



CABINET – 13TH FEBRUARY 2018

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF CCBC REGENERATION GRANTS

REPORT BY: INTERIM CORPORATE DIRECTOR - COMMUNITIES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 Following a review undertaken on the revenue and capital grant schemes currently administered by the Council's Regeneration Division, it is recommended that existing grants be amalgamated into a combined "**Caerphilly Enterprise Fund**" that focuses delivery on developing business growth and creating employment opportunities. To accommodate this officers propose merging several grant programmes including the Community Regeneration Fund and focusing their budgets into the Caerphilly Enterprise Fund. Approval to consult more widely on these proposals is being sought from Cabinet.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The current grant schemes are administered by both the Urban Renewal and the Business Support & Funding Teams within the Regeneration Division and offer financial support to both the commercial/business sectors and community/voluntary sectors. The current grant schemes are as follows:

Business Grants

- Commercial Improvement Grant (CIG)
- Business Development Grant (BDG)
- Business Start Up Grant (BSUG)

Administered By

Urban Renewal Team
Business Support & Funding Team
Business Support & Funding Team

Community / Voluntary Grants

- Community Regeneration Fund (CRF) Business Support & Funding Team
- Oakdale Community Benefit Fund (OCBF) Business Support & Funding Team

- 2.2 The above are a mixture of revenue and capital funded grants and as such there is a requirement to manage and keep them separate.
- 2.3 This Report provides an evaluation of the current grant schemes and outlines the potential to combine the grants into a single "**Caerphilly Enterprise Fund**" with a refocus towards offering improved support to start up businesses, stimulating economic growth, filling identified supply chain voids and supporting job creation.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The scheme supports the Well-being Objectives set out in the Caerphilly County Borough Council Corporate Plan 2018-2023, specifically “Enabling Employment”.
- 3.2 The scheme supports the Council’s Anti Poverty Strategy, whilst supporting and encouraging economic growth and business development which are themes running through the Council’s Regeneration Strategy entitled ‘A Foundation for Success 2018-2023’.
- 3.3 The grants programme will have a positive impact upon the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area and community it serves. In particular the grants contribute to the following goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015:
- A resilient Wales
 - A sustainable Wales
 - A prosperous Wales
 - A Wales of cohesive communities
 - A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language

4. THE REPORT

Background

- 4.1 Grants are administered by the Urban Renewal Team and Business Support & Funding Team within the Regeneration and Planning Division. Urban Renewal administers a Commercial Improvement Grant Scheme (CIG), which is a capital budget targeted towards retail and commercial property improvements in towns and villages within the County Borough. The Business Support and Funding Team administer the Business Start Up Grant (BSUG) which is revenue funded and Business Development Grant (BDG) to the business sector which is made up of a capital and revenue budget.
- 4.2 Two additional grants are aimed at the community/voluntary sector, namely: the Community Regeneration Fund (CRF) which is a mixture of capital and revenue funding along with the Oakdale Community Benefit Fund (OCBF) which also consists of revenue and capital monies.
- 4.3 Officers have undertaken a comprehensive review of the current regeneration grant regimes, including the option to merge the grants into a single, targeted grant with the aim of offering a greater focus on: supporting start up businesses; encouraging economic growth; filling identified supply chain voids and stimulating and supporting job creation within the County Borough.

Overview of current Regeneration Grant Schemes

- 4.4 The following existing grant schemes are funded by the Council’s internal capital and revenue annual budget allocations. There are no conditions which would preclude changes or mergers of the Commercial Improvement Grants or Business Support Grants. However, the Community Grants Programmes will require Cabinet Approval to revise (see also paragraph 7.6).

Commercial Improvement Grants (Urban Renewal Team)

- 4.5 Financial assistance is offered for improvements to commercial, retail and industrial premises located in town and village centres within the County Borough. Eligible works include the

conversion, extension, improvement or modification of existing commercial buildings, and the conversion of other buildings into commercial, industrial or community use. The scheme offers a grant rate of up to 50%, with the maximum amount of grant offered to any one property not exceeding £15,000. In recent years the annual budget allocation for the CIG scheme has been £50,000 per annum. There are currently over 50 expressions of interest for this fund.

Business Support Grants- (Business Support & Funding Team)

4.6 Targeted at both existing businesses and new start ups. **The Business Development Grant (BDG)** currently supports established businesses to purchase capital equipment, IT equipment, software, marketing and web site development and some internal building works to upgrade their premises. Grant funding of up to 45% of the project cost is offered to a maximum of £2,000 per project. The annual budget for 2018/19 is £51,251 although it is expected to reduce by £25,000 for one year only in 2019/20.

4.7 **The Business Start Up Grant (BSUG)** is designed to help residents of the County Borough set up a full time business for the first time. Grant funding of up to 50% of the eligible project costs, to a maximum of £500 is offered. The annual budget for 2018/19 is £5,000. Applications are invited all year round for both BDGs and BSUGs subject to budget availability and are assessed with a recommendation for grant award or refusal as and when the full assessment has been completed by the case officer. This is not a CCBC core budget and is funded by TATA steel who provides the Council with this benefit fund.

Community Regeneration Fund (Business Support & Funding)

4.8 This fund enables community and voluntary sector organisations in the County Borough to bid for capital and/or revenue funding to take forward initiatives they have developed as part of the community planning process. Funding is available up to a maximum of 80% of the total project costs. Applicants can apply for a maximum of £25,000 in capital. Revenue funding for one year can be offered, subject to the availability of resources, up to a maximum of £30,000. The annual budget for 2018/19 is £199,057 (£100,057 revenue and £99,000 Capital). This allocation will reduce in 2019/20 due to the need to establish MTFP savings.

4.9 Applications are invited up to five times a year, subject to the availability of resources where applications are discussed and assessed at a Grants Panel meeting.

Oakdale Community Benefit Fund (OCBF)

4.10 The Oakdale Community Benefit Fund was established during the development of two 2MW wind turbines amounting to circa £10,000 per annum for the duration of the lease period (25 years). The purpose of the OCBF is to support and benefit viable and sustainable communities within 1.5 miles of the turbines, which comprises the communities of Argoed, Croespenmaen, Kendon, Oakdale, Penmaen, Pentwyn and Trinant. A grant of up to 80% of total project costs is available with the maximum grant available limited to £3,000 capital and/or £3,000 revenue in a single year. It should be noted that this is not a CCBC core budget and as such it will be restricted to the terms and condition imposed by the developer who provides the Council with the benefit fund.

Evidence of Impact

4.11 This section outlines how the grants have been used over the last 3 years, identifies the positive impact of the various programmes and considers the appropriate level of funding support under the proposed "Caerphilly Enterprise Fund":

Commercial Improvement Grants (CIG)

4.12 In the financial 5 year period between 2013 and 2018 a total of 16 CIG were awarded for improvement works to properties in towns and villages throughout the County Borough. Although the maximum grant award is £15,000 under this programme, the average grant

award was £9,100. Evidence therefore suggests that reducing the maximum grant approval to £10,000 will still stimulate economic activity and will also allow more applications to be processed per annum.

