

 Brent	Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee 8 November 2022
	Report from Communities and Regeneration
Brent Council's Grants Programmes	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	n/a
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight the relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
No. of Appendices:	Six Appendix A – Carbon Offset Fund Appendix B – NCIL Old and Revised Criteria Appendix C – You Decide Projects Appendix D – You Decide Data Appendix E – Brent Health Matters Appendix F – Additional Council Grants
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Lorna Hughes, Director of Engagement, Strategy & Communications Lorna.Hughes@brent.gov.uk

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1. To inform Members of the Committee of the wide range of community grants offered by the council. This includes the 'You Decide' Participatory Budgeting initiative, Carbon Offset Fund, Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL) and Brent Health Matters grants.
- 1.2. To inform Members of the Committee about a revised approach to allocating the next round of NCIL funding in 2023.
- 1.3. To provide the Committee information on additional grants as requested.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1. For the Committee to note the content of the report.
- 2.2. For the Committee to share feedback on the Grants presented in this paper and comment on how future You Decide programmes can be improved.

3. Background on grant schemes

- 3.1. Most Councils offer grant support to voluntary community organisations. Usually, funds are made available on an annual basis to community organisations who operate in the interest of residents, with most having a formal governance structure, employed and voluntary staff who work to deliver against clear social purpose with an adopted constitution. This report provides details on how Grant funding is delivered by the Council.
- 3.2. Brent Council offers two grants in line with this approach, Edward Harvist Trust Fund and Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy.
- 3.3. Brent Council goes further than most councils by offering grant funding directly to Residents through the smaller Love Where You Live (LWYL) Grant Programme.
- 3.4. The Council has always made provision for Grant funding, and has maintained this support to the Voluntary and Community Sector despite the challenging and changing financial environment local authorities face.
- 3.5. There has been significant direct investment to local organisations in recent years over £11 million distributed through NCIL since 2017, £220,860 in LWYL and a further £415,000 in Edward Harvist Trust Fund since 2017
- 3.6. It is not unusual for the Grant funding environment to be competitive within communities, resulting in over subscription to Grant streams and invariably some disappointment among organisations who periodically face rejection for funding.
- 3.7. The Council makes effort to liaise and inform organisations of the outcomes of funding applications by publishing Grant funding results on the website and reporting to Cabinet for the larger NCIL programme.
- 3.8. Efforts to improve transparency and participation have seen the Council introduce a new method of funding allocation that involves large numbers of residents in deciding where funding goes. The You Decide Programme is an example of involving residents to share the decision-making and deliver transparency at a time where local organisations compete for resources.
- 3.9. Local research has found that Brent's £2m You Decide programme, has not been matched in terms of the level of allocated funding when compared to other London Councils Participatory Budgeting initiatives.
- 3.10. You Decide Programme has demonstrated benefits to the Council, including increased resident participation, and receiving applications from organisations

that have never applied. You Decide Programme will continue in 2023 alongside the ongoing delivery of the other Grant programmes presented here.

- 3.11. In 2021 a small independent review of the Grants administration was undertaken. This work identified a number of improvements that could be made to the Grant programme to improve the applicant experience.
- 3.12. Many of those recommendations have been introduced including:
- Reduced paper monitoring required
 - Remove financial receipting for Edward Harvist Trust Fund
 - Reduced payment schedule
 - Introduced 50% upfront payment for NCIL and Edward Harvist
- 3.13. The Council has three main grants that residents and community groups can apply for.
- 3.14. *Love Where You Live (LWYL)*

LWYL grants are small grants that aim to foster a sense of belonging amongst all communities, where diversity is celebrated and valued.

The fund was launched in April 2017. Initially, individuals or groups could apply for £500 but this was changed in 2021 to £1,000. Since April 2017, £222,860 has been allocated to support 353 projects. Since the increase in the award, the Grant has attracted a higher number of applications than previously and continues to be popular among individuals due to its speed of processing and almost immediate release of funds.

The Grants applications are assessed internally and decisions are made by a small panel of officers. Using the pre-payment card system, payments can be made almost immediately if the criteria is fully satisfied. To date, 22 applications have been rejected.

