

**COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL
SCRUTINY PANEL
21 August 2018 at 18:00**

**SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA
Part A**

(open to the public including the media)

11. Locality Budgets

Following a request from Scrutiny Committee Chair. Report includes analysis of spend since the introduction of Locality Budgets in 2015.

This report has been amended to include additional information relating to previous years Locality Budgets and the addition of paragraph 8.5 within the covering report.

| | | | |
|----------------|---------------------------------|--------|----------------|
| Report of | Assistant Director of Community | Author | Melanie Rundle |
| Title | Locality Budgets | | ☎ 508816 |
| Wards affected | All wards | | |

1. Background

The Community Enabling Strategy was approved in 2015. This encourages local communities to work together to improve and protect their neighbourhoods by increasing neighbourliness, social networks and civic participation. As part of the strategy £2,000 was agreed for each Councillor to help drive community enabling within their wards. As well as meeting the aims of the Community Enabling Strategy Locality Budget spend should also align with the Councils Strategic Priorities.

2. Reason For Scrutiny

Following a request from Scrutiny Committee Chair. Report includes analysis of spend since the introduction of Locality Budgets in 2015.

3. Action Required by Scrutiny Panel

To review the analysis provided and consider any recommendations going forward in regard to Locality Budgets.

4. Supporting Information – Locality Budgets Analysis

- 4.1 The Locality Budget Guidance ([click here](#)) sets out the aims of the scheme along with guidance for Councillors on what their budget can and cannot be spent on. It also sets out the process to follow to make an application.
- 4.2 There is a check on receipt of a request for funding but no formal monitoring of the scheme. Councillors themselves have the responsibility and flexibility of deciding what will support community enabling most effectively in their locality and to ensure the funding is actually spent on what they requested it for.
- 4.3 Officers key consideration is that spend does not generate any ongoing revenue budget implications.
- 4.4 The administration of locality budgets can be very burdensome and officers have worked with Councillors over the years to reduce this additional cost. Key improvements include moving the application process online and introduction of a minimum spend per application.
- 4.5 Councillors are only able to carry unspent funds over to the next financial year in exceptional circumstances and this must be agreed in advance.

- 4.6** Each year, the funds go toward a variety of projects but there are some general themes demonstrated through the analysis.

5. When was the money spent?

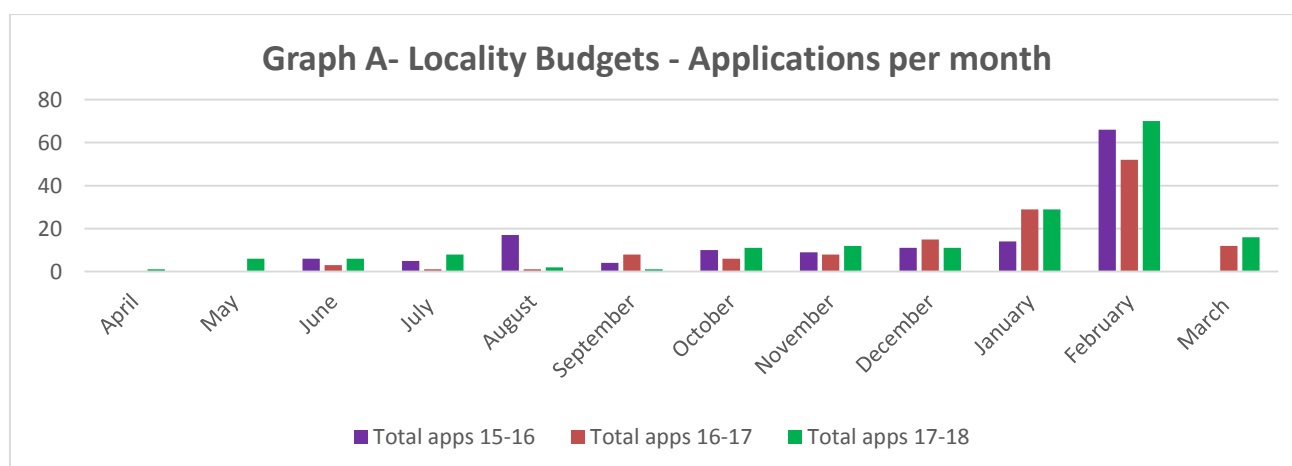
Ideally Councillors should be planning their locality budget spend alongside their local community enabling priorities and engaging with local communities very early in the financial year in an open and transparent way.

Leaving spend until the end of the year may limit the opportunities within communities, reduce the impact and possible value of these local resources for communities and adds to the administrative burden of the scheme.

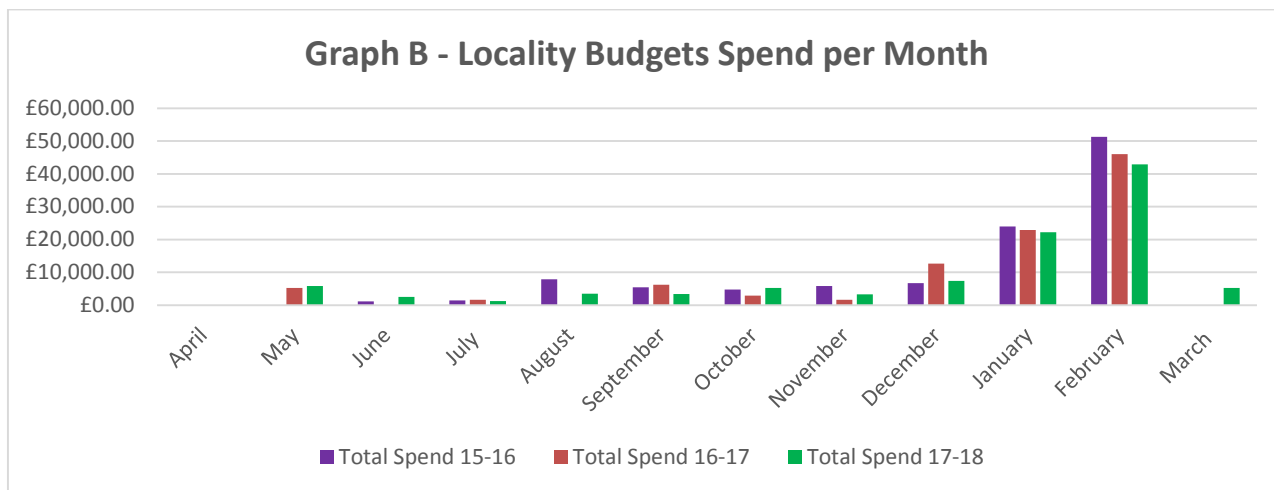
- 5.1** The below graphs show the rate of the application process across the year. Each shows a comparison over the last three financial years.

- 5.2** Graph A shows the number of applications being submitted and processed each month throughout the year. This demonstrates a pattern across the three years where a large proportion of applications are received in the last two months of the process, with the highest number in February.

- 5.3** In 2017-18, approximately £42.8k was processed in February. In the last two years, applications have been received after the February deadline, despite various reminders.