Business Grants (BDG & BSUG)

4.13 Evidence from the 3 previous years suggests that BDG grants at a maximum of £2,000 do help create jobs in small businesses. When compared against the recent LIF programme, (which had an average grant rate of nearly £6,000) the evidence shows that the BDG regime appear to be better value for money. Although it could be argued that a more targeted approach with a maximum grant to £10,000 would help deliver greater impact to fewer businesses, the facts show that awards at a lower level do help business growth and create more jobs overall than a more targeted approach.

4.14 Small BSUG grants have been offered at a maximum rate of £500 per application. Feedback from officers administrating the grant suggests that this level of support is ideal to help start lifestyle micro businesses. With a small budget of £5,000 which is derived from an annual donation from TATA Steel, it appears illogical to increase the grant level as this would dramatically reduce the number of new businesses that could be supported. Also by retaining the core elements of the grant this will also help any future awards to comply with the terms and conditions imposed by TATA Steel.

Community Regeneration Grants

4.15 This fund enables community and voluntary sector organisations in the County Borough to take forward valuable projects that have a positive impact on the community. Since 2011 a wide range of groups have received grant aid at up to 80% intervention rate. Churches, sports clubs, scout groups, OAP groups and local community partnerships are regular recipients of the grant with bigger organisations such as GAVO and Inside Out also receiving monies from the fund.

4.16 The Voluntary sector and community organisations play a large and critical role in helping local communities develop and grow. They are able to access external funding that the Council cannot bid into and have been very successful in the Caerphilly county borough council area at securing external funding for a myriad of projects. It must be noted that large numbers of local people have and do currently benefit from projects supported by the Community Regeneration Fund. The Voluntary Sector and community organisations have traditionally utilised this budget to add value to the community. The Community Regeneration Fund has enabled third sector organisations to grow and thrive. Significant match funding has been levered in from other sources: between 2011/12 and 2016/17 a total of £1,897,312 was awarded via the Community Regeneration Fund, which levered in match funding of £3,351,769 from a variety of sources. However, the projects do not have an economic focus and the review of past spend shows that only a small proportion were targeted at employment, training, skills or personal development.

4.17 With an underlying climate of financial cut backs to the Regeneration service area, officers would recommend that Cabinet consider refocusing the Community Regeneration Grant budget towards projects with an economic focus. In an age of austerity, it is imperative that the resources that the Council has available to it are channelled to give the greatest long-term sustainable impact.

Oakdale Community Benefit Fund

4.18 This fund derives from an annual contribution from the private company who operate wind turbines in the area. It enables community and voluntary sector organisations in the Oakdale area (as defined in paragraph 4.10 above) to bid for funding to take forward projects delivering a social, economic or environmental impact on the area or community concerned. Since

2014, many small community groups have benefited from the Fund, receiving grant aid at up to 80% intervention rate.

- 4.19 As with the Community Regeneration Fund, although valuable to communities, most of the funding does not have a demonstrable impact on the local economy. However, if changes are made that impact on the Community Regeneration Fund budget, then it will be desirable to continue with this fund and possibly extend the geographic reach to provide wider community benefits.

Proposed New Grant Regime

- 4.20 It is proposed that a new grants regime should concentrate more activity on developing business growth and creating employment opportunities within the County Borough. It is recommended that the primary focus of a new **Caerphilly Enterprise Fund** should be on:
- Business Start Ups in all sectors (less than 12 months trading);
 - Underutilised/empty town centre commercial properties
 - Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (e.g. those with less than 250 employees, with turnover not exceeding €50 million (approx. £45 million) and / or a balance sheet not exceeding €43 million (approx. £38.7 million);
 - Established Community Groups or Social Enterprises;
 - Filling identified supply chain voids identified by CCBC Procurement;
 - Projects that help create or safeguard jobs - contributing to the Council's Well Being Goals.
- 4.21 The Council's Corporate Plan 2018-2023 outlines a number of core Well Being objectives that the Council will strive to deliver. Objective Two is Enabling Employment. The new grant regime outlined in this report will be a key tool that will allow the Council to influence / improve the levels of employment in the county borough. It is therefore considered appropriate to re focus the 'grant' budget allocated to Regeneration and Planning towards business growth and job provision in the county borough.
- 4.22 Following a review and critical appraisal of the current grant regimes, it is clear that there is scope to amalgamate the existing business-focused grant schemes, based on the clear commonality of their main economic objectives and administrative processes. If Cabinet are minded to progress with a standardisation of current regeneration grants, it is recommended that the three business focused grants (CIG; BSUG and BDG) are combined into a single fund, namely the **Caerphilly Enterprise Fund** with the OCDF continuing to be administered separately.
- 4.23 More radically, officers propose discontinuing the Community Regeneration Fund programme and focusing it's budget into the Caerphilly Enterprise fund. The good work that the voluntary sector and community groups undertake is fully recognised and greatly appreciated but it is apparent that there are a number of external funding mechanisms that they are able to bid into to secure monies for localised community projects. Larger funding bodies such as the Big Lottery, Garfield Weston Trust and Coalfields Community Grants offer substantial grants to such groups. At this current moment in time, It has been established that there are upwards of twenty external grants available to these groups (See Appendix 1) and even though it is proposed that the CRF fund is closed, officers will continue to offer support and guidance to groups looking for funding and will actively signpost them to suitable available external grants.
- 4.24 The proposed new **Caerphilly Enterprise Fund** will prioritise those projects that can demonstrate job creation, safeguarding of existing jobs and which can lever in private sector investment. It will be aimed predominantly at businesses looking to grow within the county

borough. Although the grant regime will be open for community groups and social enterprises they will need to evidence that their projects focus on economic activity.

4.25 It is proposed that from 2019/20, the new Caerphilly Enterprise Fund will offer funding support under two categories; the first being Business Support and the second being Property Improvement:

- **Fund 1 – Business Support Grants** that will operate in a very similar manner to the BDG and BSUG and will utilise the Council's core revenue allocation to offer grants of up to £500 to micro businesses and up to £2,000 to help create jobs and economic growth in small businesses, social enterprises and community groups. As this is predominantly targeted at supporting small businesses it is intended to offer grant to businesses that can prove they require it. There are concerns that small grants are being awarded to businesses with very large turnovers and that the grants have little impact on such large companies. Therefore grant applicants will need to provide financial evidence of the 'need' of the grant based on turnover, cashflow and the liquidity of the business.

The Council's Procurement Division have identified that there are opportunities for business growth to fill voids in the Council's supply chain. It is envisaged that this fund will be used as a tool to try and encourage the local business community to fill these gaps in provision.

