

<b>Title of meeting:</b>	Climate change & Environment Decision Meeting
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	18 <sup>th</sup> July 2022
<b>Subject:</b>	Greening the City - Funding application criteria
<b>Report by:</b>	Bethan Mose, Public Health Principal Zoe White, Green & Healthy City Coordinator
<b>Wards affected:</b>	All
<b>Key decision:</b>	No
<b>Full Council decision:</b>	No

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## 1. Purpose of report

- To consider and approve criteria for awarding grant applications into the Green City capital fund, to ensure a consistent and transparent funding process.
- To note and agree the timetable for developing the process for future open funding rounds.

## 2. Background

2.1 The Greening Portsmouth Strategy (Appendix A to this report) outlines the approach that will be taken to making Portsmouth a greener city. PCC is working towards its objective of becoming carbon neutral by 2030. The document also highlights a range of broader benefits that greening the city offer, notably:

- Improved mental wellbeing
- Greater opportunities for physical activity for recreation and active travel
- Tackling climate impact (through carbon capture and mitigating the impacts of a warmer environment)
- Improved air quality
- Opportunities for increasing biodiversity
- Improved public amenity and visual impact

2.2 A 12 month progress update was taken to Cabinet in October 2021, outlining a summary of key achievements over the 12 months since the Strategy was adopted. The progress made was the result of collective efforts across PCC services, mainly

business as usual. The Greening Portsmouth Strategy is due to be refreshed at the end of 2022.

- 2.3 Moving forwards PCC has made capital funding available to the Climate Change & Environment portfolio to deliver against the Greening Strategy objectives, whilst also delivering co-benefits for other strategic priorities such as tackling air quality and responding to the climate emergency. Further capital funds were awarded to the portfolio in April 2022.
- 2.4 Work over the last 12-18 months has predominantly focussed making use of existing opportunities, with 7750 trees of various standard planted on PCC-owned estate, the creation of 3 wildflower meadows during winter 2021/2022 and support offered to schools and community groups to enable local greening projects through available Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding and/or access to national grant funding secured by PCC. In the latter case, support has been offered predominantly without recourse to PCC's own capital funding.
- 2.5 To offer best value for public funds, and to maximise the greening opportunities across the city, we now seek to agree criteria for all (internal and external to PCC) grant applications and the process for funding decisions against desired outcomes. This will afford both the City Council, as well as applicants, a transparent and consistent process in terms of how grants are awarded, whilst providing a clear framework for how each project application meets the strategic objectives for citywide greening.

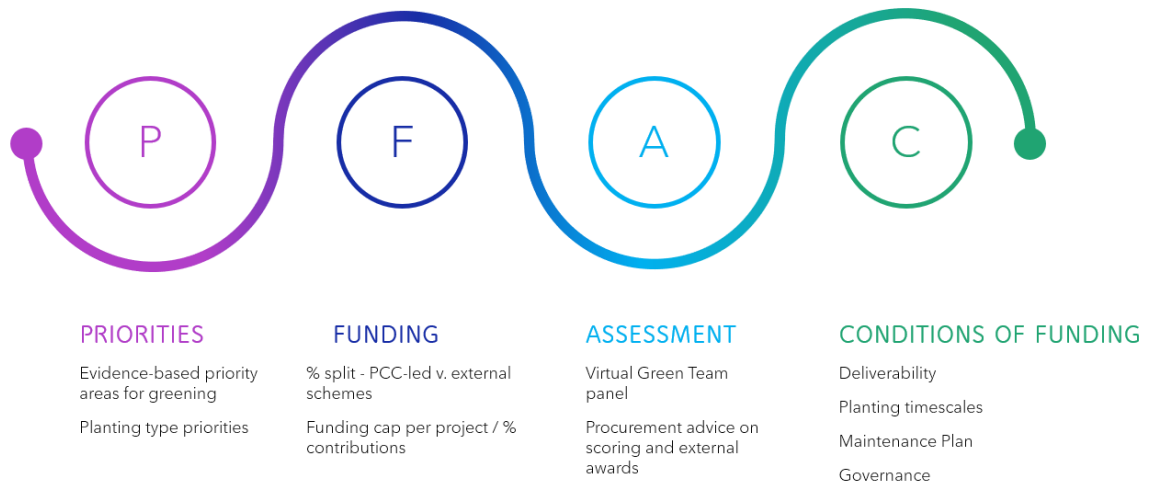
#### *Criteria*

- 2.6 All bids for PCC capital funding will be expected to demonstrate how they deliver against the following criteria:
  - the priorities of any given funding round (Part A)
  - the objectives of the Portsmouth Greening Strategy (Part B)
  - essential criteria that must be met in order for any application to be considered (Part C)
- 2.7 A template questionnaire has been developed to guide applications in meeting the above (Appendix B), with the intention to evaluate all applications with a simple scoring matrix based on the criteria.