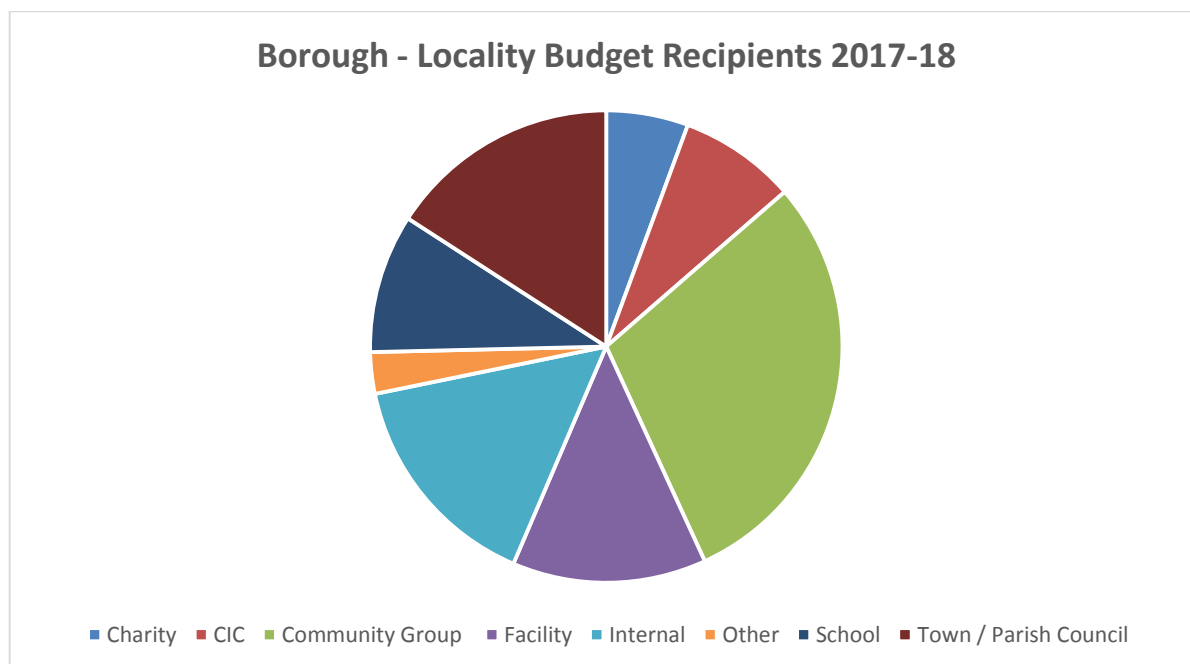
- 5.4** Graph B shows the amount of locality budget contributions processed and transferred through the year. This data shows an identical pattern in relation to submitted applications. The majority of total funds are processed in the last month.



5.5 See appendix A for a breakdown of Spend per Zone and Appendix B for details of unspent funds and carry forwards each year.

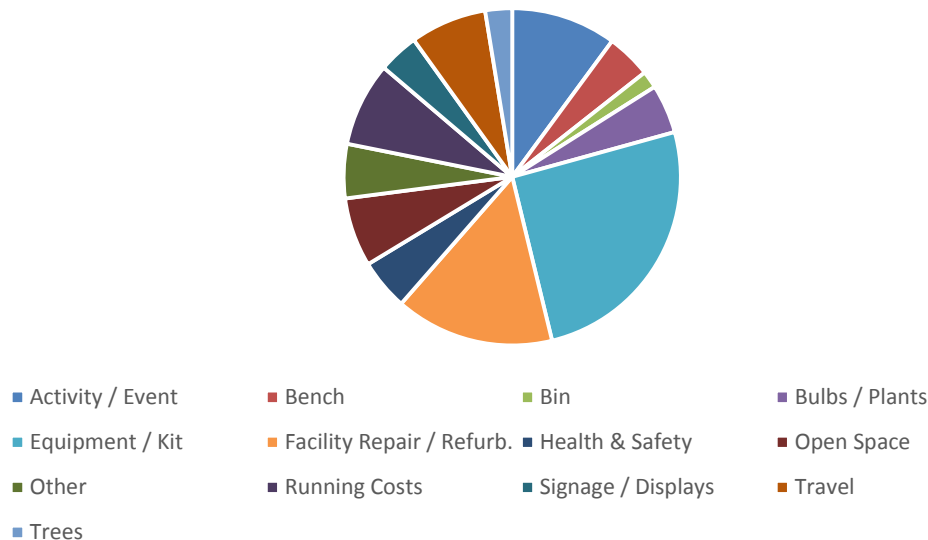
6. Borough Wide Summary

6.1 The table bellows shows that across the Borough as a whole in 2017-18, community groups are the most common recipient of locality budget funding, followed closely by internal services and products.



6.2 Across the Borough as whole in 2017-18, equipment and kit was the most popular category of contribution (as shown in table below). This includes a variety of activities and equipment which serves community groups and services. Repair and refurbishments to community facilities was the second most popular contribution.

Borough - Locality Budget Projects 2017-18



7. Good Practice

7.1 Plan early

Early planning alongside engagement with Communities and fellow Ward Councillors is likely to result in the most effective use of locality budgets.

7.2 Engage

A Ward Cllr lead application process open to local groups with a requirement to submit a 'mirror application' by a set deadline to the Ward Councillor can both engage the public and reduce the workload for the Ward Councillor who then merely needs to transfer the information from their chosen applications to the online form.

7.2 Avoid panic spending

Last minute spend often leads to having to make quick decisions about spend that may not provide the best enabling opportunities for communities so as part of the planning agree to get spend requests in well before the deadline date.

7.3 Size may matter

Consider how pooling of locality budgets with fellow Ward Councillors may enable something more significant to happen.

7.4 Follow up

Councillors have flexibility to spend their locality budgets on many things but they also have the responsibility of ensuring this has no revenue implications for the Council, could not place the Council or them as individuals in disrepute and that the money is spent in the agreed way. Thinking about how you check or get feedback from your applicants should be part of your approach.

8. Review and Improvement

Each year the portfolio holder receives feedback on the locality budget spend for the previous year and works with officers to look at ways to make improvements

going forward. For 2018/19 the following changes have been included in the process:

- 8.1** In line with both the Councils digital strategy and to ensure the process is as efficient as possible all applications received from Councillors must now be electronic and made using the online application process. Help and guidance will still be available where needed.
- 8.2** Work with Councillors to avoid last minute rush spending in February. This is both resource intensive and potentially reduces the opportunities for community enabling. Officers will increase reminders and have developed a quick guide to support Councillors.
- 8.3** The minimum spend for each individual application will increase from £50 to £100. At £50 it is possible for over 2000 individual applications (up to 40 per Cllr). Increasing the minimum spend to £100 still provides flexibility and up to 20 individual applications per Councillor but will reduce to a maximum of 735 Locality Budget applications across the whole scheme thereby reducing administrative burden.
- 8.4** A well planned and implemented local approach will negate the need to request a carry forward of Locality Budget. However it is recognised that in exceptional circumstances carrying a budget forward may result in a better project or be unavoidable. Officers will continue to work with Cllrs to limit carry forward requests in all but the most unavoidable instances.
- 8.5** A robust monitoring process will be introduced; resource will be committed from the Community Development Team to take responsibility for this. All contributions of £1000 or more will be monitored, as well as a random 5% sample from the year. Councillors will be contacted to confirm that the item or product has been bought or delivered and a record kept. Monitoring information will be incorporated in an end of year report.

9. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 9.1** There are no Equality, Diversity or Human Rights implications.

10. Standard References

- 10.1** There are no particular references to the Strategic Plan; consultation or publicity considerations or financial; community safety; health and safety or risk management implications.

11. Health and Wellbeing implications

- 11.1** The projects and services provided through use of the Locality Budget funding should have a positive impact on health and wellbeing of local residents and visitors to the Borough.

12. Appendices

- 12.1** Appendix A – Breakdown of spend per zone

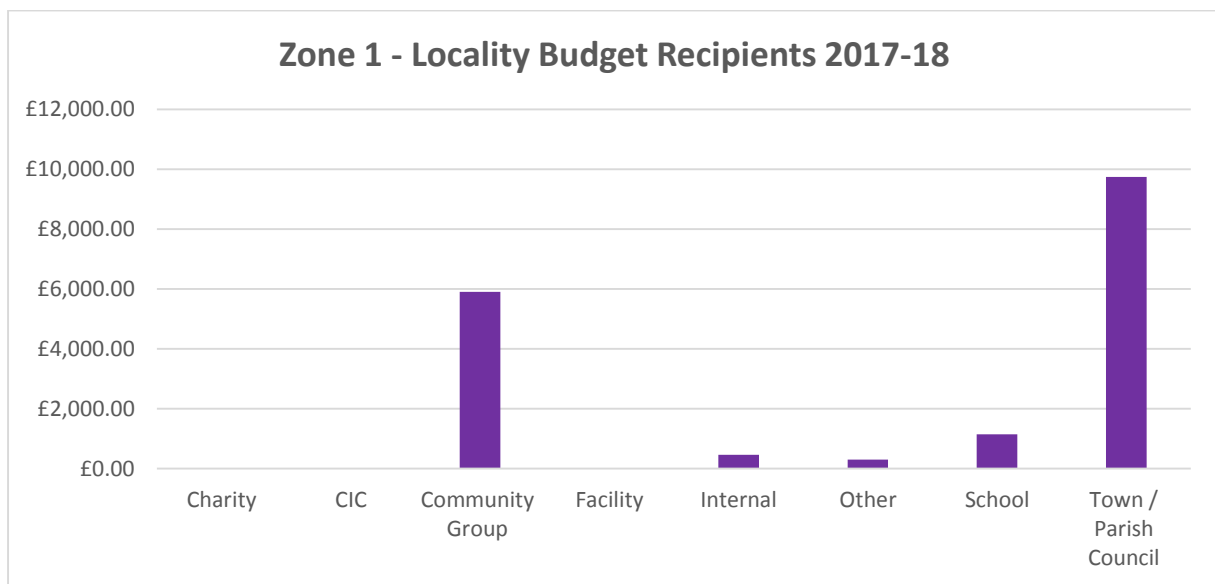
12.2 Appendix B – Unspent funds and carry forward per year

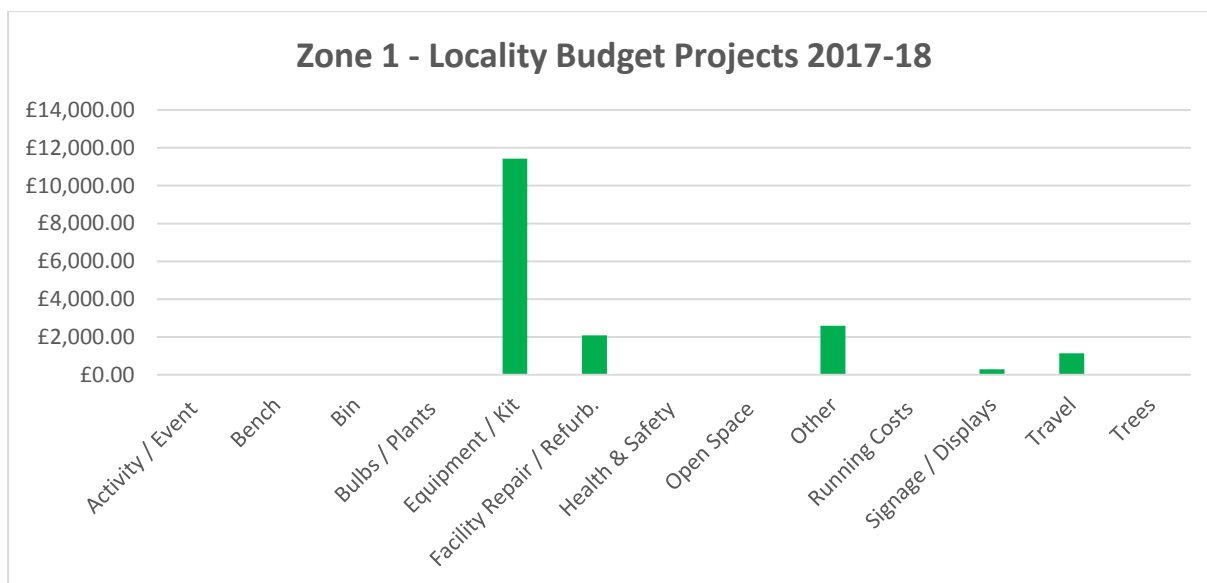
Appendix A - Funding spent across the Borough

Locality Budgets support a variety of recipients in communities. There are some trends. Below provides a breakdown of the percentile spend across the borough per zone, showing a comparison between the different areas.

ZONE 1

| Zone | Wards | Councillors |
|--------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Zone 1 | Marks Tey & Layer | Kevin Bentley |
| | | Andrew Ellis |
| | | Jackie MacLean |
| | Mersea & Pyefleet | Robert Davidson |
| | | John Jowers |
| | | Patricia Moore |
| | Tiptree | John Elliott |
| | | Derek Loveland |
| | | Barbara Wood |