A breakdown of spend per year is:

- June 2017 to March 2020: 181 projects awarded, total spend £80,210.
- April 2020 to March 2021: 30 projects awarded. Total spend £15,000
- 2021/22: 30 projects awarded, total spend £19,500
- Q1 and Q2 2022/23: 53 projects awarded, total spend in first 5 months £48,150 plus £60,000 for 59 Queen's Jubilee Street parties.

The LWYL Grant mainly attracts small local initiatives that bring communities together. Typically residents and organisations apply for funding to deliver small neighbourhood level events.

The Council has a strong track record of monitoring and managing Grant Funded Projects, and recently the Council was awarded a small fund of £15k from NHS England. As part of efforts to reduce health inequalities, NHS England wants to see the fund distributed to small organisation who can reach Black African Heritage communities. We have used the Love Where You Live grant administration process to deliver the fund on behalf of NHSE.

This fund has been advertised widely and was launched on 24 October 2022 so at this time of reporting we cannot confirm the number applicants. All successful applicants will be monitored internally.

3.15. Edward Harvist

The Edward Harvist Trust Fund is an income the Council receives as part of a legacy donated to Brent, Harrow and Haringey. The Fund is for grants towards one-off projects that work to improve the quality of life for local people in Brent. The Board of Trustees includes a nominated Elected Member of the Council. In this administration, the nominated Councillor is Councillor Afzal.

It is administered by the London Borough of Harrow. Brent Council receives 28% of the annual income received by the Charity every year. The annual income varies due to the dependence on the amount of donations received. However, on average income is approximately £80,000.

The fund is distributed to voluntary organisations in Brent that meet the Trust criteria. To be eligible to apply, organisations must be a constituted group and had not received funding from Edward Harvist Trust in the previous financial year. An independent panel reviews the projects and selects successful applicants. Trustees are then welcome to comment and provide input on the proposed outcomes before confirmation of the decision.

A breakdown of spend per year since 2018 is:

- 2018/19 16 projects award a total of £72,733.32
- 2019/20 24 projects award a total of £102,312
- 2020/21 12 projects award a total of £52,942
- 2021/22 17 projects awarded a total £71,242
- 2022/23 27 projects awarded a total £116, 535

Typically, this Grant attracts applications from Brent-based community and voluntary sector organisations at a 'developmental stage' where organisations are growing and increasing skills in bid writing and scaling up projects. This Grant generally focuses on 'service delivery' and allows projects to be delivered over a longer period of time than the smaller LWYL projects.

To historically, the success rate of EH applications is at 55%. While in the last round the success rate was 24/33 projects (72%)

The reasons for projects being rejected:

- 30% - Poor quality of application made or not complete
- 24% - Organisation previously funded for consecutive years
- 17% - Brent sub-criteria of requiring match funding was not met.
- 29% Other reasons included: existing project; the project did not meet key EHTF charity criteria

3.16. Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL)

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a charge applied to housing and residential developers. This money is then reallocated back into communities to support local projects via the Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL). The distribution of NCIL is governed by Guidance from CIL regulations by National Government.

Brent is divided into five NCIL Neighbourhoods; Kilburn & Kensal, Kingsbury & Kenton, Wembley, Willesden and Harlesden. Where a Neighbourhood Plan is in place, up to 25% of NCIL collected from developments within the Neighbourhood Plan boundary may be spent on neighbourhood priorities. There are two adopted Neighbourhood Plans in Brent, Sudbury Town and Harlesden.

Historically, the Council has delivered 2 NCIL rounds per year. Until 2021 the Grant did not have an upper limit. Community organisations have experienced generous grant awards of in excess of £285,000.

The awards made follow the standard delegation whereby a Director can make awards of up to £100k and higher award decisions are made by Cabinet. All awards are reported to Cabinet. In total 22 projects were awarded over £100,000.

The key decision took place on 14/1/2019 and affected future allocations from 22/1/2019 (Decision - Brent Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy – Review), this means that the NCIL available to the borough has effectively been allocated in two different ways:

Up to 22/1/2019: Areas with a Neighbourhood plan got 25% of the CIL received in their area. The areas without a neighbourhood plan got 15% of the CIL received in their area

From 22/1/2019: Areas with a Neighbourhood plan get 25% of the CIL received in their area. The areas without a neighbourhood plan get 15% of the CIL received across the remainder the borough, split in the following way:

- 50% of this goes to Wembley
- The remaining 50% is split equally between the other four Brent Connects areas: Kingsbury and Kenton, Willesden, Harlesden, and Kilburn and Kensal Rise

In delivering NCIL, Brent Council has taken an ambitious and transparent approach that gives much greater access to the fund than many other Councils. Typically, other Councils create a list of potential projects to receive funding. We have seen an example where Westminster City Council have given NCIL Funding to their 25 Forum areas to deliver the funds. However, they have looked to Brent to learn from our You Decide approach with the aim of increasing participation from a wider group of residents.

Since April 2017, the Council has collected £17m in income and received 575 applications. To date, the actual NCIL spend is £ 11,857,280.37 which has supported 297 projects over the last 5 years.

For standard application NCIL rounds, all applicants submitted will undergo assessment by the panel consisting of Head of Strategy and Partnerships and Head of Planning. The Panel score against the set criteria scoring is weighted giving higher value to some elements of the assessment of that particular round. The projects with the highest score will be awarded the allocated funds for that round.

Examples of projects awarded.

- Social infrastructure includes supporting vulnerable children and adults for example, the Sheriff Centre received £32,000 will be offering free debt adviser at the Kilburn Community Hub for two years.
- Physical infrastructure includes works that increase capacity of existing infrastructure or repair existing infrastructure. Examples include Harlesden Ummah Community centre who received £18,000 to refurbishment the centre. The aim of refurbishment is to improve the space in order to enhance the current service provision and to the number of services delivered at the centre.
- Jason Roberts Foundation was awarded £194,988 in 2021 to undertake much needed upgrading works at The Pavilion. The project will make the centre an all-weather facility that can be used by residents and community groups all year-round, by erecting a steel canopy over the multi-games area and 5-a-side pitch. The project will also provide an outside reception area for participants to register and for spectators to be protected from sun and adverse weather.

4. Participatory Budgeting: overview

- 4.1. Participatory Budgeting is a method of community involvement whereby the community make the decision on financial resources.
- 4.2. The approach of the participatory budgeting is to empower residents to choose the projects for their local area. Giving more autonomy over decision-making. The approach is aimed and improve participation and establish new connections within the community, by bringing diverse communities together. It also gives residents insight and understanding of local decision making plus promoting the role of Ward Councillors and Brent Connects meetings.
- 4.3. In Brent, an external facilitator was appointed to deliver the Decision Day events, except the event in Willesden which was facilitated internally.
- 4.4. A Decision Day is an online or in person event where residents would attend to vote on prospective projects. The projects with highest score would be awarded the funds.

- 4.5. Delivering the You Decide programme requires a large number of officers to manage each event. Typically, 8 officers are required to ensure risks are managed well and residents are supported.
- 4.6. In addition to the officer time required at events, there is a significant amount of administration required before the event. All applications require checking and organisations need to be validated before proceeding.
- 4.7. To ensure organisations and communities understood the approach, 43 face to face and online sessions were held to provide understanding of the process and support with applications.
- 4.8. It has been evidence by the high level of participation that residents responded positively to this new way of awarding funding.
- 4.9. The table below shows the attendance rate at the events

Brent Connects Area	Attendees	
	Registered	Numbers attended
Kilburn	91	186
Kingsbury and Kenton	198	260
Willesden	146	107
Wembley	305	280
Harlesden	116	270

- 4.10. Since the NCIL events were held in June and July, workshops have been held with both successful and unsuccessful projects supported by CVS Brent. The aim of the workshops was to inform organisations of other external funding opportunities and give advice on training and development available to them participation in both Workshops was high which signals that engagement with the organisations is ongoing and that relationships with them goes beyond the funding they receive

5. Carbon Offset Fund / CO2GO pilot

- 5.1. The first use of Participatory Budgeting in Brent was piloted on the Carbon Offset Fund. This Fund from the GLA came with specific criteria that was used to underpin the process delivered here.
- 5.2. Since 1 October 2016, under the London Plan any development that fails to achieve on-site zero carbon must make cash in lieu contributions to a Carbon Offset Fund within the borough that they are operating. These contributions are used to fund local carbon reduction projects, thereby offsetting the development's carbon emissions shortfall.
- 5.3. Known locally as CO2GO, this fund is for organisations or individuals in Brent who have ideas for carbon reduction initiatives in their local area.

