and music workshops in preparation for its 10th annual Christmas Concert. Around 400 people of all ages were involved in this project. A grant of £1,500 to the South Edinburgh Cluster Group contributed towards the cost of taking a group of 25 young people away for a residential activity camp at Lagganlia Outdoor Centre. Young Life International was awarded £600 to support the delivery of a confidence building project based around Samba drumming. Now 30 to 40 people are attending three new samba groups.
- 3.10 Under the environmental theme, Friends of St Katherine's Park received a £1,835 grant from Liberton and Gilmerton NP to install a wildflower interpretative panel and a new notice board to raise awareness of the flora and fauna within the park.
- 3.11 In Western Edinburgh NP the Corstorphine Dementia Project was provided with funding to purchase a new combined printer, photocopier and scanner to improve the quality and range of printed materials used in the group's activities. This project met the NP's priority of promoting healthier, connected communities and reducing social isolation.
- 3.12 Almond NP provided funding for two projects delivered by the Friends of Davidson's Mains Park and Woods. The first was for an outdoor learning initiative aimed at children from Davidson's Mains Primary School and included the installation of an interpretative panel. The second award was for a programme of special activities marking the 90th anniversary of the park. This included an art project, guided walks, illustrated talks, wildflower planting and installation of bird boxes. These projects met the NP's priorities of promoting access to local history and heritage and improving the environment.
- 3.13 Inverleith NP funded the Blackhall Nursery to install scooter racks. This initiative met several of the NP's priorities including making the environment cleaner, greener and safer, and creating a healthier community. Inverleith NP also funded the Fet Lor Youth Club for a Duke of Edinburgh Award outdoor experience. This met both the priorities of creating a healthier community and of improving the well being of children, young people and families.
- 3.14 City Centre NP supported the St Mary's Cathedral Environmental Project in Palmerston Place. A neglected area of land was transformed into a high amenity public green space. A grant was made to purchase trees, bulbs and compost, with local volunteers carrying out the planting work. This project met the local priority of identifying and providing more areas for people to relax in the city centre. It is expected that about 16,000 people will benefit.

- 3.15 Pentlands NP supported several environmental projects. These included awards to the Juniper Green Village Hall Organisation for a new community garden, Currie Parish Horticultural Industrial Society for equipment and materials and garden equipment for the Colinton Garden Club.
- 3.16 South West NP supported a range of projects aimed at increasing community involvement. These included awards for the purchase of equipment by the Gorgie Dalry Community Association and Merchiston Community Council, together with funds to support the production of an emergency guide for the public by the Community One Stop Shop.
- 3.17 A new focal point and hub of activity has been created in Lochend. Craigentenny and Duddingston NP has supported the Lochend Community Growing Project in establishing a well used, accessible community garden from a previously derelict open space, with an emphasis on growing food. Fifty two individual raised beds are looked after by 54 local people and 13 community group beds are cared for by groups including Carr Gomm, Link Up Women's Support Group, Prospect Bank Special School and SEASONS (a mental health group).
- 3.18 In its first year 189 people regularly used the garden and a programme of 156 workshops was delivered. These covered a variety of subjects such as grow your own produce, garden design skills, building raised beds, herbal medicine making, basket weaving and foraging walks. As well as helping people in a disadvantaged area to eat better for less, and take more exercise, this project has increased community involvement and cohesion. The Lochend Community Growing Project is an example of a project which has been fully adopted by the local community and is continuing to develop and thrive. The support from the NP grant has enabled this to happen.
- 3.19 Craigentenny and Duddingston NP also funded other projects which focussed on improving health and well being, one of the NP's priorities. For example, Link Up Women's Support Centre was funded to develop new activities including photography and art and under the sports theme, Cavalry Park Sports Club received a grant to purchase volleyball kits for a new girls' group.
- 3.20 Leith NP awarded 44 grants across a range of themes and notably 20 youth projects were supported. For example, Dr Bell's, Trinity After School Club and the Leith Primary After School Club were supported to deliver a summer youth programme. The Citadel Youth Centre took a group of teenagers to Low Port Outdoor Centre and the Leith St Andrew's Play Group delivered a music and movement project for young children.

- 3.21 Forth NP funded arts projects such as a photography course for young people delivered by North Edinburgh Arts and the Prentice Centre provided a new course on Scottish history and culture. Under the health theme, Pilton Community Health Project produced a community map of services and the North Edinburgh Alcohol Collective organised a cookery project as a diversionary activity for young people. The North West Carers Group organised a respite cinema trip for young carers under stress.