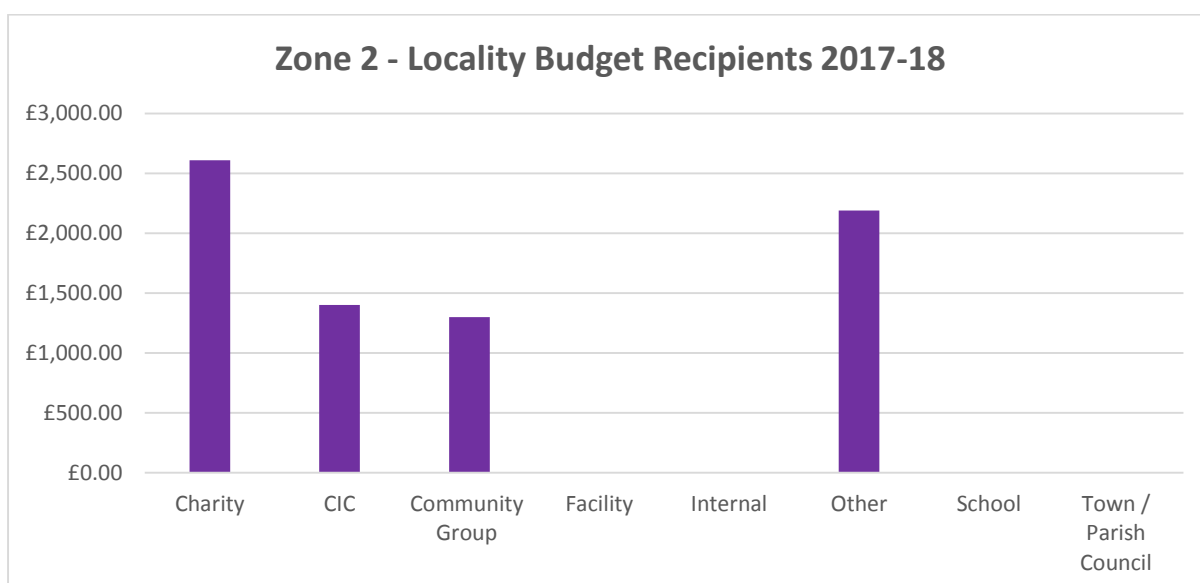


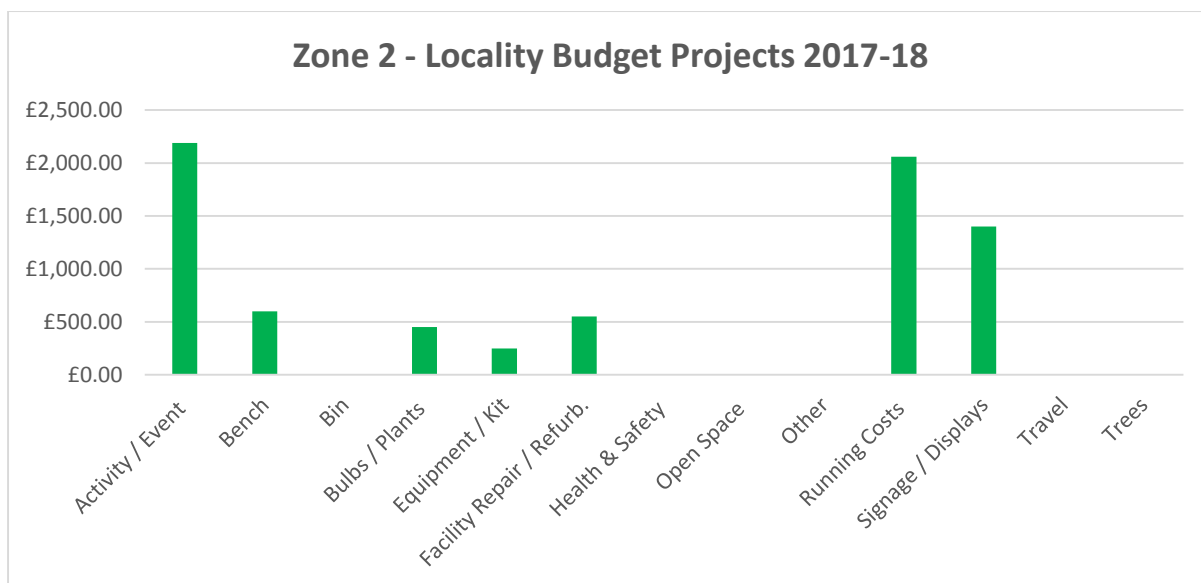


Zone 1 Summary - contributed the most funding to Town and Parish Council when compared to other zones. All wards supported the supply of chairs, tables and other equipment to parish offices. Additional security such as CCTV and fencing also benefitted from the funding. An extended footpath across Layer Marney Green and Community Groups such as the Tiptree Scouts and the Friends of the Mersea Parish Church received funding for equipment and repairs.

ZONE 2

| Zone | Wards | Councillors |
|--------|--------|--------------|
| Zone 2 | Castle | Nick Barlow |
| | | Darius Laws |
| | | Daniel Ellis |