- 5.4. The first pilot for participatory budgeting supported the allocation of £500k through the Carbon Offset Fund as a means of incentivising domestic and non-domestic energy efficiency and renewable energy measures.
- 5.5. A recruitment process was launched to appoint up to 50 residents to be a part of the Carbon Offset Fund planning group. 18 residents regularly took part in the planning group process. The group coined the name 'CO2GO' as the name of the participatory budgeting funding stream. The resident planning group were tasked with:
- Developing the eligibility criteria and programme
 - Designing the communications materials
 - Promoting the programme and application process to residents and groups
 - Promoting the decision day event across the community.
- 5.6. The planning group agreed to the fund would:
- Target those in fuel poverty and it should not be means-tested
 - Not be given directly to individuals or cluster groups. A third-party contractor would be engaged to manage the energy efficiency works for successful applicants
 - Cover the cost of the survey for each property in a bidding cluster. Once completed, the cluster would meet to review the findings and agree on how to spend their budget
 - Cover the cost of measures and pay the contractor directly (per procurement rules)
 - Look at clusters as a whole due to economies of scale e.g. cost of external wall insulation for a cluster of ten properties, should be less than external wall insulation for ten individual properties.
- 5.7. Officers attended the planning meetings to ensure that the group's proposals were in line with GLA guidelines and would not be contrary to any council policies.
- 5.8. The planning group agreed on two pots of funding to be made available as part of the process:
- Pot 1: £400,000 fund for households and community buildings to reduce carbon and save energy costs. Residents could apply up to £10,000 per household. They could join up with others in their community to form clusters of connected houses, flats or a combination
 - Pot 2: £100,000 fund for organisations and resident groups to apply between £500 to £20,000 for projects that deliver education and awareness to reduce the carbon footprint in Brent.
- 5.9. The application window was open for 11 weeks from October 2021 to January 2022. During this time, officers provided face-to-face and online support sessions to help residents complete application forms.

5.10. Pot 1 received 26 applications and Pot 2 received 24 applications.

5.11. The Decision Day was held virtually on 29 January 2022. The table below provides the numbers who attend the online Decision Day event:

Registered	203
Attendees	135
Voters	127

5.12. All applicants submitted pre-recorded films of up to three minutes long. During the event, each project presented its film. At the end of each film, voters were asked to vote on *'How well do you think adaptations to these houses will support the reduction of carbon and support local residents?'*

5.13. Pot 1: 39 flats, maisonettes, houses and two community buildings in Willesden were awarded funding to complete sustainability works to reduce their carbon footprint. Each will receive energy efficiency improvement works to the value of £10k per home or building. The work will be completed via the arrangement Brent Council has entered with EcoFurb. Work is commencing for a retrofit assessment of the successful properties to better understand the measures and interventions required. For Pot 1, monitoring will consider energy use before and after measures and evaluate resident satisfaction with the work. It should be noted that the current high energy prices mean that whilst work will reduce energy use, it may not reduce energy spend.

5.14. Pot 2: Nine applicants were awarded (eight full and one partial) to carry out environmental education projects. Appendix A lists the organisations and the date money was released. Projects run to the end January 2024 giving applicants approximately 15 months to deliver the project once funds are received. Monitoring and evaluation for each organisation's success have been set out in the grant funding agreement with each organisation. Project-specific measures of success will be submitted at the project closure. In June 2022 Cabinet approved the successful applications. Arrangements were made to release funding directly to Pot 2 projects.

5.15. A further £1.2m is available in the Carbon Offset Fund and further work is underway to determine how best to allocate this.

6. You Decide

6.1. Following the use of participatory budgeting to distribute £500k Carbon Offset Fund, it was decided to use the same approach to allocate £2m of NCIL funding in the 2022/23 financial year.

6.2. In the You Decide round the £2m funding was split equally between the five Brent Connect areas so each area was allocated £400k. This formula has not impacted on the overall allocation agreed by Cabinet in 2017.

