

Birmingham Strategic Partnership Programme Board 15th May 2007**Neighbourhood Renewal Fund Proposed Allocations 2007/2008****Purpose**

To seek approval from the Board for the NRF allocations 2007/08.

To outline intentions to improve governance arrangements.

To make proposals for an evaluation of NRF.

Recommendations

That the Board approves the NRF allocations for 2007/2008

That the BSP team bring forward to the June meeting proposals to strengthen governance arrangements including

- A set of guidelines for constituencies and for blocks
- Proposals on a reallocation policy for underspends
- A monitoring and reporting process for the innovation fund

NRF Allocations 2007/2008

The proposed NRF allocations for 2007/2008 includes:

- NRF Ward and Community Chest allocations.
- NRF allocation by LAA Block.
- NRF Infrastructure allocation.
- NRF Innovations and Development allocation

Summary

The total NRF allocation for 2007/2008 is £37.62M. There is also a BCC contribution of £1.20M and a carry forward balance of £3.94M which brings the total available to £42.76M.

• Ward Allocation	£13.19M
• Community Chest	£4.0M
• Block Allocations	£11.84M
• Innovations	£749K
• Community Engagement	£750K
• Infrastructure	£1.67M
 Total	 £32.2M

There are also proposals for the extra £5M funding being received in 2007/2008. These are:

• Contribution to WSO's	£758K
• Health FTAP	£2.0M
• Worklessness FTAP	£1.0M
• Housing FTAP	£1.0M
• Innovations	£320K
 Total	 £5.07M

Carry forward balances are as follows:

• Ward allocation	£3.74M
• Community Chest	£1.43M
• Block Allocations	£7K
 Total	 £5.2M

This brings the total funding requested to £42.44M which leaves a balance of approximately £280K as a contingency fund.

The Ward funding has been allocated using the same criteria as 2006/2007. Each ward will also receive £100K Community Chest funding.

Please note that all NRF funding in 2007/2008 is subject to the criteria governing the Local Area Agreement.

Financial guidance and governance Arrangements

Financial guidance and Governance arrangements are currently being revised in line with the recent Grant Determination and Audit Report, in particular establishing 'what is Eligible expenditure' and creating a robust reporting mechanism to ensure compliance.

As accountable body BCC has a statutory responsibility to ensure that the funding is properly accounted for. Funding is distributed according to the needs of the partners responsible for delivering the outcomes and targets in the LAA and appropriate mechanisms are being developed for the distribution and accountability of funding passed to partners.

The Programme Board will receive a monthly financial monitoring statement summarising block spend and commitments, this will also include any potential variations. It is planned that these are dealt with on a monthly basis and that any under spends are reallocated promptly to ensure that targets are met.

This will be coordinated through the BSP Delivery team.

It is proposed therefore that the BSP team

- 1 Produce a set of guidelines for Block and constituency leads to ensure probity and accountability. This will be brought to the June Programme Board for information.
- 2 Bring forward proposals on how we reallocate underspends and

Evaluation

Jon Bright presented a paper at the March PB meeting which gave a historical perspective of the ward-based NRF programme. The Programme board agreed with the two main conclusions; firstly that the individual ward projects were probably sound (the concern was more about collective strategic impact) and secondly while the priority statements showed some signs of influencing investment/expenditure and outcomes, this had happened fairly late in the day. The group agreed that both theme and ward aspects of the NRF program should be evaluated, taking on board any previous work conducted by partners.

A number of pieces of work have been conducted that are relevant; BCC review of NRF ward projects costing over £250K, BSP paper on ward projects in Oct 2005, several years of NRF audit on a random set of NRF projects conducted by Birmingham Audit, Annual Floor target achievement reports, NRF evaluation commissioned by DCLG in mid-late 2006, thematic reports to BSP, several annual reports by key partnerships and an internal BCC briefing document produced for Jon Bright at the end of 2006.

It is proposed that an external consultant is brought in to undertake an evaluation of NRF.

The evaluation should take account of other evaluation work that has been conducted in the past and seek to identify impacts achieved from the investments made. It should also identify what has worked and provide some suggestions for future strategies.