



<b>Subject:</b>	Social Supermarket Fund 24/25
<b>Date:</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> April 2024
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	David Sales, Strategic Director of City & Neighbourhood Services
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Nicola Lane, Neighbourhood Services Manager Margaret Higgins, Lead Officer Community Provision

**Is this report restricted?** Yes  No

**Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.**

Insert number

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)
4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter
5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained
6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction
7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime

**If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?**

<b>After Committee Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>After Council Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Sometime in the future</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Never</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Is this report eligible for call in?** Yes  No

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
1.1	The purpose of this report is to advise members on the following matters; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the outcome of the recent open call for applications to the Social Supermarket Fund 24/25.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the current finance available to support successful applicants to the Social Supermarket fund</li> <li>• the finance available to support delivery of a Hardship Programme in 24/25 and; to ask members to;</li> <li>• consider options for funding successful applicants to the Social Supermarket Fund 24/25 and recommend an option to Council.</li> <li>• grant delegated authority for the Operational Director of Neighbourhood Services to make further allocations to agreed organisations, based on the agreed option, if further funding becomes available.</li> <li>• agree that a meeting of the Cost of Living Working Group will be scheduled for May 24 and that a further update on delivery of the 23/24 Hardship programme will be provided at that point when monitoring returns have been collated.</li> </ul>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	<p>That members consider the following report and note the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the outcome of the recent open call for applications to the Social Supermarket Fund 24/25.</li> <li>• the current finance available to support successful applicants to the Social Supermarket fund</li> <li>• the finance available to support delivery of a Hardship Programme in 24/25</li> </ul> <p>Members are also asked to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consider the identified options for funding successful applicants to the Social Supermarket Fund 24/25 and recommend an option to Council.</li> <li>• grant delegated authority for the Operational Director of Neighbourhood Services to make further allocations to agreed organisations, based on the agreed option, if further funding becomes available.</li> <li>• agree that a meeting of the Cost of Living Working Group will be scheduled for May 24 and that a further update on delivery of the 23/24 Hardship programme will be provided at that point when monitoring returns have been collated.</li> </ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main report</b>
3.1	<p><b><u>Background</u></b></p> <p>In response to recommendations in the Welfare Reform Mitigations report, the Department for Communities (DfC) has operated a Social Supermarket Pilot programme since October 2017. Following positive evaluation of the Social Supermarket Pilot Programme, funding was made available through the CSP in 20/21 to expand the concept to all council areas.</p> <p>The aim of a social supermarket is to offer a sustainable response to food insecurity by seeking to help address the root causes of poverty rather than simply provide food. This is achieved by providing, in addition to food support, a referral network for wraparound support.</p> <p><b><u>Key Issues</u></b></p> <p>3.2 Previously, Council has worked with identified partners to develop models for delivery. The People and Communities Committee granted approval on 9 November 2023 to operate an open call for grant applications to the Social Supermarket Fund in 2024/25. Members were advised at this point that because activity is 100% funded by DfC, there was a risk that funding to support successful applications might not be in place from April 24.</p> <p>3.3 However, on balance, it was agreed that it was preferable to undertake the application process so that funding could be issued as soon as it became available from the</p>

department. Members agreed that funding of up to £50,000 would be available for each individual project; this in line with other large grant funding programmes.

The 2024/25 Social Supermarket Support Fund received 28 applications totalling £946,619.70 by the closing date of 12 noon on Friday 26 January 2024. Following assessment and independent moderation the recommendations for awards provided in Appendix 1.

3.4 Funding for Social Supermarkets is primarily drawn from the DfC Community Support Programme (CSP) Letter of Offer, which includes a 100% DfC funded funding stream for this work. DfC advised on 29<sup>th</sup> March that the available budget for 24/25, at this stage, is £104,686, which is based on a quarter of the direct award to BCC last year. However, there is no confirmation of the total allocation for 24/25.

3.5 Members will recall that as part of the 24/25 Hardship Programme, SP&R approved that £150,000 be allocated to Social Supermarkets in addition to the DfC funding.

3.6 Members of People and Communities committee were provided with an update on the outcome of the open call application process on 9<sup>th</sup> April and asked to approve delegated authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to approve funding awards to Social Supermarkets as funds become available. Members of P&C were keen that SP&R consider possible support to these projects so that as many as possible could be supported.

3.7 DfC issued accounts direction to councils on 16<sup>th</sup> January to enable any unspent Hardship funding to be transferred to a useable reserve in 2023/24 and ringfenced for Hardship programmes within the 2024/25 financial year. This guidance also states that COVID-19 funding underspends can be carried forward and used for this purpose.