- 6.3. Delivery of the You Decide programme consisted of three stages. A communications and engagement plan was developed to deliver all three phases., beginning in March 2022:
- Phase 1 - Promotion and Community Engagement: March-May 2022
Prior to applications opening, workshops and support sessions were offered to all applicants, including: 43 Information Support Sessions with the You Decide Team, Brent Health Matters Team and Decision Day Facilitator.
 - Phase 2 - Applications and Application Support: May-June 2022.
One-to-one application support sessions in different neighbourhoods across the borough and online support sessions, which were available to book until the application deadline
 - Phase 3 - Decision Day: June-July 2022
All applicants invited to attend a Decision Day were offered and encouraged to attend a presentation support session, offering guidance on presentation content and style. The sessions ran twice a week (one in person and one online).
- 6.4. The communications and engagement approach focused on reaching all sections of Brent's community, tapping into existing networks but also making sure to target hard to reach areas and those who were reluctant to engage. This involved producing communications and marketing materials in community languages and lots of face-to-face community engagement.
- 6.5. The communications and engagement plan was split into three phases. Different communications tools were therefore implemented during each phase to maximise the reach and participation of local communities.
- 6.6. Internal communications included promoting You Decide on the intranet, e-newsletter to staff and briefing to Members, alongside a digital toolkit which included shareable assets, leaflets, a press release and social media posts to be used locally.
- 6.7. External communications involved using 50 lamppost banners (10 banners in each Brent Connects area), artwork displayed on the JCDecaux digital and print boards around the borough and advertising at each train station in the borough to ensure good coverage. We also designed tote bags to hand out at events and the engagement team wore specially designed t-shirts to promote the initiative. Other more traditional communications, including press releases at different stages and social media posts were used.
- 6.8. During the five 'Decision Day' events, brochures were designed and printed for people to read the projects bidding for funding. These were also made available online.
- 6.9. A journalist from The Guardian attended the Wembley 'Decision Day' and covered the story online: www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/jul/13/dragons-den-style-event-hands-control-of-225m-to-residents-of-brent-council

- 6.10. During phase 2, officers worked with CVS Brent to identify organisations that could support individual residents to deliver their proposed project idea. The team also encouraged applicants to book at least one of the presentation support sessions.
- 6.11. 149 applications were submitted. 10 of the 149 applications were rejected as they did not meet the criteria. **Appendix B** lists the eligibility criteria.
- 6.12. Of the remaining 139 applications, 59 projects were selected by residents and awarded You Decide funding from across the five Brent Connect areas. The Decision Days were led by an external facilitator.
- 6.13. Projects were assigned to one of the five priorities from the 2019-2023 Borough Plan:
- Most fell under the ‘every opportunity to succeed theme’ (57/130 projects, 43.9%). These projects were primarily about improving life opportunities for children and young people or helping people find ways to work.
 - Projects under ‘A borough where we can feel Safe, secure, happy and healthy’ were the least likely to be successful (9/26 successful, 35%), in part because this includes projects based on culture which was the least successful theme overall with none of the 9 projects being successful.
- 6.14. A decision paper was provided to Assistant Chief Executive and CMT to authorise delegated powers to release the funds to successful applicants in July 2022.
- 6.15. **Appendix C** lists all successful projects and the amount awarded. 35/58 projects fall within social infrastructure and 23/58 projects fall within physical infrastructure – which are fairly distributed across the Brent Connect areas as detailed below:

Connect Area	Projects awarded funding
Harlesden	10
Kilburn & Kensal Rise	10
Kingsbury & Kenton	14
Wembley	11
Willesden	13

- 6.16. **Appendix D** provides a comprehensive breakdown of You Decide data by Brent Connects.
- 6.17. All organisations entered a legally binding agreement to deliver the projects by signing a Funding Agreement containing the council's Standard Grant Terms and Conditions. Funds are expected to be released in October 2022. Most projects will be completed within a year and two projects will be delivered within a two-year period.

- 6.18. All project schedules are assigned a Council priority. Each individual project schedule lays out the agreed outcomes for each project which aligns with their assigned Council priority.
- 6.19. All successful projects had further checks conducted by the team e.g. officer ensuring safeguarding and equality policies in place.
- 6.20. As of the time of writing of the report 42/58 projects have received their project schedule. The remaining 16 were are awaiting for either planning permission and/or further details from projects before we can proceed with the project schedule. Officers are working for these projects for to complete the process.

6.21. Project monitoring

Project monitoring is led by an officer team. This includes project visits and reports. Funds are released through the standard process which ensures suppliers are fully set up on the council's payments system and in line with financial management processes.

Currently there are 160 projects in monitoring and a further 58 will begin monitoring in January. Once the new round opens in January it is likely that this number will increase.

6.22. Future NCIL rounds:

Since You Decide, feedback has been received from ward councillors, lead members and CMT. The feedback received to date is being used to improve future programmes. Initially, revisions will be introduced to:

- NCIL will run twice in a financial year. One round will be the standard NCIL application and the second will be allocated via the You Decide participatory budgeting process
- The criteria has been revised. This is to make the eligibility criteria and exclusions more defined for prospective applicants. This includes successful projects for the last round will not eligible for the next round to ensure grant funding is spread throughout the community. The criteria is detailed in **Appendix B**.
- The next round of NCIL round will be a standard application
- Bid limit is £50k. Smaller organisations (up to £10k) and Medium/Larger organisations (up to £50k)

- 6.23. The communications and engagement campaign will begin earlier and be even more ambitious in its desired reach. The voting rules for participatory budgeting will be published on the council's website and will also be shared with all applicants. Proof of address will be required to confirm residential status. Internal departments will be consulted earlier – in advance of project going forward to Decision Days.

7. Brent Health Matters ‘You Decide’

- 7.1. As part of the You Decide participatory budgeting process, the Brent Health Matters Team also allocated a £250k Health and Wellbeing grant to community organisations. This was also divided equally among each Brent Connects area giving each £50k.
- 7.2. Community organisations were invited to apply for projects to a maximum value of £10k. The application criteria is available to view in **Appendix E**.
- 7.3. Brent Health Matters received 79 applications, the breakdown for each Brent Connects area was:

Brent Connects area	Number of applications
Harlesden	19
Willesden	14
Wembley	28
Kingsbury and Kenton	9
Kilburn	9

- 7.4. Brent Health Matters Decision Days were the same as NCIL You Decide except Wembley where the Brent Health Matters and NCIL decision days were held on different days:

Connect area	Number of attendees	Number of successful organisations
Harlesden	53	6
Willesden	21	6
Wembley	85	6
Kingsbury and Kenton	107	6
Kilburn	59	6

- 7.5. A range of different projects and organisations were successful, including some small organisations that received funding for the first time.
- 7.6. Overall, participatory budgeting was successful because it encouraged local community organisations to come together and support each other, including developing joint working and resource sharing.

8. Additional council grants

- 8.1. **Appendix F** provides more information on the additional council grants available to the voluntary community sector:
- Brent for Business: Energy Saving Scheme
 - Food Aid grants
 - Resident Association grant
 - St Raphael's Voice group grant
 - Together Towards Zero grant

- Duke of Edinburgh Holiday and Food Programme grant

9. Financial implications

- 9.1. The Council is required to spend at least 15 per cent of CIL (capped at £100/dwelling each financial year) on neighbourhood projects, in consultation with the local community. Areas with a neighbourhood plan receive 25 per cent of the CIL collected in that area. Together these form the funds available for Neighbourhood CIL.
- 9.2. Neighbourhood CIL can be spent on a wider range of projects than normal CIL, both infrastructure as with strategic CIL and anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area, as long as this is done in consultation with the local area.
- 9.3. Each project will be required to sign a funding agreement to confirm project milestones, outputs and payment instalments. Brent's Community Social Infrastructure Team will conduct regular project monitoring.
- 9.4. The Council is permitted to spend up to 5% of CIL income on administrative costs, the costs of running this scheme will be met from this 5% share.