#### *Process*

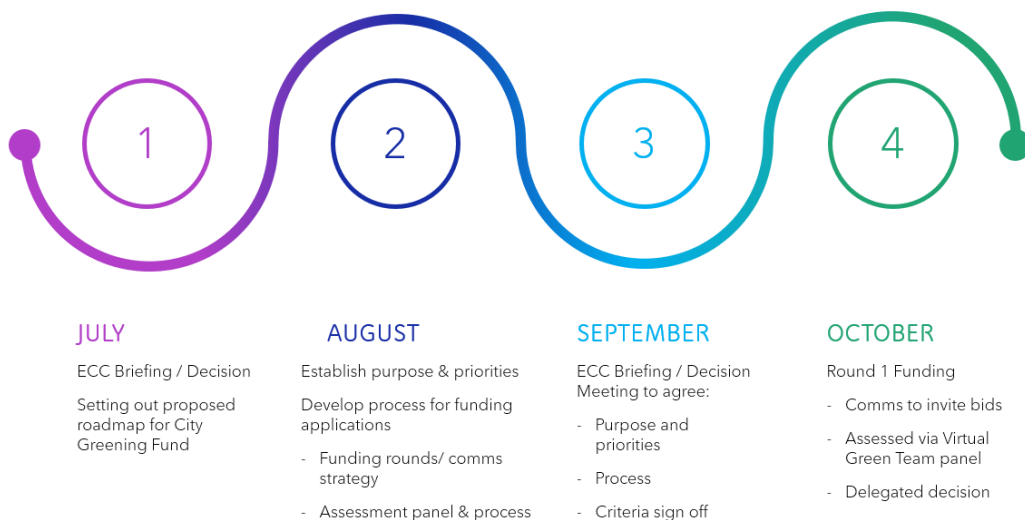
- 2.8 Given the capital fund is limited, it is no longer appropriate to consider funding applications on an ad hoc basis. Sitting behind the proposed criteria for funding applications, we intend to spend the next 6-8 weeks developing a robust framework to guide how and when we invite funding applications. As part of this, we will consider how best to reflect strategic priorities for greening, options for funding, assessment process and awarding conditions.

## CITY GREENING FUND FRAMEWORK



2.9 The intention is to bring back proposals on this framework to be agreed at the September Climate Change and Environment Decision Meeting - with a view to a potential call for bids shortly after in time for the Autumn/Winter planting season.

## ROADMAP



**3. Recommendations**

3.1 The Cabinet Member is asked to:

- note the proposed approach;
- approve the criteria for internal and external grant applications; and
- agree to bring back further detail on the process for funding rounds at the September Decision Meeting.

**4. Reasons for recommendations**

4.1 To offer best value for public funds, and to maximise the greening opportunities across the city; this will afford both the City Council, as well as applicants, a transparent and consistent process in terms of how grants are awarded, whilst providing a clear framework for how each project application meets the Greening Portsmouth Strategy (2020) objectives (see Appendix A).

**5. Legal implications**

5.1 The criteria is within a fairness construct appropriate , all that needs to be clear is that the process is communicated at the time of application and that the decision is final. Decision makers acting within a sensible criteria of application can say yes or no. The fairness and challenge mitigation is based upon: a fair application criteria, process, assessment and objective justification for a decision to grant funding or not. This can be looked at again.

**6. Director of Finance's comments**

6.1 There are no direct financial implications as a result of approving the recommendations within this report.

6.2 The funding for the programme is set aside within the Council's approved Capital programme.

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Signed by: Helen Atkinson, Director of Public Health

**Appendices:**

Appendix A: The Greening Portsmouth Strategy

Appendix B: Proposed City Greening Fund criteria questionnaire for applicants

**Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972**

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
Greening Portsmouth Strategy 2020	<a href="https://democracy.portsmouth.gov.uk/documents/s26330/Greening%20Portsmouth%20Strategy%20appendix.pdf">https://democracy.portsmouth.gov.uk/documents/s26330/Greening%20Portsmouth%20Strategy%20appendix.pdf</a>
Update to Cabinet October 2021	<a href="https://democracy.portsmouth.gov.uk/documents/s32455/Greening%20Strategy.pdf">https://democracy.portsmouth.gov.uk/documents/s32455/Greening%20Strategy.pdf</a>

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by ..... on .....

.....  
Signed by: