

Equality Impact Assessment – Ref 1191

Introductory Information

Budget/Project name

Economic Recovery Fund 2022-23

Proposal type

- Budget
- Project

Decision Type

- Committee
- Cabinet Committee (e.g. Cabinet Highways Committee)
- Leader
- Individual Cabinet Member
- Executive Director/Director
- Officer Decisions (Non-Key)
- Council (e.g. Budget and Housing Revenue Account)
- Regulatory Committees (e.g. Licensing Committee)

Committee Chair and Vice Chair

Cllr Martin Smith and Cllr Ben Miskell

Entered on Q Tier

- Yes
- No

Year(s)

<input checked="" type="radio"/> 22/23	<input type="radio"/> 23/24	<input type="radio"/> 24/25
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EIA date

20/05/22

EIA Lead

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Adele Robinson | <input type="radio"/> Ed Sexton |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> Annemarie Johnston | <input type="radio"/> Louise Nunn |
| <input type="radio"/> Bashir Khan | <input type="radio"/> Michelle Hawley |
| <input type="radio"/> Beth Storm | <input type="radio"/> James Henderson |
| <input type="radio"/> Diane Owens | |

Person filling in this EIA form

Sarah Lowi Jones

Lead officer

Diana Buckley

Lead Corporate Plan priority

<input type="radio"/> An In-Touch Organisation	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Strong Economy	<input type="radio"/> Thriving Neighbourhoods and Communities	<input type="radio"/> Better Health and Wellbeing	<input type="radio"/> Tackling Inequalities
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Portfolio, Service and Team

Cross-Portfolio

- Yes No

Portfolio

City Futures, Economic Development and Culture

Is the EIA joint with another organisation (eg NHS)?

- Yes No

Brief aim(s) of the proposal and the outcome(s) you want to achieve

The Economic Recovery Fund is aimed at supporting high street recovery, particularly in district centres, following the Covid-19 pandemic. Previously (in 2021-22) it functioned as a grant fund for collaborations of businesses/other local champions to bid for up to £50k or £200k, but the structure and process for the newly identified £2m for district centres is yet to be decided. This paper essentially requests a delegation so that the Lead Officer, alongside the Economic Recovery Fund Steering Group, can develop options around the use of this money in this new iteration of the Fund.

Impact

Under the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) we have to pay due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations

More information is available on the [Council website](#) including the [Community Knowledge Profiles](#).

Note the EIA should describe impact before any action/mitigation. If there are both negatives and positives, please outline these – positives will be part of any mitigation. The action plan should detail any mitigation.

Overview

Briefly describe how the proposal helps to meet the Public Sector Duty outlined above

This proposal is requesting a delegation of power, but indirectly (based on the ERF 2021-22) there is always the potential for grant funds like this to reward areas with existing networks, stronger social capital and more available resources ahead of those that do not have these things available and may struggle more to work together as a collaboration.

Last year to mitigate this we used the Business Information Officers working across the city to make these connections and work with groups of businesses to support the development of ideas and applications. We would very much aim to do this again and ensure there is support for high streets wanting to access funding to improve their areas and encourage customers back.

In addition, it is suggested that running a version of the Economic Recovery Fund again will give those areas with less advantage an opportunity to benefit.

Impacts

Proposal has an impact on

<input type="radio"/> Health	<input type="radio"/> Transgender
<input type="radio"/> Age	<input type="radio"/> Carers
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Disability	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Voluntary/Community & Faith Sectors
<input type="radio"/> Pregnancy/Maternity	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Cohesion
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Race	<input type="radio"/> Partners
<input type="radio"/> Religion/Belief	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Poverty & Financial Inclusion
<input type="radio"/> Sex	<input type="radio"/> Armed Forces
<input type="radio"/> Sexual Orientation	<input type="radio"/> Other

Give details in sections below.

Disability

Staff

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Customers

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Where language may be a barrier to engaging businesses, we will endeavour to work with community leaders, third sector organisations and others who could assist in brokering discussions.

Race

Staff

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Customers

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Where language may be a barrier to engaging businesses, we will endeavour to work with community leaders, third sector organisations and others who could assist in brokering discussions.

Voluntary/Community & Faith Sectors**Staff**

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

[Empty text box for details of impact]

Customers

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Where language may be a barrier to engaging businesses, we will endeavour to work with community leaders, third sector organisations and others who could assist in brokering discussions.