10. Legal implications

- 10.1. The outcome of the You Decide process will require a formal decision by an officer or Cabinet Member with appropriate decision-making authority or by Cabinet.
- 10.2. The Planning Act 2008, and CIL Regulations 2010, provide for local authorities to apply the CIL to infrastructure to support development. The Neighbourhood element may be used to fund 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 (Reg. 59F).
- 10.3. CIL spending is governed by Part 7 of the CIL Regulations. For any financial year in which CIL, receipts are received, an infrastructure funding statement outlining receipts and expenditures must be prepared and published on the council's website. (Reg. 62).
- 10.4. Government Guidance (2014, as amended) states that the Council must engage the community where development has taken place and accordingly, agree with them on how best to spend the funding. The use of neighbourhood funds should match the priorities expressed by the local communities.
- 10.5. The Council has the power to award grants to organisations using its general power of competence in section 1 of the Localism Act 2011. The Council should however act reasonably and follow internal governance requirements.
- 10.6. The GLA guidance 2018 provides that Carbon offset funds allow for a source of funds for carbon reduction projects across London. The intention is that the

fund helps with emission reductions from existing buildings where achieving carbon savings can be more challenging. The guidance states that the London Plan requires that Councils :

- set up a carbon offset fund that is ring-fenced to secure delivery of carbon savings within the relevant LPA
- set a price for carbon, i.e. price per annual tonne of carbon, that developers pay
- to make up any shortfall in on-site carbon savings, securing contributions through Section 106 agreements
- identify a suitable range of projects that can be funded through the carbon offsetting fund
- put in place suitable monitoring procedures to enable reporting to the GLA

11. Equality Implications

- 11.1. Participatory budgeting aligns the links between equality and community empowerment and participation in local financial decision-making. Participatory budgeting has significant potential to transform the relationships between local communities and the local authority.
- 11.2. The equalities implications include utilising a strong blend of engagement approaches to reach a broad spectrum of diverse organisations and residents to enhance participation opportunities.
- 11.3. An Equality Analysis (EA) of all grant programmes is completed and continually reviewed. The overall assessment is that Brent's grant programmes have a positive impact in terms of promoting equality. Each project also completes an initial screening of the likely impact of their plans on the protected characteristics.
- 11.4. Under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the council has a duty when exercising its functions to have 'due regard to the need to:
- 11.5. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and other conduct prohibited under the Act;
 - Advance equality of opportunity; and
 - Foster good relations between those who share a "protected characteristic" and those who do not.
- 11.6. This is the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

12. Environmental Sustainability Implications

- 12.1. Approximately 43% of the carbon emissions emitted from within Brent's borough boundary come from domestic properties (homes), which is the single biggest contributor to Brent's overall carbon emissions total. Theme 3 of the council's Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy (2021-2030) seeks to address this through focusing on 'Homes, Buildings and the Built Environment'.

The objective of this strategy theme states: “By 2030, as many homes and buildings in the borough as possible will be more energy efficient, be powered by renewable sources and be resilient to future adverse weather events caused by climate change – and we will do all in our gift to achieve an average rating of Energy Performance Certificate B in directly owned council stock.”

- 12.2. The purpose of CO2GO initiative therefore contributes to this objective, with a particular focus on the elements relating to improved energy efficiency of homes and buildings. As stated within paragraph 39 flats, maisonettes, houses and two community buildings in Willesden were awarded funding to complete sustainability works to reduce their carbon footprint. Once completed, the retrofit improvement works on the homes and buildings mentioned are likely to see a substantive reduction in the carbon emissions generated from those properties, which will in turn contribute to a small reduction in Brent’s overall borough-wide carbon emissions total generated from domestic properties and commercial/industrial buildings.
- 12.3. All of the planning meetings and decision day took place online so the overall carbon footprint of the CO2GO project to this point will also have been minimal.

13. Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

- 13.1. The Lead Member for Community Engagement, Equalities & Culture is regularly briefed on Love Where You Live, Edward Harvist and NCIL grants and the You Decide programme.
- 13.2. The Lead Member for the other listed grants is regularly briefed.
- 13.3. All members are kept up to informed on the dates of the opening of grant rounds and You Decide launch via the Members Information Bulletin.
- 13.4. A member’s development session on the next NCIL round will take place in November.

Report sign off:

Lorna Hughes
Director of Engagement, Strategy &
Communications