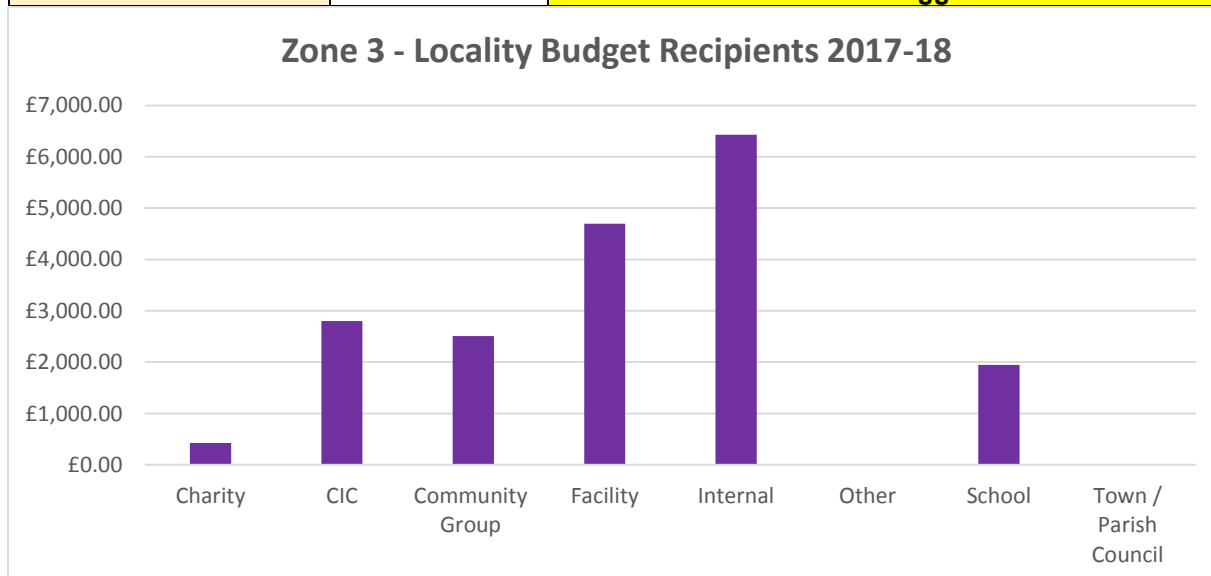


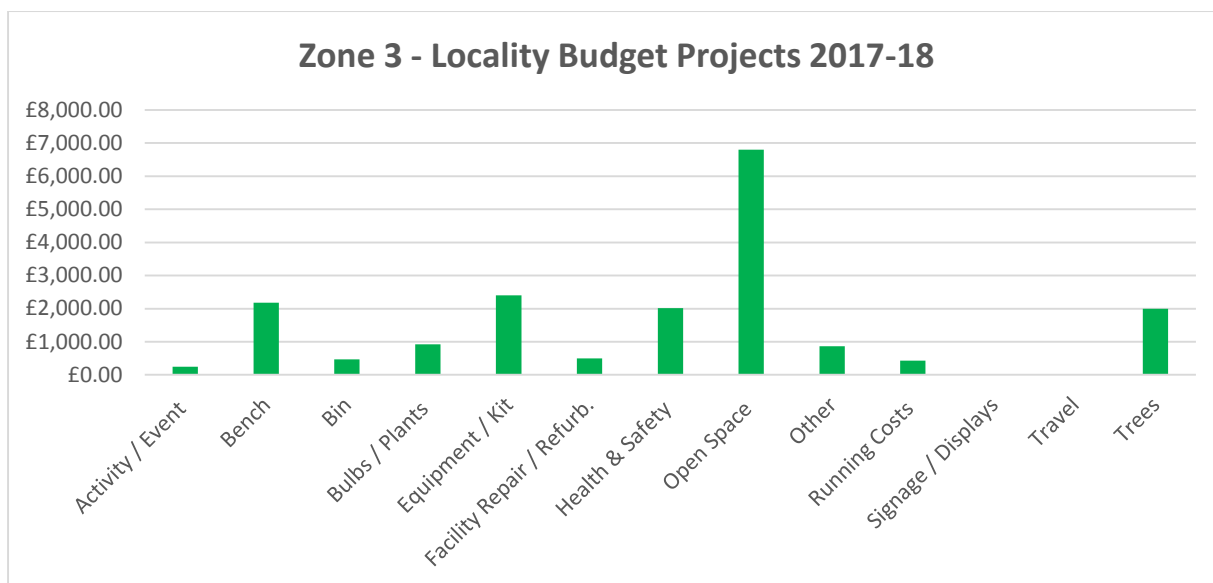


Zone 2 Summary - supported a variety of projects. Heritage projects, such as lighting Jumbo and the John Worland memorial featured heavily, along with supporting the running costs of homeless charities in particular.

ZONE 3

| Zone | Wards | Councillors |
|--------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Zone 3 | Highwoods | Beverley Oxford |
| | | Gerard Oxford |
| | | Philip Oxford |
| | Mile End | Phil Coleman |
| | | Martin Goss |
| | | Dominic Graham |
| | St Annes & St Johns | Helen Chuah |
| | | Paul Smith |
| | | Mike Hogg |

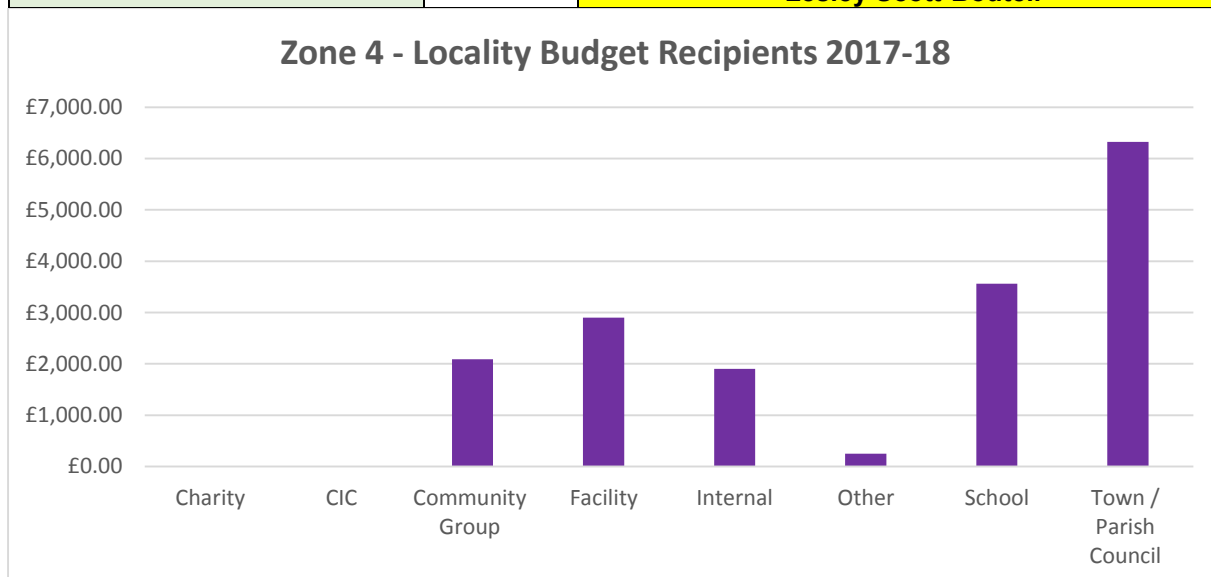


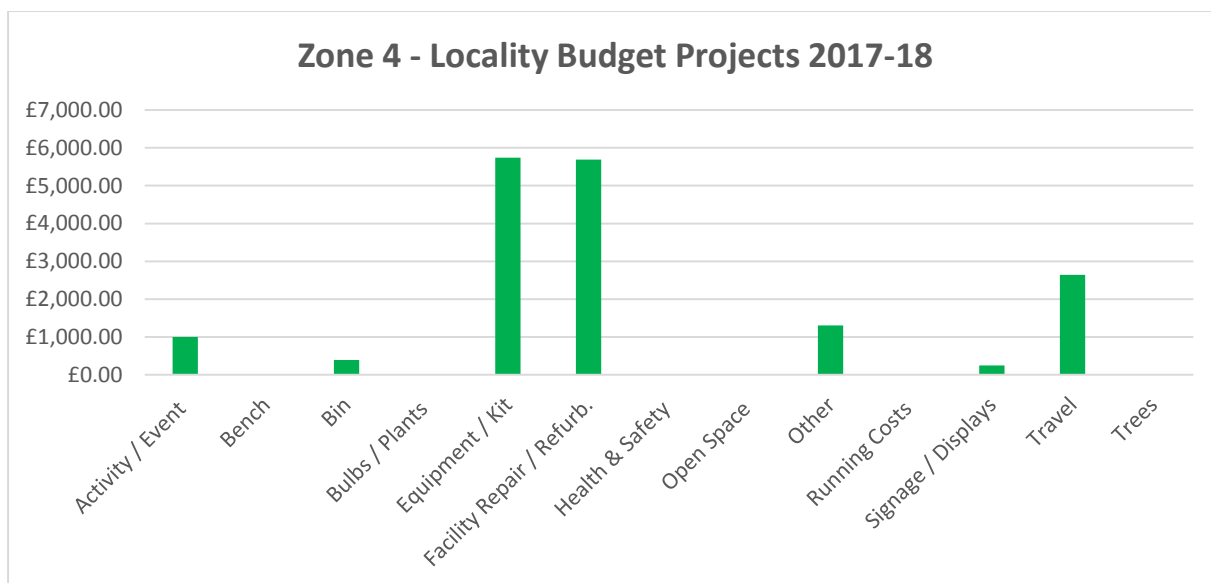


Zone 3 Summary - concentrated largely on supporting open space projects; trees, bulbs benches and bins all featured which improved the outside areas of these wards. St. John's & St. Anne's contributed to the local community centre but this also supported the community garden. Highwoods Councillors supported the garden project, and Highwoods in Bloom. Mile End ward supported the local schools also.