This fund will be open to community businesses, in particular social enterprises to bid into.

- **Fund 2 – Property Improvement Grants** that will operate in a very similar manner to the existing CIG regime outlined above, with a focus on bringing empty or underutilised buildings back into beneficial use. This thematic will operate using a capital allocation and will offer capital grants of up to £10,000.

4.26 It is proposed that the existing Business Development Grant budget will form the core of the Fund 1 budget. The annual budget for 2018/19 is £51,251 with a similar budget allocation in 20/21.

Please note that under the current budget proposals, this budget is expected to reduce by £25,000 for one year only in 2019/20.

4.27 As part of the MTFP savings for 2019/20 it is proposed that the indicative Community Regeneration Grant **revenue** budget allocation is reduced from £100,000 to £50,000. It is further proposed that the remaining indicative £50,000 be allocated from the CRF to the Caerphilly Enterprise Fund to be refocused on economic outputs under Theme 1 – Business Support.

Please note that under the current budget proposals the residual £50k outlined above has been identified as a temporary 'one year only' cut in order to balance the budget for 2019/20.

4.28 Likewise it is recommended that the 2019/20 £99k indicative **capital** allocation for the Community Regeneration fund be vired to the Caerphilly Enterprise Fund Theme 2 – Property Improvements. This would result in the Community Regeneration Fund having a zero budget which would therefore effectively end that programme.

4.29 Section 7 of this report sets out in more detail the proposed allocations to be made to the new Caerphilly Enterprise fund and its two sub-categories for 2019/20.

- 4.30 With extreme pressure on senior managers to make savings for MTFP, it is likely that these grants programmes will come under scrutiny. It is therefore imperative that available resources are aligned to make the greatest impact and help take forward the Council's Corporate Objectives.
- 4.31 The Evidence of Impact section (4.11 – 4.19 above) outlines key evidence that has led officers to propose the maximum grant available under each of the priority funding categories as outlined in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Proposed Grant Limits and Intervention Rates

Fund	Proposed Grant Available	Intervention Rate
Caerphilly Enterprise Fund - Theme 1 "Business Support"	£200- £2,000 revenue	Up to 45%
Caerphilly Enterprise Fund - Theme 2 "Property Improvement"	Up to £10,000 capital	Up to 50%
Oakdale Community Benefit Fund	Up to £3,000 capital Up to £3,000 revenue	Up to 80%

- 4.32 It is further recommended that any grant funded project would need to demonstrate that it will contribute to improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well being of the County Borough:

Economic

There will need to be evidence of job creation (at least one job) where grants of up to £5,000 are awarded. Where larger grants are awarded additional job creation will need to be evidenced.

Environmental

Property Improvement Grants must deliver environmental enhancements. Projects to refurbish empty, vacant or underutilised commercial premises will be prioritised.

Social/Cultural

Social enterprises/businesses must demonstrate how their project will contribute to their future growth and development.

- 4.33 It is proposed that the existing geographical boundary for the Oakdale Community Benefit Fund is extended from 1.5 miles to 2 miles. This would add the communities of Markham, Cefn Fforest, Blackwood, part of Newbridge and Crumlin to the existing eligible communities of Argoed, Croespenmaen, Kendon, Oakdale, Penmaen, Pentwyn and Trinant. It also brings in the communities of Llanhilleth, Brynithel and Aberbeeg in Blaenau Gwent and it should be noted that a number of similar schemes across the UK cut across local boundaries. However it is not suggested that communities outside Caerphilly CBC should have access to this fund. As this fund is provided from a contribution from a private company then they would need to agree to the expansion of the boundary.

Approval Process – Options

- 4.34 Two options for the grants approval process have been considered as part of this review:
- **Written Procedure** via Case Officer Grants Approval Report (Report certified by Case Officer, Line Manager, Grants Manager, Head of Service in consultation with Cabinet Member)
 - **Panel Meeting and Assessment** – Case Officer Recommendations discussed at regular Panel meetings with designated Panel members (including Case Officer, Grants Manager, Head of Service, minimum quorum required)
- 4.35 On balance, it is recommended that the current written procedure process is retained for all new business grants under the Caerphilly Enterprise Fund that require grant funding of less than £5,000. This approach has worked for a number of years and has been effective and more responsive to business focused grants, as it allows projects to be assessed in a timely manner, on a rolling basis as they are received. It should also be noted that this process has been subjected to detailed external audits when the EU supported Local Investment Fund was delivered (up to April 2015).
- 4.36 It is acknowledged, however, that more scrutiny may be required for grant awards above £5,000. It is therefore recommended that a grants panel is established to assess grant applications over this £5,000 threshold both for revenue and capital bids. Grant panel membership would consist of:
- Project Officer presenting report
 - Section/Team Manager
 - Grants Manager, Corporate Finance
 - Cabinet Member for Economy, Infrastructure, Sustainability & Wellbeing of Future Generations
 - Head of Regeneration and Planning
- 4.37 All grant applications will undergo a stringent review, both those that go to panel and those under £5,000 that will be awarded directly. There are already review procedures in place for the existing grants and officers have developed these to be applicable for the grant regime.

5. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

- 5.1 This proposal contributes to the Well-being Goals as set out in Links to Strategy above. It is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act and is aimed at improving the economic well being of the County Borough.
- 5.2 As such the proposals align with the following well being goals:
- **A Prosperous Wales** – financial contributions to targeted business sectors will support opportunities for development of a skilled population in an economy which generates wealth and employment opportunities;
 - **A resilient Wales** – targeted grant support will foster social, economic resilience and the capacity to adapt to change;
 - **A more Equal Wales** – the grant programmes encourage applications from a wide range of sectors and organisations, community, voluntary or business, and reflect a broad opportunity for participation.
 - **A Wales of cohesive communities** – the grant programmes support measures to provide attractive and well connected communities through financial support to community based

projects and environmental improvements.

- **A globally responsible Wales** – the grant programmes support measures which improve the economic, social and environmental well being of the County Borough.

6. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 An EIA screening has been completed in accordance with the Council's Strategic Equality Plan and supplementary guidance and some potential negative impact has been identified affecting one or more of the target equality groups.
- 6.2 A full EQLA has been carried out and is appended to the report. Please see Appendix 2.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The review has highlighted that up until 2018/19 that community focused grants have had an overall budget of nearly **three** times that of the funding targeted at the business community. Even the latest 2018/19 budget is nearly twice that of business orientated grants. This report seeks to alter this balance. Proposed budget allocations for 2019/20 are set out in table 2 below.
- 7.2 In order to meet MTFP targets it has been proposed that several of the grant allocations are reduced from 2019/20 onwards and amalgamated into the two Enterprise Funds identified in section 4.25. Table 2 outlines those proposed for 2019/20.
- 7.3 The 2018/19 approved budgets for CRF are £100,057 revenue and £99K capital. The proposal in this report is that the CRF be closed and the £100K revenue budget be split between a £50K MTFP saving and a £50K virement into the Caerphilly Enterprise Fund Thematic 1.
As noted above, under the current budget proposals, the residual £50k has been identified as a temporary 'one year only' cut in order to balance the budget for 2019/20. Likewise there will be a 'one year only' £25k reduction in the BDG allocation.
- 7.4 The Community Regeneration capital budget of £99k will be redirected towards the property focused category of the proposed Caerphilly Enterprise Fund.
- 7.5 These proposals are reflected in Table 2 below. In short, this report recommends the closure of the Community Regeneration Fund, with monies being refocused towards delivering tangible economic outputs.