Community Funding Support Programme

- 3.22 The Community Funding Support Programme (CFSP) was introduced in 2009 to help voluntary and not-for-profit groups access non-Council funding sources and complement the CGF. The programme includes two 'Meet the Funders' events each year, one city-wide and one within a NP area. At these market place events community groups can discuss their projects and source grant aid from a range of funders from across the UK. Since 2009, 14 events have been held attracting around 1,936 visitors. Around 33 exhibitors have participated including the Big Lottery, Lloyds TSB Foundation Scotland, Bank of Scotland Foundation, Voluntary Action Fund, Foundation Scotland, and the Edinburgh Trust.
- 3.23 Feedback from visitors to the 'Meet the Funders' events identified a need for more help in preparing grant applications. Responding to this demand 'How to Apply for a Grant workshops' were developed and now form part of the CFSP. The workshops provide practical help to participants in improving their application skills. Since 2010, 21 workshops have been delivered to around 311 people in the city.
- 3.24 The CFSP also includes the preparation, publication and distribution of a monthly External Funding Update which promotes new sources of funding. The information is e-mailed to over 200 groups across the city and is also posted on the NP website. The updates are also collated into a booklet 'Funding Information Pack for Voluntary Organisations' which is sent to community groups by e-mail or handed out in paper form at events. This booklet currently contains details of around 164 different sources of funding.
- 3.25 This year, the Local Community Planning Team has been exploring ways to develop the CFSP, with the aim of increasing awareness of the range of grant funding available and involving more people in the 'Meet the Funders' events and grant workshops. Working in partnership with the Library Service, the online funding portal [Edinburgh4Community](#) has now been expanded to include the funding information contained within the funding information packs. This allows users to search for funding by theme or funding amount and also to receive email notifications of new and relevant funding directly. The portal also promotes the CGF and local news. To support users on the site, a 'how to' video has been produced and is available to view [online](#).

- 3.26 In recognition of the Council's channel shift towards increased online transactions, since the summer, online bookings for the 'How to Apply for a Grant workshops' have been piloted in both Leith and South Central NPs. This has been well received and will continue with the forthcoming workshop in Portobello and Craigmillar NP. Using this system allows participants to receive notifications in online calendars and makes the management of bookings easier.
- 3.27 Last year's citywide 'Meet the Funders' event saw a decrease in visitor attendance. To address this, the Local Community Planning Team has been looking at ways to increase attendance. Building on the already successful partnership with the Library Service, the Spring 2015 event will be held in the Central Library and the format redesigned to include live demonstrations of the funding portal; alongside opportunities for previously funded groups to promote their projects to a wider audience. In addition, a survey is being distributed to all previous attendees, with the feedback to be used to inform further developments.
- 3.28 A communication plan has been developed to support the delivery of the CFSP. This includes using the NP website, Edinburgh4Community and social media channels to promote successful funding stories, new funding sources and events. This is consistent with the NP strategic approach to communications approved by the Communities and Neighbourhoods Committee in May 2014.

Measures of success

- 4.1 The CGF aims to encourage small scale activity which benefits local communities and supports the delivery of the objectives of the NP Local Community Plans. The success of the NPs will be measured through the CGF awards addressing NP priorities and outcomes as evidenced by the NP's Performance Framework.

Financial impact

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report. All CGF awards will be contained within the allocated budgets for each NP.

Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 There are no adverse impacts arising from this report.

Equalities impact

- 7.1 Local community planning activity and the work of the NPs contributes to the delivery of the Equality Act 2010 general duties of advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations. The range of community projects across a wide range of equality groups supported by the CGF demonstrates a significant contribution to the delivery of equalities objectives by the NPs.

Sustainability impact

8.1 There are no adverse environmental implications arising from this report.

Consultation and engagement

9.1 The CGF plays a key role in community development, building the capacity of local people to take direct action. The CGF decision making processes enables local people to have direct input and influence over the allocation of resources. The projects which are delivered by community groups are based on the identified local priorities.

Background reading/external references

The updated full CGF application pack is available on the NP website-

<http://www.edinburghnp.org.uk/about-nps/funding/community-grants-fund/>

John Bury

Acting Director of Services for Communities

Contact: Natalie McKail, Environmental Health / Scientific Services, Bereavement, Registration and Local Community Planning Manager

E-mail: Natalie.mckail@edinburgh.gov.uk | Tel:07717224843

Michele Mulvaney, Community Engagement Manager

E-mail: Michele.mulvaney@edinburgh.gov.uk | Tel: 0131 469 3541

Links

Coalition pledges	P33 – Strengthen Neighbourhood Partnerships and further involve local people in decisions on how Council resources are used
Council outcomes	CO23 – Well engaged and well informed – Communities and individuals are empowered and supported to improve local outcomes and foster a sense of community CO24 – The Council communicates effectively internally and externally and has an excellent reputation for customer care
Single Outcome Agreement	SO4 – Edinburgh’s communities are safer and have improved physical and social fabric
Appendices	N/A