

Cheltenham Borough Council

Cabinet – 15 July 2025

Recommended allocations of neighbourhood CIL funds

Accountable member:

Councillor Mike Collins, Cabinet Member for Planning and Building Control

Accountable officer:

Tracey Birkinshaw, Director of Communities & Economic Development

Ward(s) affected:

Non-parished areas

Key Decision: No

Executive summary:

In December 2022, Cabinet agreed to establish a Cheltenham Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – Neighbourhood Panel which would provide a process for the allocation of neighbourhood CIL funds held on behalf of the non-parished areas (areas without a parish council) of Cheltenham.

The first funding round took place in 2023 and £128,355 was allocated to 16 projects.

Neighbourhood CIL receipts for the non-parished areas have now built up to create a new pot for 2025, which at the time of the assessment by the Neighbourhood Panel was £119,839.02.

In March 2025, the council went live with a new bidding round. Not-for-profit organisations with a formal constitution including voluntary and community sector groups, social enterprises, councils and other public sector organisations and schools across non-parished areas were invited to apply for neighbourhood CIL funding for projects with an economic, social or environmental objective which deliver publicly accessible physical improvements and address the demands that development places on the local area, including contributing to carbon net zero.

The bidding round closed on 19 May 2025 and a total of 28 applications were received, requesting a total of £257,361 in funding.

The members of the CIL Neighbourhood Panel met informally to assess the applications and to make preliminary recommendations which were then endorsed at a meeting of the CIL Neighbourhood Panel on 18 June 2025, totalling £119,938. The endorsed recommendations are brought to Cabinet for agreement and are set out in Appendix 3 and shown spatially to illustrate the distribution of the bids received on the map provided at Appendix 4.

As of the latest update on the value of the CIL fund, the total value of un-parished CIL monies stands at £148,583. Following consideration by the Neighbourhood Panel, £119,938 has been recommended for allocation by Cabinet. This report recommends supporting the recommendations made, leaving a balance of £28,645 in unallocated funds. Considering this additional funding that is available, and following engagement with the Leader of the Council, this report recommends further allocations as detailed in Section 3 of this report. The remaining unallocated CIL monies to be held over and considered in the next bidding round.

Recommendations: That Cabinet:

- 1. Agrees the endorsed recommendations as set out in appendix 3 as the list of neighbourhood projects for investment.**
 - 2. In addition to those projects recommended by the Neighbourhood CIL Panel allocates the following funding from the unallocated Neighbourhood CIL to:**
 - Scheme 19 – Murals by Paint Festival on Honeybourne Line £7,500**
 - Scheme 22 – Playhouse Theatre. Contribution to feasibility work for capital works £9,500**
- With the remaining £11,645 unspent CIL monies to form part of the allocation for a future bidding round.**
- 3. Enters into project agreements with the agreed projects.**
 - 4. Supports the intention to launch future funding rounds as and when the Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure fund has built up to a sufficient level. The timing of this will be informed by regular monitoring of the fund.**
 - 5. Reviews the process used this year and build any best practice into future bidding rounds.**

1. Implications

1.1 Financial, Property and Asset implications

Contributions from developers are and will be held in a holding account and used to fund neighbourhood infrastructure when required. As of 22 May 2025, £119,839.02 was available for unparished areas. At the time of signing off this report the funds available are £148,583.

Signed off by: Gemma Bell, Director of Finance and Assets (Deputy Section 151 Officer), gemma.bell@cheltenham.gov.uk

1.2 Legal implications

Regulation 59F of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 provides that where all or part of a chargeable development is in an area which is unparished, those CIL receipts that would have been otherwise passed to a Parish Council may be used by a charging authority to support the development of that part of the charging authority's area that is not within the area of a local council.

The law does not prescribe a specific process for agreeing how the neighbourhood portion should be spent, but the national Planning Practice Guide states that in cases where the charging authority will retain the neighbourhood portion, the charging authority should engage with the communities where development has taken place using existing community consultation and engagement processes and agree with them how best to spend the neighbourhood funding.

Further that, charging authorities should set out clearly and transparently their approach to engaging with neighbourhood, with consultation at the neighbourhood level proportionate to the level of levy receipts and scale of the proposed development to which the neighbourhood funding relates.

Signed off by: One Legal, legalservices@onelegal.org.uk

1.3 Environmental and climate change implications

As part of the application process, all applicants were required to detail how their project will help to mitigate or adapt to the impacts of climate change and one of the 5 scored criteria was how well the project contributes to Cheltenham net zero. 5 of the 15 projects recommended for funding scored particularly highly on their climate impact, including solar panels at Holy Apostles; the 10th Cheltenham Scouts at Pittville Park and the Sea Cadets, plus Vision 21's Ecohub and a bike repair and recycling project at the Rock. The 6 projects applying for £10,000 or more were also required to submit a climate change impact assessment. These all showed an overall positive impact on climate change.

Signed off by: Maizy McCann, Climate Officer, Maizy.mccann@cheltenham.gov.uk

1.4 Corporate Plan Priorities

This report contributes to the following Corporate Plan Priorities:

- Working with residents, communities and businesses to help make Cheltenham #netzero by 2030
- Ensuring residents, communities and businesses benefit from Cheltenham's future growth and prosperity

The recommendations regarding the Cheltenham Neighbourhood Panel will also support the council deliver its statutory function as Local Planning Authority.

1.5 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Implications

The recommendations as set out in appendix 3, if agreed by Cabinet, will see funding awarded to a number of organisations. Each of the grant recipients will manage the funding in line with their own equality and diversity policies.

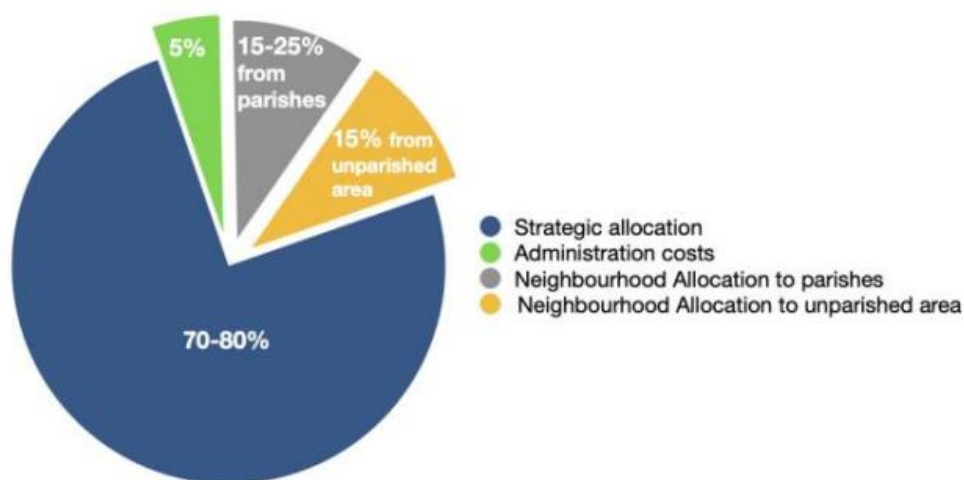
The panel have been mindful to ensure that there is a fair distribution of funding across the non-parished area and a map of the recommendations is attached as appendix 4.

1.6 Performance management – monitoring and review

The activities of the Cheltenham CIL Neighbourhood Panel will be reviewed by Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

2. Background

- 2.1** The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a charge which local authorities can place on developers to help fund infrastructure needed to support new development in their areas. CIL is governed by the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended). Under these Regulations, Cheltenham Borough Council is a CIL charging authority and approved the introduction of CIL October 2018 with the commencement of charging on planning applications granted permission on or after 1st January 2019.
- 2.2** Since 2019, the CIL pot has been slowly growing and values received reported annually via the councils statutory Infrastructure Funding Statement, submitted to government at the end of each year.
- 2.3** In line with CIL regulations, CIL is allocated along the following split.



2.4 This report relates to the Neighbourhood Allocation to ***non-parished areas*** as highlighted in the orange segment in the diagram above. Where funding relates to parish councils, the council transfers this direct to the relevant body. However, where there is no parish council then the council retains this element to be spent on relevant neighbourhood projects.

2.5 The council allocated £128,355 in neighbourhood CIL funding in 2023, and this report relates to the allocation of the second round of funding in 2025.

3. Governance Arrangements – The Neighbourhood Allocation

3.1 One of the purposes of CIL is to encourage communities to support development and recognise that development can bring clear and identifiable benefits to an area. The CIL Regulations provide that a proportion of CIL collected from areas may be spent to address “the demands that development places” on a local area. In respect of the non-parished element of the Neighbourhood Allocation, the council should seek to address the demands that development approved places on that area.

3.2 This does not preclude investment from this neighbourhood allocation within a parished area, but it must be on an exception basis and clearly bring demonstrable benefit to the non-parished areas.

3.3 There is some flexibility on the use of the Neighbourhood Allocation, provided it supports:

- The provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure; or
- Anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area

3.4 In December 2022, Cabinet agreed to establish the Cheltenham CIL – Neighbourhood Panel which would provide a process for the allocation of CIL funds to community-based projects.

- 3.5** The first funding round took place in 2023 and £128,355 was allocated to 16 projects.
- 3.6** In March 2025, the current round of funding was launched. Not-for-profit organisations with a formal constitution including voluntary and community sector groups, social enterprises, councils and other public sector organisations and schools across non-parished areas were invited to apply for neighbourhood CIL funding for projects with an economic, social or environmental objective which deliver publicly accessible physical improvements and address the demands that development places on the local area, including contributing to carbon net zero.
- 3.7** Information was provided on the council's website, with a link to apply online via Microsoft Forms. An information session for applicants was also held on 9th April 2025 and a presentation on the fund made to the VCS Forum.
- 3.8** The bidding round closed on 19th May 2025 and a total of 28 applications were received, requesting a total of £257,361 in funding.
- 3.9** The CIL Neighbourhood Panel met informally to assess the applications, scoring them against the criteria in the application guidelines. Their preliminary recommendations (set out in Appendix 3) were then endorsed at a meeting of the panel on 18 June 2025. The Neighbourhood Panel recommended funding totalling £119,938. This report supports the recommendations made.
- 3.10** As of the latest update on the CIL fund, the total value of un-parished CIL monies stands at £148,583 due to additional payments being made since the Neighbourhood CIL Panel assessed the projects submitted. Following the recommendations made by the Neighbourhood Panel, £119,938 has been allocated, leaving a balance of £28,645 in unallocated funds. In light of this additional funding, and following engagement with the Leader of the Council, this report recommends further allocations to:
- Scheme 19 – Murals by Paint Festival on Honeyborne Line £7,500
 - Scheme 22 – Playhouse Theatre. Contribution to feasibility work for capital works £9,500
- 3.11** The remaining unallocated CIL monies, which following the additional allocations will stand at £11,645 will be held over and considered in the next bidding round.
- 3.12** The application and assessment process for 2025 will be reviewed to inform future bidding rounds.
- 4. Next steps**
- 4.1** Subject to agreement by Cabinet, a grant agreement will be entered into with each party, which will include relevant monitoring arrangements.

5. Key risks

5.1 There are two key risks identified in the risk assessment in Appendix 1:

- Potential misuse of the grant
 - If a grant recipient becomes insolvent or winds up before the grant is used
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Report author:

Helen Down, Participation and Engagement Lead
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Appendices:

1. Risk Assessment
2. Equality Impact Assessment
3. Recommended allocations for neighbourhood CIL
4. Map of recommended allocations

Background information:

[Cabinet – 20th December 2022: Cheltenham Community Infrastructure Levy – Neighbourhood Panel](#)

[Cheltenham Neighbourhood CIL call for projects](#)

Appendix 1: Risk Assessment

Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions
	Potential misuse of the grant	Helen Down	3	2	6	Reduce	Ensure due diligence has been undertaken with each provider.	Helen Down	31.3.24
	If a grant recipient becomes insolvent or winds up before the grant is used	Helen Down	3	2	6	Reduce	<p>Endeavour to pay out funds in arrears to minimise financial risk to the council.</p> <p>Ensure due diligence has been undertaken with each provider.</p>	Helen Down	31.3.24

Appendix 2: Equality Impact Assessment (Screening – to be included in all Cabinet and Council reports)

1. Identify the policy, project, function or service change

a. Person responsible for this Equality Impact Assessment

Officer responsible: Helen Down

Service Area: Communities, Wellbeing & Partnerships

Title: Participation and Engagement Team Leader

Date of assessment: 22.5.25

Signature: H Down

b. Is this a policy, function, strategy, service change or project?

Choose an item.

If other, please specify: Allocation of grant funding

c. Name of the policy, function, strategy, service change or project

Allocation of Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy funding

Is this new or existing?

Already exists and is being reviewed

Please specify reason for change or development of policy, function, strategy, service change or project

This is the second round of Neighbourhood CIL funding and this is the allocation of this year's funding.

d. What are the aims, objectives and intended outcomes and who is likely to benefit from it?

Aims:

To support community projects in non parished areas of Cheltenham which deliver publicly accessible physical improvements and address the demands that development places on an area.

Objectives:	To allocate Neighbourhood CIL funding appropriately and fairly.
Outcomes:	Community based projects are able to take place that make physical improvements in non parished areas.
Benefits:	Residents in non parished areas will benefit from publicly accessible physical improvements within their neighbourhoods that have a social, environmental or economic objective.

e. What are the expected impacts?

Are there any aspects, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could have an impact on the lives of people, including employees and customers.

No

Do you expect the impacts to be positive or negative?

No impact expected

Please provide an explanation for your answer:

The projects being funded have demonstrated that there is community support for them to take place and will be beneficial but will not impact on the lives of people.

If your answer to question e identified potential positive or negative impacts, or you are unsure about the impact, then you should carry out a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment.

f. Identify next steps as appropriate

Stage Two required

No

Owner of Stage Two assessment

Completion date for Stage Two assessment

Please move on to Stage 2 if required ([intranet link](#)).