Table 2: Proposed Grant Structure and Core Allocations

Proposed Grant Regime	Proposed Core Allocations		
	Revenue	Capital	Total
Caerphilly Enterprise Fund - Fund 1 Small businesses	£101,251 £26,251 for 19/20	£0	£101,251 £26,251 for 19/20
Caerphilly Enterprise Fund - Fund 1 Micro businesses	£5,000	£0	£5,000
Caerphilly Enterprise Fund - Fund 2 Property Grants	£0	£149,000	£149,000

Proposed Grant Regime	Proposed Core Allocations		
	Revenue	Capital	Total
Total for Business Grants	£106,251 <i>£31,251 for 19/20</i>	£149,000	£255,251 <i>£180,251 for 19/20</i>
Community Regeneration Grant	£0	£0	£0
Oakdale Community Benefit Fund	£10,000	£0	£10,000
Total for Community Grants	£10,000	£0	£10,000

7.6 It should be noted that any decisions relating to the CRF grants programme, will need to be viewed against the existing relationship between the Council and the Voluntary Sector. The Compact / Partnership Agreement is currently being renewed and will be presented in its final form to the Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee. Via the Compact Agreement, the Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee is a consultee on changes to third sector funding and should be included in the consultation process. It is therefore suggested that the recommendations in this report be presented to the voluntary sector and community groups (probably through consultation with the Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee) as part of a consultation process before implementation.

8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Currently Business Support and Funding Team officers are the primary contact for the business growth grants with enquires relating to property improvements directed to the Urban Renewal team.
- 8.2 The restructuring of the Regeneration and Planning Department will identify roles and responsibilities for officers with regards to this new grants model, should it be implemented.

9. CONSULTATIONS

- 9.1 A wider consultation process is proposed with the voluntary sector and community organisations before implementation of the new grants programme. The results of this consultation will be reported back to Cabinet. The views and comments of consultees to date have been reflected in the report and certain concerns are outlined below. A response to each concern is outlined in italics below each bullet point.
- 9.2 The Community Regeneration Fund was previously administered by the Council's Policy Section. They are extremely concerned at the proposals to amalgamate the funds and refocus all of them on enterprise and job creation/employment. So rather than reflect their views and comments within the body of the report, it is considered prudent to summarise their views on the proposed refocusing of the current grant regime below.
- The Community Regeneration Fund has enabled third sector organisations to grow and thrive. The report fails to mention the significant match funding that the community grant programmes lever in from other sources. Between 2011/12 and 2016/17 a total of £1,897,312 was awarded via the Community Regeneration Fund, which levered in match funding of £3,351,769 from a variety of sources, which is a massive amount of economic benefit for the county borough as a whole.

Regeneration Officer Comments - *The proposed grant regime is not being established to deter community groups from applying but with the overall budget being cut year on year the grant regime needs to have a clear focus. This focus, as outlined in the report, will be on stimulating the local economy and as such the grants regime will concentrate on more defined economic outcomes. The voluntary sector and community groups do have access to a range of alternative funding bodies outside of this grants programme that they can apply to and expertise exists within the Council to continue to help signpost organisations and groups to these funding sources.*

- It appears very unjust that the focus is moving from supporting our local communities to only supporting businesses. The proposals in the report will make the majority of third sector organisation ineligible for the funding and, those that are will have to compete with the business sector. External grant sources such as EU funding were used to top up Council budgets to great effect. Many of the projects funded via the community grant schemes also included employing staff, so to suggest that the proposed changes will give a greater economic focus is not fully accurate.

Regeneration Officer Comments - *The recommendations in this report must be viewed in the wider context. Budgets for discretionary grants have seen severe cutbacks and although it is acknowledged that the CRF has had some positive economic benefits, its primary focus has always been around supporting community orientated projects. With dwindling resources, there is a need to make the process more competitive and it has been determined that there should be a refocus on projects that bolster the local economy. Groups who have traditionally accessed the CRF fund will still be able to bid into the fund but with more focused projects. Again it is worth re-iterating that all voluntary and community groups would acknowledge that there are numerous alternative funding mechanisms for community group support. Circa twenty alternative funding sources exist that these groups will still have access too and officers will signpost towards. Although budgets are being cut there will still exist a very strong and well staffed Community Regeneration Team offering support to these communities on a daily basis.*

- The report suggests that most of the CRF funding does not have a demonstrable impact on the local economy, and this is not the case. Had it not been for the seed funding provided by the Community Regeneration Fund, development projects like Newbridge Memo, Van Road Church in Caerphilly, Rudry Village Hall and many others simply may not have happened.

Regeneration Officer Comments - *This report does acknowledge the positive impact that the grants have had over time, but it also clearly argues that the Council must prioritise its reducing resources. It is believed that the best return on this budget will be to take a more focused economic approach to its distribution in order to bolster the robustness of local communities.*

- There is a need to consult with the voluntary sector in relation to the proposed changes. This is enshrined in the Compact agreement, which the Council is a primary signatory to. The Compact / Partnership Agreement is currently being renewed, having been approved in principle by the Public Services Board in September and will be presented in its final form to the Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee in due course. CCBC is a prime signatory to the Compact and the Funding Code of Practice. Via the Compact Agreement, the Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee is a consultee on changes to third sector funding and should be included in your consultation. It is suggested that this report be presented to the Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee as part of the consultation process

Regeneration Officer Comments - A full consultation process with the voluntary sector and community groups will be undertaken as part of the wider consultation process before the new grants regime goes live. This engagement will also allow the Council to highlight replacement funding opportunities available to these groups.

- The report makes reference to the Well-being of Future Generations Act. The Act requires that all public bodies consider the social, economic, environmental and cultural benefits of everything that they do, so a focus purely on economic benefits would not be in keeping with the spirit of the Act. The vast majority of the projects previously funded via the CRF have impacts on multiple benefits, including economic.
- **Regeneration Officer Comments** - The Well Being of Future Generations Act has been considered in delivering this report. Focusing the impact of grants towards maximising local economic activity will, it is believed, have the most profound effect on local communities well being. Stimulating more favourable economic conditions and new employment opportunities will have a plethora of positive outputs and outcomes on the local community as people's overall financial security/stability and well-being improves.
- The report requires a full EQLA be carried out as many CRF funded projects are aimed specifically at these targeted groups. These target groups need to be fully consulted before the report is approved by Cabinet.