ZONE 4

| Zone | Wards | Councillors |
|--------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Zone 4 | Lexden & Braiswick | Lewis Barber |
| | | Brian Jarvis |
| | | Dennis Willets |
| | Rural North | Christopher Arnold |
| | | Nigel Chapman |
| | | Peter Chillingworth |
| | Stanway | Fiona MacLean |
| | | Jessica Scott-Boutell |
| | | Lesley Scott-Boutell |

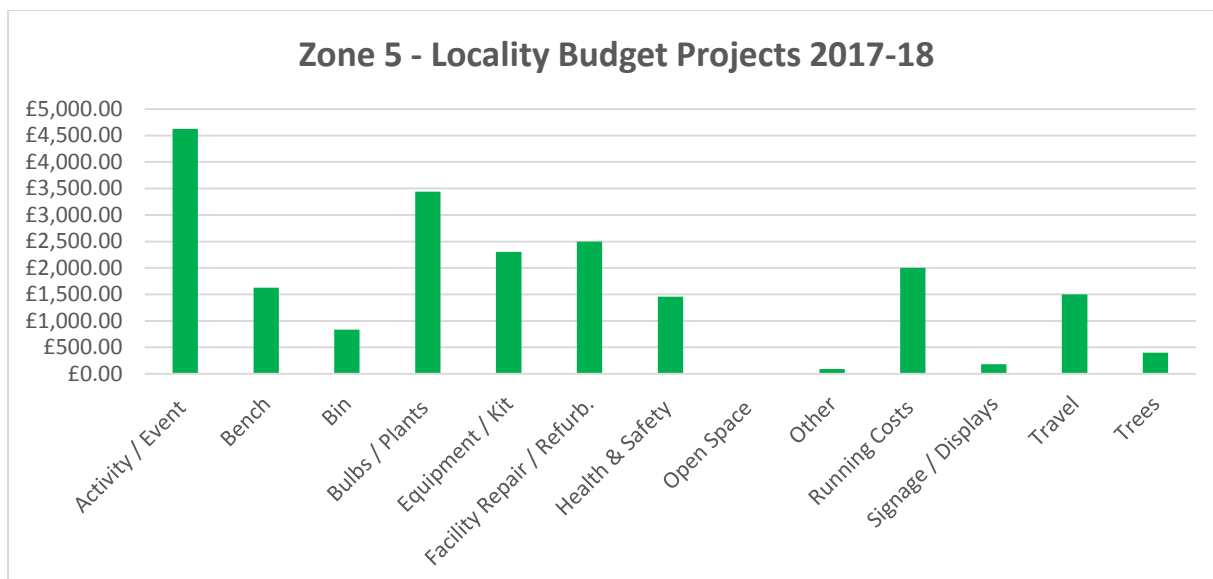
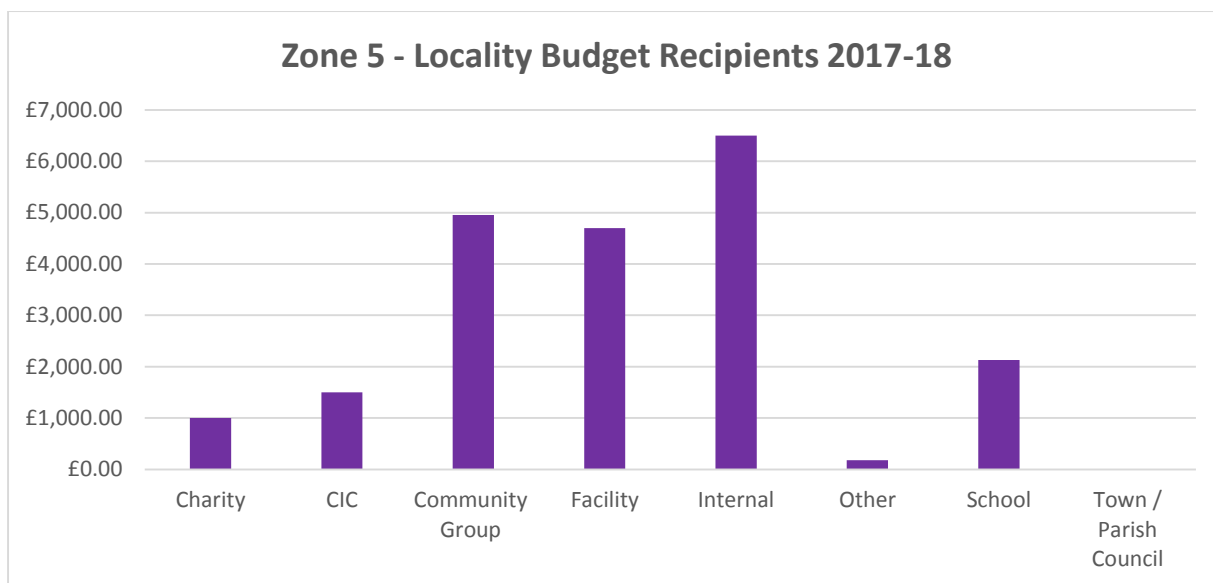




Zone 4 Summary - Parish Councils were supported most and projects included a lot of facility repairs and equipment for groups. Lexden & Braiswick included supplying funding for football kits and other equipment for youth services, along with a garden event, and repairs to two local churches. Rural North supported six different Parish Council projects ranging from new equipment to repairs. Stanway schools were supported by local Councillors with funding towards travel plans and scooter equipment.

