

# Executive Report

Delegated Decisions - 27 February 2024

## COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE FUND 2024-25

Name of Cabinet Member	<b>Councillor Jennifer Wilson-Marklew</b> Cabinet member for Public Realm
Report sponsor	<b>Graham Cox</b> Assistant Director of Highways and Transportation
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Exempt / confidential / not for publication	<b>No</b>
Council Plan reference	<b>10 Cooperation and Partnerships</b>
Wards affected	<b>All wards</b>

### Executive summary

To determine the allocation of grants and funding of projects under the Community Infrastructure Fund (CIF).

22 Parish, Community and Town Councils (PCTC) made a total of 28 bids for CIF projects as listed in **Annex A** to the report.

Following a preliminary assessment of all the applications it is recommended that the schemes listed in **Annex B** to the report are approved for the 24/25 period.

The total estimated value of the schemes recommended for approval from the CIF is £94,743. The total PCTC contribution is £97,313. This includes a contingency fund of £5,257.

#### 1. Proposed Decision(s)

- 1.1 That the £100,000 Community Infrastructure Fund is allocated for the projects submitted as indicated in **Annex B** to the report. There is also the Parish Supplementary Fund (£24,000) that will provide additional contingency funding.

## 2. Reasons for the decision?

- 2.1 The Community Infrastructure Fund (CIF) has been provided by the Council to provide match funding towards Parish, Community or Town Council initiated public realm projects.
- 2.2 This decision constitutes a key decision and involves approving applications for funding.

## 3. Background to the decision

- 3.1 The CIF is an annual fund that parish councils have been able to apply to since the 2019/2020 financial year and it is considered as an essential funding stream for important local community initiatives.
- 3.2 The CIF replaced the previous parish grants programme. The new model was adopted from April 2019. Parishes can apply for up to £20,000 match funding and must complete the project within the financial year.
- 3.3 The aim is to facilitate the delivery of large or complex public realm projects using MKCC match-funding and if required, project management. Without MKCC resources, these projects are unlikely to be delivered otherwise.
- 3.4 All applications go through a feasibility check and are scored based on the criteria set out in the matrix (attached at **Annex C** to the report).

## 4. Implications of the decision

Financial	Y	Human rights, equalities, diversity	
Legal	Y	Policies or Council Plan	
Communication		Procurement	
Energy Efficiency		Subsidy	
Workforce		Other	

### a) Financial implications

Most parishes will receive up to 50% match funding. Parishes with less than 200 households will receive up to 75% match funding.

There is funding within the approved 2024/25 capital programme of £0.100m for the CIF. Any underspend from 2023/24 will help fund the approved schemes in **Annex B** to the report. These 2024/25 applications will be project managed by MKCC Highways or by the parishes themselves. The processing and management of the schemes may be undertaken by inhouse teams or contractors e.g., Parks and Open Spaces (depending on the project), but the overall CIF management will continue to be covered by the Highways Liaison Team.

Any remaining funding from the 2024/25 programme due to under-spends or from any withdrawn projects will remain in the programme and should a significant additional amount become available, it may be offered for redistribution as per the fund criteria.

## b) Legal implications

The CIF uses powers under the Local Government Act 1972 and the Localism Act 2011. Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 enables authorities to incur expenditure for certain purposes that will bring direct benefit to the area. Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 provides a general power of competence for local authorities. There are no subsidy control implications at the point when the Council pays the money to the parishes because generally, parish councils are not categorised as enterprises within the meaning of the Subsidy Control Act. However, it is incumbent upon the parishes when utilising the funds to ensure that they do so in a manner that complies with procurement law and subsidy control legislation. It is anticipated that the Council will enter into grant agreements with the parishes for the funds to record the purpose of the funds and the requirement to comply with applicable legislation.

## c) Other implications

22 Parish, town, and community councils (out of 48) made applications for funding as summarised in **Annex A** to the report. Six parish councils made more than one application. Without the CIF match-finding many projects are unlikely to proceed.

All applications for the CIF period of 24/25 were evaluated using the revised criteria as outlined in Annex C and those recommended for approval are shown in **Annex B** to the report (16 schemes).

## 5. Alternatives Considered

- 5.1 The CIF was created with consultation from the parishes to replace the existing multiple smaller funding streams for parish councils. The CIF has been successfully delivered annually since 2019/2020 and remains the preferred process for offering parish councils the ability to choose and deliver public realm schemes.
- 5.2 Previous CIF conditions allowed delivery of projects over two years (during 2019-2020) however this proved to be difficult to administrate and parish feedback suggested that an annual process was more beneficial with their own budgeting.
- 5.3 Since the CIF began, MKCC has enabled parishes to deliver over 70 public realm projects that solve safety issues or persistent problems. Without these schemes, larger issues may have arisen or MKCC would need to eventually carry out works to mitigate issues.

## 6. Timetable for implementation

<b>Month / Year</b>	<b>Activity</b>
26 February 2024	Delegated Decision – To consider applications for approval.
29 February 2024	Successful parishes informed they have been awarded CIF funding by letter including any conditions of the funding.
31 March 2024	Deadline for Parish councils to respond to accept/reject conditional offer of CIF.
By 31 March 2025	Projects to be completed to meet CIF criteria.

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### List of Annexes

Annex A	Summary of all CIF 24/25 applications received.
Annex B	Summary of CIF 24/25 recommended for approval.
Annex C	Guidance and criteria for CIF applications 24/25.

### List of background papers

CIF Delegated Decision 2023/24

[Agenda for Delegated Decisions on Tuesday 14th March, 2023, 5.30 pm | Milton Keynes City Council \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#)