Regeneration Officer Comments - This has been undertaken as part of the Cabinet report consultation mechanism. The full EQLA is attached at Appendix 2.

- In a wider context Community Asset Transfer is becoming more of a focus for the Council in the current financial climate. With ever diminishing resources it is unlikely that Council will be able to maintain the range of community venues within the county borough such as community centres, sporting facilities, changing rooms etc. It will be difficult to expect community organisations to take on these sorts of facilities if the Council cannot offer financial support with grant funding. External funding sources that they can be signposted to and offered support.

Regeneration Officer Comments - The CRF is a discretionary grants regime. Community and voluntary groups would be advised not to look to build support from this funding source into their building management or financial management models as further cuts are very probable.

10. SUMMARY

- 10.1 The report advocates the merging of the current Commercial Improvement Grant, the Business Development Grant, the Business Start Up Grant and the Community Regeneration Fund into the Caerphilly Enterprise Fund which will concentrate more activity on developing business growth and creating employment opportunities within the County Borough. The proposals will simplify the grants application process and seek to standardise grants administration throughout the Regeneration Division. Officers will undertake a consultation exercise with community groups and the voluntary sector over the proposals, in particular the recommendation to effectively discontinue the Community Regeneration Fund and refocus its budget into delivering this new grants programme.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 To seek approval for officers to conduct a thorough consultation process with the voluntary sector and community groups on the recommendation set out below (11.2 – 11.6) before bringing a further report back to Cabinet.
- 11.2 That the existing grants (CIG, BDG, BSUG and CRF) are amalgamated to provide a new **Caerphilly Enterprise Fund** to be launched in April 2019.
- 11.3 That the existing core grant allocations are re-aligned as set out in paragraphs 4.20 to 4.32 to provide greater economic outputs within the county borough under the Caerphilly Enterprise Fund umbrella.
- 11.4 That the existing Community Regeneration Fund be discontinued.
- 11.5 That officers request to the developer who provides the funding, that the geographic boundary for the Oakdale Community Benefit Fund be increased from 1.5 miles to 2 miles but should not be available outside of the county borough.
- 11.6 That Cabinet considers and endorses the protocols outlined within the report for determining grant applications.

12. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 12.1 Primarily to offer improved support to businesses and to maximise economic growth. In addition, the proposals will standardise the process for grants administration throughout the Regeneration Division and to improve the systems by which the Regeneration and Planning Division controls and administers grants to businesses.

13. STATUTORY POWER

- 13.1 Sections 70 and 71(1) of the Government of Wales Act 2006 and sections 126-128 of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996.

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Consultees: Cllr Sean Morgan, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy, Infrastructure, Sustainability & Wellbeing of Future Generations
Mark S Williams, Interim Corporate Director (Communities)
Rhian Kyte, Head of Regeneration and Planning
Antony Bolter, Group Manager (Strategy Funding & Support)
Glenn Cooper, Project Officer, Urban Renewal Team
Clair Vokes, Grants Officer (Strategy Funding and Support)
Tina McMahon, Community Regeneration Manager
Dave Roberts, Principal Group Accountant
Nadeem Akhtar, Group Accountant, Corporate Finance
Kath Peters, Corporate Policy Manager
Alison Palmer, Community Planning Co-Ordinator
Vicki Doyle, Policy Officer, Statistics and Funding
Anwen Cullinane, Senior Policy Officer – Equalities and Welsh Language
Shaun Watkins, Principal Personnel Officer

Apendices:

Appendix 1 – Voluntary Sector/Community Group: Sources of External Grants

Appendix 2 – Equalities Impact Assessment

Appendix 1

GRANT SCHEME NAME	PROVIDER	GRANT DESCRIPTION	WHO CAN APPLY	CAPITAL / REVENUE	GRANT AMOUNT	MATCH FUNDING REQUIRED
Technical Assistant Grant	CCBC	To support charities and voluntary organisations in Caerphilly undertaking a capital project with costs associated with technical assistance	Voluntary or Charitable organisations in Caerphilly	Capital	Up to £4800 including VAT	Not stated
Welsh Church Fund	CCBC	To promote the activities of voluntary organisations that benefit the people of Caerphilly and enrich local communities	Registered voluntary charities, movements and institutions which contribute towards community life, community organisations, community based projects, churches and chapels	Capital	Smaller Projects up to £5,000 or larger projects up to a maximum of £10,000	Up to £5000 fully funded for larger projects of over £5000, the remaining amount will be subject to a grant rate of 75% up to a maximum grant of £10,000
Health & Wellbeing Grant	Aneurin Bevan University Health Board	The purpose of the Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Grant is to support voluntary organisations working within the Caerphilly County Borough area on projects related to improving the health and wellbeing of residents.	Voluntary or community organisation, charity, community interest company or social enterprise operating in Caerphilly County Borough	Capital & Revenue	Max £4000	fully funded or match funded
GAVO Cash 4 U Grant	GwirVol Partnership	The purpose of the Cash 4 U Grant is to fund exciting and worthwhile projects that create more Volunteering opportunities for young people aged 14-25.	Voluntary organisations	Capital & Revenue		

Garfield Weston Foundation	Garfield Weston Foundation	Supports a wide range of charitable activity in the UK in areas such as arts, community, education, environment, youth, faith, health, welfare, museums and heritage	UK registered charities, Charitable Incorporated Organisations, Educational establishments including schools & universities, Churches, Housing Associations, Museums and Galleries	Capital & Revenue	Regular grants of up to £100,000 or Major Grants of £100,000 and above	Match Funding required. Capital projects 10% of total project cost. Revenue projects 10-20% of organisations total income/salary. Like to see evidence of 50% funding before applying for grant
Coalfields Community Grants - Wales	The Coalfields Regeneration Trust	The programme is for community and voluntary organisations that can clearly demonstrate that a grant will impact positively on people living in the former Coalfield Communities of Wales	Community & Voluntary Organisations	Capital & Revenue	From £500 up to £7000	Fully funded up to £7,000 or can be used to match fund
Gwent High Sheriffs' Community Fund	Community Foundation in Wales	Funding is available for community-based initiatives and projects that reduce crime and improve community safety in Gwent. The fund aims to provide a safer and better quality of life for the people of Gwent	Community groups, voluntary organisations and local charities in Gwent, ie the local authority areas of Newport, Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen, Monmouthshire and Caerphilly.	Capital	Max £5000	
National Lottery Awards for All - Wales	Big Lottery Fund	Grants are available for community organisations, schools and statutory bodies in Wales to help improve local communities and the lives of people most in need	Voluntary and community organisations, including: registered charities, constituted groups and clubs, not-for-profit companies and community interest companies, social enterprises, schools, statutory bodies including town, parish, and community council.	Capital & Revenue	Grants between £300 and £10,000	Fully funded up to £10,000 or match funded

Wales - People and Places	Big Lottery Fund	People and Places aims to support people and communities working together and using their strengths to make positive impacts on the things that matter to them the most	Voluntary or community organisation, registered charities, constituted groups or clubs, community interest companies, social enterprises, schools, statutory bodies including town, parish or community council	Capital & Revenue	Medium grant offers from £10,001 to £100,000 for projects lasting up to 5 years and Large grant offers from £100,001 to £500,000 for projects lasting up to 5 years	Funding is available for all eligible costs of the project but applicants are encouraged to seek funding from other sources
People's Postcode Trust	People's Postcode Lottery	Provides project based funding for up to 12 months in length ranging from £500 - £20,000 to organisations within Great Britain. The current themes of the Trust are: Poverty Prevention, Employability Programmes and Human Rights through combatting discrimination	Registered charity, CIO/SCIO, Constituted voluntary or community group, social enterprise, community interest company, not-for-profit organisation, local club or other constituted community group	Capital & Revenue	£500 - £20,000	
Tesco Bags of Help	Tesco / Groundwork	Bags of Help is Tesco's local community grant scheme where the money raised by the carrier bag charge in tesco stores is being used to fund thousands of community projects across the UK. The projects must meet the criteria of bringing benefits to the community.	voluntary or community organisations including registered charities/companies, schools, health bodies, NHS Hospital Trust, Foundation Trust, Parish/Town Councils, Local authorities and social housing providers	Capital	From £1000 to £4000 can be awarded	Fully funded or match funded if larger project
Tudor Trust	Tudor Trust	Core funding, unrestricted funding, project grants, capital grants	organisations/charities seeking support for work that has a charitable purpose	Capital & Revenue	No limit set	Fully funded

Local Community Projects Fund	Greggs Foundation	The Local Community Projects Fund awards grants of up to £2000 to enable not for profit organisations to do something they otherwise couldn't afford to.	Organisations supporting people in need. Any not for profit organisation can apply, however larger organisations with a turnover in excess of £300,000 will be unsuccessful	Capital	£2,000	Fully funded
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation	Esmee Fairbairn Foundation	Grants available to organisations doing legally charitable work in the UK that focuses on the Foundation's funding priorities in the arts, children and young people, the environment, food or social change	Charities and not-for-profit organisations with a regular annual turnover of at least £50,000	Capital & Revenue	Max £500,000	Match funding is not required however, it may help to have funding commitments from other sources and a credible investment raising plan
Tampon Tax Community Fund	Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport	Grants are available to local not-for-profit organisations for local projects that improve the lives of disadvantaged women and girls in local communities across the UK	Registered UK charities, constituted community groups, companies limited by guarantee with charitable aims, community interest companies, co-operatives, credit unions, social enterprises	Revenue	£10,000	Fully funded or match funded
Trusthouse Charitable Foundation	The Trusthouse Charitable Foundation	Grants are available to smaller charitable and not-for-profit organisations in the UK to fund community support, arts, education and heritage projects in areas of extreme urban deprivation or remote, socio-economically deprived rural areas	Established charitable organisations including CICs, social enterprises, not-for-profit registered companies, voluntary organisations	Capital & Revenue	Max £60,000	Applicants must have secured a minimum of 50% of the total project cost before applying for both capital & revenue projects

Co-op Local Community fund	Co-op Membership	Helps pay for local projects that co-op members care about through 1% of own brand sales and carrier bag charges	Charities, local community groups or not-for-profit organisations	Capital & Revenue		
ACT Foundation (ACT)	ACT Foundation	Provides grants to individuals and other UK charities with the aim of enhancing the quality of life for people in need, specifically the mentally and physically disabled and the aged.	UK registered charities	Not specified	No upper limit but most grant awards are for under £10,000	
Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust - Veterans Community Centres Programme	Ministry of Defence	The funding is to be used to improve existing community centres used by veterans.	Registered charity or CIC that already supports the Armed Forces Community	Capital	£30,000	Fully Funded
Baily Thomas Charitable Fund	Baily Thomas Charitable Fund	The Charity aims to support work for the aid and relief of those affected by learning disability	Voluntary organisations which are registered charities or are associated with a registered charity	Capital or Revenue	two grant schemes - small grants from £250 up to £10,000 or general grants over £10,000	Can be match funded
Improving Lives Grant Programme	The Henry Smith Charity	Grants for small and medium sized organisations in the UK to support projects and the running costs of organisations	Charities and not-for-profit organisations including social enterprises	Capital & Revenue	£20k - £60k	

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

October 2018

THE COUNCIL'S EQUALITIES STATEMENT

This Council recognises that people have different needs, requirements and goals and we will work actively against all forms of discrimination by promoting good relations and mutual respect within and between our communities, residents, elected members, job applicants and workforce.

We will also work to create equal access for everyone to our services, irrespective of ethnic origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, religious beliefs or non-belief, use of Welsh language, BSL or other languages, nationality, responsibility for any dependents or any other reason which cannot be shown to be justified.

The Council is required to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- removing or minimising disadvantages experienced by people due to their protected characteristics
- taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people
- encouraging people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The protected characteristics are:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Age | • Race |
| • Disability | • Religion, Belief or Non-Belief |
| • Gender Re-assignment | • Sex |
| • Marriage and Civil Partnership | • Sexual Orientation |
| • Pregnancy and Maternity | • Welsh Language* |

* The Welsh language is not identified as a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, however in Wales we also have to treat Welsh and English on an equal basis as well as promoting and facilitating the use of the Welsh language.

Further advice on completing impact assessments can be found on the equalities pages of Corporate Policy Unit Portal.

THE EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

NAME OF NEW OR REVISED PROPOSAL*	Establishment of a new Caerphilly Enterprise Fund which combines all of the current grant funding programmes run under the Regeneration Department.
DIRECTORATE	Communities
SERVICE AREA	Regeneration & Planning – Urban Renewal and Business Support & Funding Teams
CONTACT OFFICER	Allan Dallimore Urban Renewal Team Leader dallia@caerphilly.gov.uk 01443 866441
DATE FOR NEXT REVIEW OR REVISION	N/A

***Throughout this Equalities Impact Assessment Form, ‘proposal’ is used to refer to what is being assessed, and therefore includes policies, strategies, functions, procedures, practices, initiatives, projects and savings proposals.**

The aim of an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is to ensure that Equalities and Welsh Language issues have been proactively considered throughout the decision making processes governing work undertaken by every service area in the Council as well as work done at a corporate level.

The Council’s work across Equalities, Welsh Language and Human Rights is covered in more detail through the [Equalities and Welsh Language Objectives and Action Plan 2016-2020](#).

When carrying out an EIA you should consider both the positive and negative consequences of your proposals. If a project is designed for a specific group e.g. disabled people, you also need to think about what potential effects it could have on other areas e.g. young people with a disability, BME people with a disability.

There are a number of supporting guidance documents available on the [Corporate Policy Unit Portal](#) and the Council’s Equalities and Welsh Language team can provide advice as the EIA is being developed. Please note that the team does not write EIAs on behalf of service areas, the support offered is in the form of advice, suggestions and in effect, quality control.

Contact equalities@caerphilly.gov.uk for assistance.

PURPOSE OF THE PROPOSAL

1	<p>What is the proposal intended to achieve? <i>(Please give a brief description and outline the purpose of the new or updated proposal by way of introduction.)</i></p> <p>A draft cabinet report presents a proposal to combine the existing regeneration grants into a single “Caerphilly Enterprise Fund” with a refocus towards offering improved support to start up businesses, stimulating economic growth, filling identified supply chain voids and supporting job creation. Officers have undertaken a review of the current regeneration grant regimes, and have recommended merging the grants into a single, targeted grant regime with an economic output focus. This Caerphilly Enterprise Fund will look to streamline the existing grants processes and have one point of access, making it easier to navigate for applicants.</p> <p>The Cabinet report proposes the refocusing of all regeneration grants towards economic outputs under a streamlined grants protocol. The report advocates that part of the Community Regeneration Fund (CRF) budget be identified as a possible MTFP saving and the remainder re-focused towards supporting business and property grants that the department operates. The current 2018/19 approved budgets for CRF are £100,057 revenue and £100,000 capital. Likewise, it is proposed that the Community Regeneration Fund capital budget be re-directed towards the property focused category of the proposed Caerphilly Enterprise Fund.</p> <p>Effectively the report recommends the closure of the current CRF programme of grant funding as it operates at present. Whilst the purpose of the Community Regeneration Fund (CRF) has been to foster and enhance viable and sustainable communities within Caerphilly county borough, it is acknowledged that with reduced internal resources, the focus of grant activity should be focused on economic outputs. It is further acknowledged that there are external grants bodies who offer similar funding for local projects. The new Caerphilly Enterprise Fund will not exclude community groups from bidding into it, but the focus of the grants will be much narrower. It is acknowledged that the new grant regime may mean that some community groups will no longer be able to bid in for funding.</p>
2	<p>Who are the service users affected by the proposal? <i>(Who will be affected by the delivery of this proposal? e.g. staff members, the public generally, or specific sections of the public i.e. youth groups, carers, road users, people using country parks, people on benefits etc. Are there any data gaps?)</i></p> <p>The proposed Caerphilly Enterprise Fund will offer improved support to start up businesses and will offer a streamlined grants application process to existing SME's that will be easier to access, be more responsive to the needs of the business community and help stimulate economic growth. Local businesses and entrepreneurs will benefit from a more focused and better funded grants programme.</p> <p>The Enterprise fund will harmonise the existing Regeneration grants processes under one umbrella. The current CRF is used by voluntary and community groups to deliver community based projects that must have one of more of the following aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• they will enhance employment prospects and skills of local people, particularly the young and those at a disadvantage, and promote equality of opportunity• they will protect and improve the local environment and infrastructure, and bring land and buildings into effective use• they will enhance the quality of life of people through social, cultural and recreational opportunities• they will promote and encourage local people to secure a sustainable future for local communities and/or encourage regeneration.

	<p>With the proposed new regime, community groups and social enterprises will only be able to submit bids aimed at the first of the bullet points above, specifically at economic outputs</p> <p>In 2017-18, £129K revenue and £167K capital was allocated to 17 projects in 5 bidding rounds. The ability to fund third sector projects for anything other than economically focused projects would be lost if the current funding levels were identified as MTFP savings or vired to the new Caerphilly Enterprise Fund.</p> <p>The existing CRF Fund has traditionally enabled community and voluntary sector organisations in the county borough to bid for funding to take forward initiatives they have developed for the benefit of the local community or service users. Since its inception in 2011 a wide range of groups have received grant aid at up to 80% intervention rate. Churches, sports clubs, scout groups, Older people groups and local community partnerships are regular recipients of the grant with bigger organisations such as GAVO and Inside Out also receiving monies from the fund. These groups will still be able to bid into the enterprise fund but will need to have more focused projects. In addition, Council officers will continue to work with these groups to signpost them to the various external grant bodies that they can access</p> <p>A wider consultation process will be conducted as part of the implementation process</p>
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IMPACT ON THE PUBLIC AND STAFF

3	<p>Does the proposal ensure that everyone has an equal access to all the services available or proposed, or benefits equally from the proposed changes, or does not lose out in greater or more severe ways due to the proposals? <i>(What has been done to examine whether or not these groups have equal access to the service, or whether they need to receive the service in a different way from other people?)</i></p> <p>The proposed Caerphilly Enterprise Fund will be delivered using protocols and processes that comply with the Council's Strategic Equality Plan and the Welsh Language Measure. All documentation will be bi-lingual.</p> <p>The application will include questions regarding Welsh language and equalities and how the grantee will pay due regard to both.</p> <p>The application process will be easier to navigate for potential grant applicants. The programme will be open, transparent and more streamlined</p> <p>The creation of the Caerphilly Enterprise Fund will effectively bring a single application process for applicants to bid into for projects. The Voluntary Sector and community groups will be advised on how best to bid under this fund and will also be signposted to other funding opportunities for projects</p>
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4	Is your proposal going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics? <i>(Has the service delivery been examined to assess if there is any indirect effect on any groups? Could the consequences of the policy or savings proposal differ dependent upon people's protected characteristics?)</i>	
Protected Characteristic	Positive, Negative, Neutral	Relevance of the Policy or Practice
Age	negative	Some grants have been awarded to help these groups. Possible negative impact if they are discontinued
Disability	negative	Some grants have been awarded to help these groups. Possible negative impact if they are discontinued
Gender Reassignment	neutral	
Marriage & Civil Partnership	neutral	
Pregnancy and Maternity	neutral	
Race	neutral	
Religion & Belief	negative	Some grants have been awarded to help these groups. Possible negative impact if they are discontinued
Sex	neutral	
Sexual Orientation	neutral	

5	<p>In line with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards. (No.1) Regulations 2015, please note below what effects, if any (whether positive or adverse), the proposal would have on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.</p> <p><i>(The specific Policy Making Standards requirements are Standard numbers 88, 89, 90, 91, 92 and 93. The full detail of each Standard is available on the Corporate Policy Unit Portal. Although it is important that what is outlined in the proposal is available in Welsh and English, please consider wider impacts on Welsh speakers.)</i></p> <p>Consideration has been given to the how the project will be delivered having due regard for the Welsh language.</p> <p>All information and promotional material made available to the public will be in line with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards and is produced bilingually. All application forms under the proposed Caerphilly Enterprise Fund will also be available bilingually. Officers will ensure that the Welsh Language Standards which relate to Grants are adhered to as part of the process.</p>
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INFORMATION COLLECTION