ZONE 5

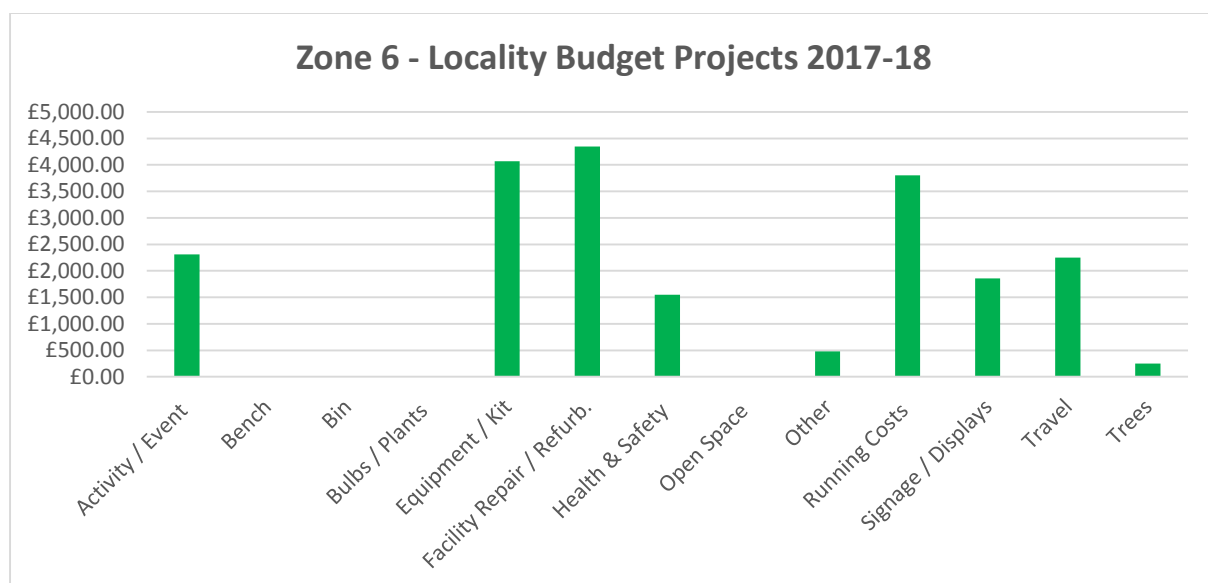
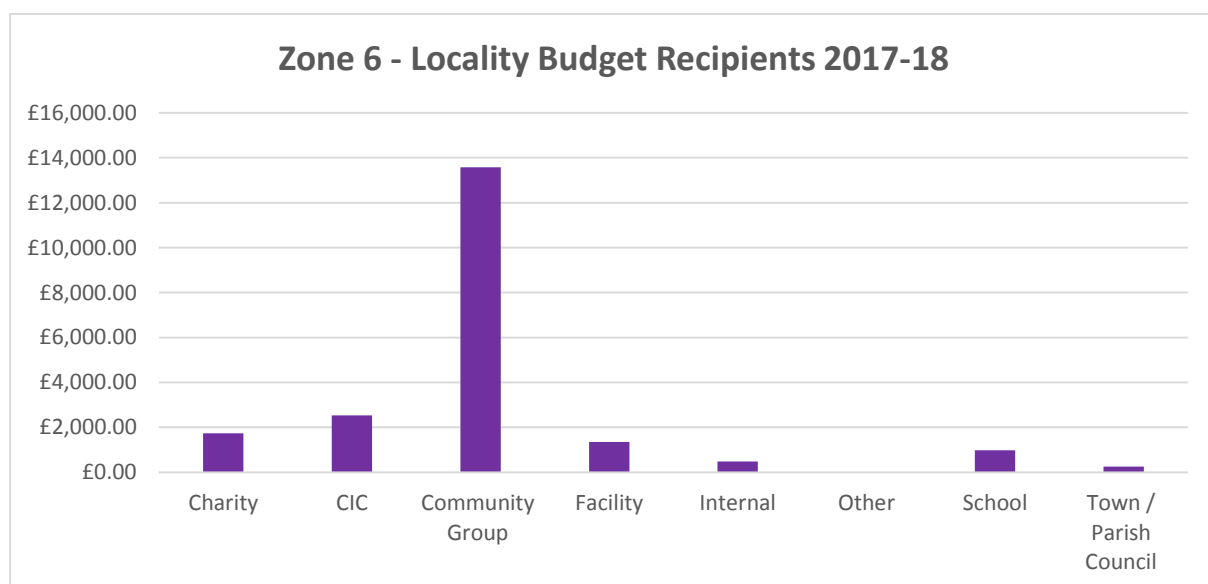
| Zone | Wards | Councillors |
|--------|------------------------|-----------------|
| Zone 5 | Berechurch | Dave Harris |
| | | Martyn Warnes |
| | | Chris Pearson |
| | Newtown & Christchurch | Annie Feltham |
| | | Nick Cope |
| | | Theresa Higgins |
| | Prettygate | Roger Buston |
| | | Beverly Davies |
| | | Sue Lissimore |
| | Shrub End | Vic Flores |
| | | Pauline Hazel |
| | | Lyn Barton |



Zone 5 Summary - Contributions served various community groups, and facilities, along with improvements to outside space in the area. Berechurch supported various Fun-day events, travel services and bulbs. New Town supported The Recreation Ground at Old Heath Road, and the GO4 café within this, St John's Green primary school, and the running costs of local organisations such as Beacon House. Prettygate contributed largely to plants, trees and a replacement bin, and also disabled toilets and first aid equipment. Shrub End focussed on shrubs, plants, trees and benches.

ZONE 6

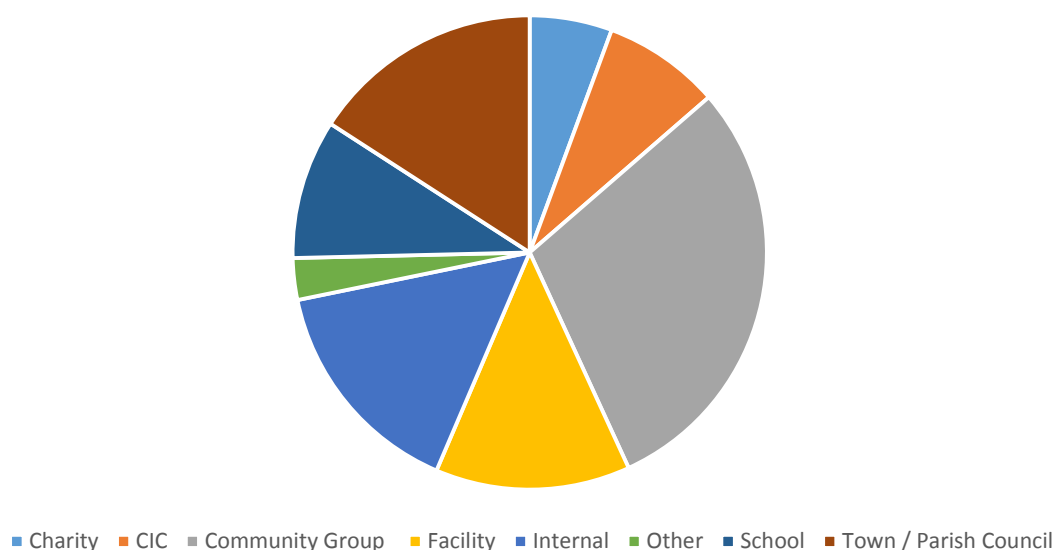
| Zone | Wards | Councillors |
|--------|-------------------|----------------|
| Zone 6 | Greenstead | Tina Bourne |
| | | Julie Young |
| | | Tim Young |
| | Old Heath & Hythe | Adam Fox |
| | | Mike Lilley |
| | | Lee Scordis |
| | Wivenhoe | Mark Cory |
| | | Rosalind Scott |
| | | Cyril Liddy |



Zone 6 Summary - supported community groups more than any other zone, with all Councillors contributing to an array of groups, to help with supplying equipment and running costs, to specific projects such a new floodlight at Wivenhoe FC, and renewing the skate park.

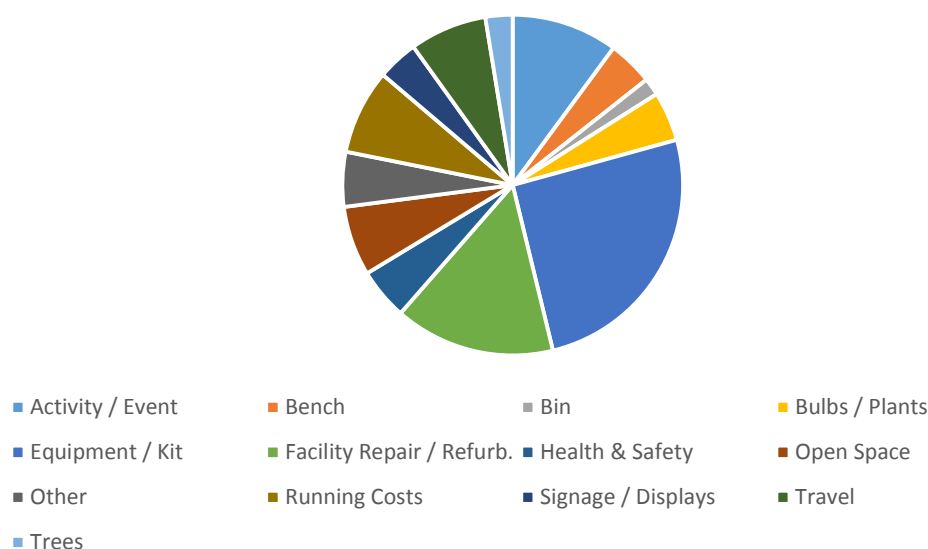
BOROUGH-WIDE SUMMARY

Borough - Locality Budget Recipients 2017-18



Across the Borough as a whole in 2017-18, community groups are the most common recipient of locality budget funding, followed closely by internal services and products.