3.8 At present the identified underspends that are available for the 24/25 Hardship Programme are £223,400. This figure may rise when financial returns for the 23/24 programme have been provided by delivery organisations. Members are asked to consider the options in the table below and advise if they are content to approve an allocation to Social Supermarkets from the 24/25 budget.

3.9 A Cost of Living Working Group was established to consider the development and funding allocations for the 23/24 Hardship Programme, which was agreed by SP&R in December and is outlined in Appendix 2. Members are asked to agree that a further meeting of this group will be convened in May 24 to provide Members with an overview of programme delivery highlights and to inform members decision making in relation to the delivery of a Hardship Programme for 2024/25.

3.10 However, given the current lack of available DfC budget, members are asked to consider and approve one of the options below in advance of the next meeting of the Cost of Living working group.

Option	Detail	Pros	Cons
Option1	Fund top 13 scoring projects on a 100% basis. Issue 25% of funding initially and	Follows good practice to support scores of 60 and above.	No indication from DfC on when decision on full allocation will be available. Note: in 23/24 BCC received confirmation of full allocation in July 23.

	<p>increase as total DfC allocation is confirmed.</p> <p><b>Total Cost - £490,508.70 25% - £122,627.18</b></p>	<p>Minimises risk to council by only providing funding on a quarterly basis until the annual allocation if confirmed by DfC.</p> <p>Should funding not become available in a timely manner from DFC it is possible that Hardship Programme could provide further funding to these 13 projects for a further time period.</p>	<p>No security of funding for organisations who completed strong applications.</p>
Option 2	<p>Fund 21 projects on a 70% basis. Issue 25% of funding initially and increase as total DfC allocation is confirmed.</p> <p><b>Total Cost - £550,021 25% - £196,436</b></p>	<p>This option is based on projected total DfC allocation and £100,000 allocation from Hardship Programme and is therefore within anticipated budget.</p> <p>Provides funding for all 21 projects and ensures service delivery to a larger number of individuals.</p>	<p>No indication from DfC on when decision on full allocation will be available and no confirmation of what final allocation will be. Note: in 23/24 BCC received confirmation of full allocation in July.</p> <p>Any reduction in % of funding may impact on viability of delivery for individual projects.</p> <p>If the Hardship programme finances are directed towards supporting social supermarkets there is limited budget available to support other initiatives through a 24/25 Hardship programme.</p>
3.11	<p>Further detail on the outcome of the Social Supermarket Fund application is provided in the full People &amp; Communities committee paper attached in Appendix 3.</p>		
3.12	<p><u>Financial implications</u></p> <p>At present the identified underspend from 21.22 and 22.23 Hardship Programmes is £60,300. A further £163,100 has been identified to date from Covid funding underspends. Members may wish to note that Covid underspends cover a number of grant programmes, Micro/Medium grants in 20/21, 21/22 and 22/23 as well as Kitchen Equipment Grants 20/21</p>		

3.13	<p>and 21/22 and Thematic and Strategic Partner funding awards 20/21 and 21/22. This provides a total available Hardship budget of £223,400 for 24/25.</p> <p>DfC advised on 29th March that the available budget for 24/25, at this stage, is £104,686, which is based on a quarter of the direct award to BCC last year. However, there is no confirmation of the total allocation for 24/25. DfC have advised that they will include the balance of their funding to Footprints Women’s Centre (funded directly through the DfC pilot) in the CSP contract. This is likely to be in the region of £50,000, which will create a potential contribution from DfC of £468,744, although this is not confirmed.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="260 483 1444 640"> <tr> <td>Confirmed DfC budget 25%</td> <td>£104, 686</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Projected DfC budget 100% (based on 23/24 and Footprints allocation)</td> <td>£468,744</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Current available Hardship Programme 24/25 budget (from identified underspends)</td> <td>£223,400*</td> </tr> </table> <p>*Note - Additional funds may be identified following financial returns for 23/24 programme</p>	Confirmed DfC budget 25%	£104, 686	Projected DfC budget 100% (based on 23/24 and Footprints allocation)	£468,744	Current available Hardship Programme 24/25 budget (from identified underspends)	£223,400*
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Current available Hardship Programme 24/25 budget (from identified underspends)	£223,400*						
3.14	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications and Rural Needs Assessment</u> The 24/25 Social Supermarket Fund open call has been screened for Equality, Good Relations and Rural Needs Implications.</p>						
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Appendices – Documents Attached</b>						
4.1	<p>Appendix 1: Application List, Scores &amp; Awards based on options Appendix 2: Hardship Programme 2023/24 Allocations Appendix 3: People and Communities Paper – Social Supermarket Fund 24/25 (09.04.23)</p>						