6	<p>Please outline any evidence and / or research you have collected which supports the proposal? This can include an analysis of service users. <i>(Is this service effectively engaging with all its potential users or is there higher or lower participation of uptake by one or more protected characteristic groups? If so, what has been done to address any difference in take up of the service? Does any savings proposal include an analysis of those affected?)</i></p> <p>Commercial Improvement Grants In the financial 5 year period between 2013 and 2018 a total of 16 CIG were awarded for improvement works to properties in towns and villages throughout the County Borough. Although the maximum grant award is £15,000 under this programme, the average grant award was £9,100. Evidence therefore suggests that reducing the maximum grant approval to £10,000 will still stimulate economic activity and will also allow more applications to be processed per annum. The Council holds a very large database for property owners who have submitted an Expression of Interest. To date there are over 60 expressions of interest,</p> <p>Business Grants (BDG & BSUG) Evidence from the 3 previous years suggests that BDG grants at a maximum of £2,000 do help create jobs in small businesses. When compared against the recent LIF programme, (which had an average grant rate of nearly £6,000) the evidence shows that the BDG regime appear to be better value for money. Although it could be argued that a more targeted approach with a maximum grant to £10,000 would help deliver greater impact to fewer businesses, the facts show that awards at a lower level do help business growth and create more jobs overall than a more targeted approach. Evidence shows that the full budget is fully expended 'year on year' with strong demand for the grants programme.</p> <p>Small BSUG grants have been offered at a maximum rate of £500 per application. Feedback from officers administrating the grant suggests that this level of support is ideal to help start lifestyle micro businesses. With a small budget of £5,000 which is derived from an annual donation from TATA Steel, it appears illogical to increase the grant level as this would dramatically reduce the number of new businesses that could be supported. Also by retaining the core elements of the grant this will also help any future awards to comply with the terms and conditions imposed by TATA Steel.</p> <p>Current Community Regeneration Fund Since 2011 a wide range of groups have received grant aid at up to 80% intervention rate. Churches, sports clubs, scout groups, OAP groups and local community partnerships have been regular recipients of the grant with bigger organisations such as GAVO and Inside Out also receiving monies from the fund. Between 2011/12 and 2016/17 a total of £1,897,312 was awarded via the Community Regeneration Fund, which levered in match funding of £3,351,769 from a variety of sources, However in 2017/18 the fund was under-subscribed.</p> <p>It has been established that there are circa twenty external bodies who offer grant support to the voluntary sector and community groups and it is proposed that CCBC groups use these to a greater extent than they have to date.</p>
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CONSULTATION

7	<p>Please outline the consultation / engagement process and outline any key findings. <i>(Include method of consultation, objectives and target audience. What steps have been taken to ensure that people from various groups have been consulted during the development of this proposal? Have you referred to the Equalities Consultation and Monitoring Guidance?)</i></p> <p>Before implementing the move towards an overarching Caerphilly Enterprise Fund that concentrates on economic outputs it is proposed that the new grants protocol will go to the Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee (and or the voluntary sector/community groups individually). The VSLC is a consultee on changes to third sector funding and as such will have a chance to comment on the proposals from this stance.</p>
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MONITORING AND REVIEW

8	<p>How will the proposal be monitored? <i>(What monitoring process has been set up to assess the extent that the service is being used by all sections of the community, or that the savings proposals are achieving the intended outcomes with no adverse impact? Are comments or complaints systems set up to record issues by Equalities category to be able analyse responses from particular groups?)</i></p> <p>The Caerphilly Enterprise Fund grants, like the current business grants, will have an inbuilt monitoring protocol.</p> <p>Officers within the Regeneration team will have the specific role of monitoring not only who grants have been awarded to but also the impact off the grants on those businesses/organisations who they are awarded to.</p>
9	<p>How will the monitoring be evaluated? <i>(What methods will be used to ensure that the needs of all sections of the community are being met?)</i></p> <p>Officers monitor the grants and evaluate them using a set of criteria that the grants are awarded against. The criteria currently do not include for impact on protected characteristics.</p> <p>However the Council will ensure that residents of Caerphilly are potentially able to benefit from the economic impacts of grant award and that grant applications are encouraged from all geographic locations.</p>
10	<p>Have any support / guidance / training requirements been identified? <i>(Has the EIA or consultation process shown a need for awareness raising amongst staff, or identified the need for Equalities or Welsh Language training of some sort?)</i></p> <p>Officers need to encourage collaborative working and encourage all grant applicants and recipients to work to sustainable development principles (I-CLIP – involvement, collaboration, long term, integration, prevention) and use the medium of Welsh where possible and practicable.</p>

	Officers from within the Council's Community Regeneration and Economic Development section will continue to offer support and advice to community and voluntary groups as to how best to take projects forward and benefit from external grant bodies
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11	If any adverse impact has been identified, please outline any mitigation action.
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	Officers will ensure that all partners and local organisations are aware of the new Caerphilly Enterprise Fund and are encouraged to submit applications.
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	There are a large number of external community and voluntary sector grants programmes and vehicles that the Council can help signpost groups to, that will help alleviate any negative impact of the CRF fund being withdrawn
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12	What wider use will you make of this Equality Impact Assessment? <i>(What use will you make of this document i.e. as a consultation response, appendix to approval reports, publicity etc. in addition to the mandatory action shown below?)</i>
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	The assessment will underpin delivery of the Caerphilly Enterprise fund to ensure that all communities, groups, their protected characteristics are given the same opportunity to access the funding.
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	The EIA will be appended to the Cabinet report
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13	<p>An equality impact assessment may have four possible outcomes, through more than one may apply to a single proposal. Please indicate the relevant outcome(s) of the impact assessment below.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Please tick as appropriate:</p> <p>No major change – the impact assessment demonstrated that the proposal was robust; there was no potential for discrimination or adverse impact. All opportunities to promote equality have been taken. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Adjust the proposal – the impact assessment identified potential problems or missed opportunities. The proposal was adjusted to remove barriers or better promote equality. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Continue the proposal – the impact assessment identified the potential problems or missed opportunities to promote equality. The justification(s) for continuing with it have been clearly set out. (The justification must be included in the impact assessment and must be in line with the duty to have due regard. Compelling reasons will be needed for the most important relevant proposals.) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Stop and remove the proposal – the impact assessment identified actual or potential unlawful discrimination. The proposal was stopped and removed, or changed. <input type="checkbox"/></p>
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Completed by:	Allan Dallimore
Date:	20.11.18
Position:	Team Leader, Urban Renewal
Name of Head of Service:	Rhian Kyte – Head of Regeneration and Planning