Borough - Locality Budget Projects 2017-18



Across the Borough as whole in 2017-18, equipment and kit was the most popular category of contribution. This includes an array of activity to administration equipment which serves community groups and services. Repair and refurbishments to community facilities was the second most popular contribution.

LOCALITY BUDGETS - FIVE YEAR SUMMARY

In 2012, Locality Budgets were introduced for a two-year period, and administrated by the Democratic Services. In year three, 2014-15, there was no budget though underspend from the previous year was saved for related Councillors. In 2015, a Cabinet decision determined the relaunch of Locality Budgets, and the administration was passed to the Community Development Team.

| | 2012-12 | 2013-14 | 2014-15* | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | 2017-18 |
|----------------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|
| Budget | 120,000.00 | 134,000.00 | 34,000.00 | 120,000.00 | 113,000.00 | 112,000.00 |
| Spend | 105,703.59 | 95,162.04 | 8,221.55 | 98,618.36 | 99,758.33 | 102,767.79 |
| Underspend | 0.00 | 0.00 | 25,778.45 | 4,700.00 | 7,769.29 | 2,488.09 |
| Carry Forward | 14,296.41 | 32,837.96 | 0.00 | 10,695.96 | 10,137.58 | 7,020.14 |

2014-15*

There was no budget allocated for LB this year, though underspend was carried over from the previous year. This was secured for the 22 Councillors who underspent in 2013-14

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| 2012-13 Summary | 32x Cllrs did not spend all their budget, of these; 12x Conservative 15x Liberal Democrat 5x Labour |
| 2013-14 Summary | 38x Cllrs did not spend all their budget, of these; 13x Conservative 16x Liberal Democrat 6x Labour 3x Highwoods Independents |
| 2014-15 Summary* | |
| 2015-16 Summary | 21x Cllrs did not spend all their budget, of these; 8x Conservative 8x Liberal Democrat 4x Labour 1x Highwoods Independents |
| 2016-17 Summary | 30x Cllrs did not spend all their budget, of these; 14x Conservative 8x Liberal Democrat 7x Labour 1x Highwoods Independents |
| 2017-18 Summary | 17x Cllrs did not spend all their budget, of these; 7x Conservative 5x Liberal Democrat 5x Labour |

LOCALITY BUDGETS - THREE YEAR SUMMARY

| | 2015-16 | | 2016-17 | | 2017-18 | |
|-----------------------|---------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| Councillor | Carry Forward | Unspent | Carry Forward | Unspent | Carry Forward | Unspent |
| Christopher Arnold | 668.50 | | | 31.50 | | |
| Lewis Barber | | | 798.72 | | | 697.00 |
| Lyn Barton | 400.00 | | 112.00 | | 340 Installation of picnic bench | |
| Kevin Bentley | 354.00 | | 550.00 | | 76.02 Digital Spokes project | 76.02 |
| Elizabeth Blundell | | 800.00 | | | | |
| Vic Flores | | | | | 2000 War Memorial | |
| Nigel Chapman | 758.61 | | 296.39 | | | |
| Peter Chillingworth | | | 530.00 | | | |
| Mark Cory | | | 1900.00 | | | |
| John Elliott | 739.23 | | | 2200.00 | | |
| Daniel Ellis | | | 775.00 | | | |
| Annie Feltham | 50.00 | | 100.00 | | | |
| Adam Fox | | | 1087.00 | | | 150.00 |
| Bill Frame | | 1500.00 | | | | |
| Martin Goss | 1625.00 | | | 50.00 | | |
| Dominic Graham | 1875.00 | | 1050.00 | | | |
| Annesley Hardy | | 100.00 | | | | |
| Dave Harris | 611.67 | | 209.66 | | | 30.35 |
| Pauline Hazell | | | 100.00 | | | |
| Thersea Higgins | 1050.00 | | | 50.00 | 1500 Friends of The Recreation Ground | |
| Brian Jarvis | | | 256.73 | | | 196.00 |
| Darius Laws | 250.00 | | 727.00 | | | |
| Mike Lilley | | | | | | 30.00 |
| Derek Loveland | | | | 1000.00 | | |
| Jackie MacLean | 250.00 | | | 50.00 | 980 Digital Spokes project | |
| Fiona Maclean | | | | 2000.00 | 353.06 Digital Spokes project | |
| Jon Manning | | 1700.00 | | | | |
| Kim Naish | | 600.00 | | 234.00 | | |
| Nigel Offen | | | | 2000.00 | | |
| Gerard Oxford | 663.88 | | | 45.00 | | |
| Chris Pearson | 611.66 | | 209.67 | | | 30.36 |
| Lee Scordis | | | 128.40 | | | |
| Jessica Scott-Boutell | | | | | 747 Mixed Bulbs | |
| Lesley Scott-Boutell | | | | | 743.06 Mixed Bulbs | |
| Paul Smith | 748.60 | | | 48.60 | 281 Mixed Bulbs | |
| Martyn Warnes | | | 221.34 | | | 32.36 |
| Dennis Willetts | | | 1085.67 | | | 1246.00 |
| Tim Young | 39.81 | | | 60.19 | | |
| TOTALS: | £10,695.96 | £4,700.00 | £10,137.58 | £7,769.29 | £7,020.14 | £2,488.09 |
| Total unspent: | £15,395.96 | | £17,906.87 | | £9,508.23 | |

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| 2015-16 Summary | 21x Cllrs did not spend all their budget, of these; 8x Conservative 8x Liberal Democrat 4x Labour 1x Highwoods Independents |
| 2016-17 Summary | 30x Cllrs did not spent all their budget, of these; 14x Conservative 8x Liberal Democrat 7x Labour 1x Highwoods Independents |
| 2017-18 Summary | 17x Cllrs did not spend all their budget, of these; 7x Conservative 5x Liberal Democrat 5x Labour |

| Councillors who HAVEN'T underspend / carried forward over past 3x years | | | |
|---|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Nick Barlow | Tina Bourne | Rodger Buston | Beverley Oxford |
| Helen Chuah | Cyril Liddy | Robert Davidson | Philip Oxford |
| Philip Coleman | Julie Young | Beverley Davies | |
| Nick Cope | | John Elliott | |
| Mike Hogg | | Andrew Ellis | |
| | | John Jowers | |
| | | Sue Lissimore | |
| | | Patricia Moore | |
| | | Barbara Wood | |

| Total applications received | | |
|-----------------------------|---------|---------|
| 2015-16 | 2016-17 | 2017-18 |
| 142 | 135 | 173 |

| Councillor | Total Apps submitted 2017-18 |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Mark Cory | 16 |
| Peter Chillingworth | 10 |
| Dave Harris | 9 |
| Chris Pearson | 9 |
| Martyn Warnes | 9 |
| Cyril Liddy | 9 |
| Rosalind Scott | 9 |
| Christopher Arnold | 9 |
| Nigel Chapman | 9 |
| Daniel Ellis | 8 |
| Darius Laws | 8 |