Cohesion**Staff**

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

[Empty text box for details of impact]

Customers

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

In the first iteration of the Fund we have not seen any issues with collaborations around a particular community excluding others, thus creating some tension in local areas. We have looked to ensure collaborations were inclusive. It is possible that giving opportunity and encouraging different groups to come round a table and work together may increase local cohesion.

Poverty & Financial Inclusion

Staff

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Customers

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

It is possible that in areas of poverty businesses may be less able to spare the time and resources to come together and develop ideas and applications that would give them access to the Economic Recovery Fund. It is also the case that other local champions and leaders could step in and support them in doing so where this was an issue. We have seen this during the first iteration of the Fund where third sector groups and Councillors have led the development of applications. As noted above, it is also likely that those areas that found it more difficult to come together in the short timescale in 2021 would have the opportunity to do so now with the benefit of support from Business Information Officers and Local Area Committee teams.

In running the Fund again those initially less able would now have the opportunity to access and benefit from the Fund.

Action Plan and Supporting Evidence

Action Plan

We will continue to ensure that our Equality Duty is part of the decision making by the Director and Steering Group for this piece of work. We will continue to try and mitigate any impacts on protected, vulnerable or disadvantaged groups by putting resources in place to support them in applying to the Fund. We will be proactive in approaching less advantaged areas of the city to raise awareness and encourage engagement with the scheme. We will continue to be cognisant of where activity is happening in developing applications across the city, so that if the Steering Group sees areas that are not represented we can apply additional time and resource in those areas to make sure that this is not a result of any disadvantage. Where language may be a barrier in engaging with businesses we will endeavour to work with community leaders, third sector organisations and others who could assist in brokering discussions.

Supporting Evidence (Please detail all your evidence used to support the EIA)

We did not request EDI information from people enquiring about or applying to the Fund, so we do not have strong evidence as to whether any specific groups had disproportionate success or found it harder to access the Fund.

As a project we have tracked the spread of projects that are part of ERF by LAC area, which is as follows:

North = 1

North-East = 3

East = 1

South-East = 2

South = 2

South-West = 1

Central = 5

Multiple/city-wide = 2

City centre specific = 10 (some received ARG funding and not ERF – 4 of those received ERF funding only, one had mixed funding and 5 were funded through ARG but went through ERF processes to access that funding – the purpose was to bolster the Fund and protect district centre spending.)

The spread is not, and was not intended to be, evenly distributed across LAC areas and in some ways the spread reflects the density of economic activity and is therefore we would expect and want to see projects come forward. However, there is no doubt that projects will need to come from new areas in the coming year.

Consultation

Consultation required

Yes No

If consultation is not required please state why

Are Staff who may be affected by these proposals aware of them

Yes No

Are Customers who may be affected by these proposals aware of them

Yes No

If you have said no to either please say why

This is not a project affecting Council customers directly, it is open across District Centres in the city. While there is awareness of the Economic Recovery Fund across the city, we have not consulted on the new iteration, this report simply requests a delegation of authority to allow the Steering Group to work up and decide on options.

Summary of overall impact

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Overall this is a positive project as it provides additional resource to support individuals and businesses effected by the economic impacts of Covid-19.

To ensure equality of access to the Fund, the following actions are being put in place:

- Raising equality of access and inclusion as a specific risk on the risk register in order to put in place mitigations and ensure regular assessment of this by the Steering Group.
- Ensuring that resource is allocated to areas that need capacity and help in drawing together a collaboration, in order to support them developing ideas and bringing forward applications.
- Where language may be a barrier to engaging businesses, we will endeavour to work with community leaders, third sector organisations and others who could assist in brokering discussions.
- Demographic information will be requested at the point of application to understand whether any groups are over/under-represented in and throughout the process.

Summary of evidence

It is suggested that for 2022-23 we request EDI information from applicants so that we have a better understanding of who accessed the scheme and was successful in securing funding for their areas.

Changes made as a result of the EIA

We will ensure that we request information from applicants and monitor the success of protected groups through the scoring process. Should there be any sense that any group is disproportionately not winning funding, the Steering Group will assess this and agree a set of actions to encourage and support those groups to come forward.

Escalation plan

Is there a high impact in any area?

Yes No

Overall risk rating after any mitigations have been put in place

High Medium Low None

Sign Off

EIAs must be agreed and signed off by the equality lead in your Portfolio or corporately. Has this been signed off?

Yes No

EIA Lead: Annemarie Johnston

Date agreed

26/05/2022

Review Date

30/11/2022