



## **Stronger Communities Fund Agreement**

**2022/23**

1. The Council has agreed to establish a Stronger Communities Fund as part of the approved Medium-Term Financial Plan.
2. This Agreement is between Darlington Borough Council (the 'Council') and the elected Member of \_\_\_\_\_ Ward, Councillor \_\_\_\_\_ (the 'Member') and sets out the conditions (on receipt of a signed copy of this Agreement) for the distribution of £1,000 (the 'Funding') to the Member to be used for the benefit of their ward and its residents

### **The Fund**

3. As part of the approved Medium Term Financial Plan, £1,000 has been allocated to each individual Member to be used at their discretion to deliver the objectives of the Stronger Communities Fund.
4. The proposed objectives of the fund as agreed by the Council are :-
  - a. to support individuals and groups to enhance access to opportunities to improve health and wellbeing outcome within their Wards; and
  - b. to invest in environmental improvements which improve the local area to the benefit of the local community
5. Examples of how the Funding could be used, include, but are not restricted to :-
  - a) supporting local groups with events or rents;
  - b) supporting individuals to excel in sport or education;
  - c) providing equipment for individuals in need of support; and
  - d) contributing towards or funding the purchase of environmental improvements such as providing a park bench or play equipment
6. The Council reserves the right to withdraw the account should it believe the Funding has been used inappropriately and/or has remained unspent. For the avoidance of doubt, any funding which is not distributed by the Member will be repayable to the Council.

## **Awarding the Funding**

7. The Member must publicise the Funding within their ward, through newsletters, notice boards etc, advising residents and organisations of the availability of the funding, the criteria and application process and the date by which any applications should be received.
8. The Member must also consider whether the provisions of the Code of Conduct for Members will apply before agreeing to award any of the Funding. Decisions to award Funding to an organisation that a Member works for, or is in a position of management or control, may be considered to be a pecuniary interest, and, as such, the Member must seek advice about this from the Council's Monitoring Officer.
9. In utilising the funding, in accordance with paragraph 10 below, the Member must not commit the Council to any future spend, for example, on-going maintenance.
10. In using the Funding, the Member shall ensure that :-
  - (a) in the 2022/23 financial year, due to the requirements to ensure the appropriate use of Council resources during an election period, all of the funding must be given to the grant recipient by 24 March 2023 and no advertising or promotion of any of the fund shall be undertaken after this period.
  - (b) the process of awarding Funding is open and transparent;
  - (c) the funding will not be used for the Members' personal or political gain;
  - (d) no aspect of the Funding may be, or appear to be, party political in intention, use or presentation
  - (e) the Funding has been used for the purpose that it was provided; and
  - (f) funding shall only be made to individuals or 'not for profit' organisations that are resident in the Borough of Darlington; and

## **Releasing the Funding**

11. The Member will advise, in writing, the Democratic Manager of the details of their grant recipient together with the funding amount and the purpose for which the grant has been allocated.
12. The Democratic Manager will advise, in writing, the grant recipient of the success of their application and request them to agree to the terms and conditions of the funding allocation.
13. On receipt of 12 above, the Democratic Manager will transfer the total amount of funding, as agreed by the Member, to the funding recipient.

## **Monitoring of the Scheme**

14. The Stronger Communities Fund will be reviewed by the Communities and Local Services Scrutiny Committee on a six-monthly basis to ensure the Fund is meeting its aims and objectives and to inform decisions regarding its continuation into future financial years.

Acceptance of Grant Conditions

**Member of the Council for :**

Ward

**Name :**

**Signature :**

**Authorised Signatory for the Council :**

**Name : S Wright, Democratic Manager**

**Signature :**