

Record of decision taken under delegated powers by a council officer



Title:	Your Fund Surrey Application – CORE JUDO ACADEMY
Divisions Affected:	Foxhills, Thorpe & Virginia Water Division – Jonathan Hulley
Key Decision:	No
Decision taken under delegation by virtue of:	Cabinet/ Committee decision Cabinet 21st July 2020 Min Ref: 112/20 COMMUNITY PROJECTS FUND [Item 10] Link

Summary

This decision record sets out the key information for publication on the decision by the Executive Director for Customer and Communities to approve expenditure for a Your Fund Surrey project located in Thorpe Green. The agreed recommendations are set out below on the face of this decision record. Details on the project are set out in the Decision Report as an annex to this record.

Decisions made

It was AGREED

1. To fund project CF115 for the full £68,000 requested, composed of:
 - £64,459 of capital funding towards the extension build and equipment to be paid in staged payments, on evidence of spend.
 - £3,541 (5%) contingency to be held by Surrey County Council (SCC) only for use on evidenced need and until final evidence of income, expenditure and evaluation is received.
2. To approve following conditions for the applicant to be included within the funding agreement:
 - Confirmation of Runnymede Borough Council (RBC) lease before any payments are released.
 - To encourage the applicant to use all possible measures identified to increase sustainability and reduce environmental impact during construction and operation of the facility.
 - To encourage the applicant to consider all reasonable measures which could be undertaken to expand the reach and use of the facility. In particular to work closely with RBC and the local voluntary sector.

Reasons for Decisions:

These decisions are to enable expenditure from the Your Fund Surrey to be awarded to a project which have been the subject of a rigorous assessment process by officers, as set out in Annex 1.

Officers consider the project to meet the aims and published criteria of the fund and to satisfy the requirements to award funding, the project has been further considered by the Your Fund Advisory Panel.

Decisions taken by:	Marie Snelling - Executive Director of Customer and Communities
Decisions taken on:	19 August 2022
To be implemented on:	19 August 2022

Alternative options considered

N/A

Summary of any financial implications

This project that has been approved for funding and has been through the due diligence and agreed governance process.

Cabinet agreed in July 2020 the funding for these projects will be drawn from the £100m of capital funding allocated to Your Fund Surrey within the Capital Programme.

Cabinet agreed in July 2020 to establish a core team to manage the delivery of the fund and risks associated with it, funded from the Corporate Feasibility budget.

Declarations of conflicts of interest

None

Consultation/Process Followed

Decision taken in consultation with Cllr Mark Nuti, Cabinet Member for Communities and following Your Fund Surrey Advisory panel review.

Background Documents

Exempt:

Annex 1 – Your Fund Surrey Decision Report CF115 Core Judo Academy

No



THINK **BIG**

Your Fund Surrey - Delegated Officer Decision Report

DATE: 19th May 2022

SUBJECT: YOUR FUND SURREY APPLICATION – CORE JUDO ACADEMY

PROJECT NAME: THORPE GREEN COMMUNITY FITNESS AND PUBLIC AMENITIES PROJECT

CF REFERENCE: CF115

Purpose of the Report:

This decision record sets out the key information for publication on the decision by the Executive Director for Customer and Communities to approve expenditure for a Your Fund Surrey project located in Thorpe Green.

This is to enable expenditure from the Your Fund Surrey to be awarded to projects which have been objectively scored and assessed to meet the criteria for Your Fund Surrey by Officers and further considered by the Your Fund Advisory Panel.

The vision of Your Fund Surrey (YFS) is to bring community-led and place-making projects to life, with a focus on wider community benefit that leaves a real legacy.

Recommendations:

Officer Recommendations in consultation with the Advisory Panel. It is recommended:

3. To fund project CF115 for the full £68,000 requested, composed of:

- £64,459 of capital funding towards the extension build and equipment to be paid in staged payments, on evidence of spend.
- £3,541 (5%) contingency to be held by Surrey County Council (SCC) only for use on evidenced need and until final evidence of income, expenditure and evaluation is received.

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- Confirmation of Runnymede Borough Council (RBC) lease before any payments are released.
- To encourage the applicant to use all possible measures identified to increase sustainability and reduce environmental impact during construction and operation of the facility.
- To encourage the applicant to consider all reasonable measures which could be undertaken to expand the reach and use of the facility. In particular to work closely with RBC and the local voluntary sector.

Reason for Recommendations

1. This application has been the subject of a rigorous assessment process by officers, as set out in the body of this report. Officers consider the project to meet the aims and published criteria of the fund and to satisfy the requirements to award funding.

Executive Summary

2. Thorpe Green is located in the Electoral Division of Foxhills, Thorpe & Virginia Water in the Borough of Runnymede. It is in the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) decile 9, however it is adjacent to Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) of higher deprivation, in deciles 5 and 3 of Longcross, Lyne & Chertsey South and Chertsey St Ann's respectively.
3. The Thorpe Green Community Fitness and Public Amenities Project will provide a new community use car park and outdoor community fitness space. The overall aim of this project is to get more people utilising the green open spaces of Thorpe Green, improving social interaction through promoting active healthy lifestyles.
4. The installation of a community fitness space catering for different fitness levels and focussing on the younger and older members of the community. It will include calisthenic type fitness equipment appealing to younger and fitter members of the community and oak wooden equipment which is more attractive to younger children, older demographics and those who are new to fitness.
5. The community car park will allow greater access to these new amenities as well as encourage use of the green spaces of Thorpe Green. Dog walkers, young families, older residents, and disabled users will have a car park which caters for them. The introduction of bike hoops will allow more green transport use. The project can be accessed via footpaths and the surrey cycleway. Access from local communities via these footpaths and cycleways links Thorpe Village, Stroud and Egham to these proposed amenities linking different areas of the borough.
6. The Core Judo Club is a Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC) registered with HMRC. If they were to dissolve, assets would go to another CASC or the sports' governing body to remain in community use. Fitness equipment and responsibility for the car park would revert to RBC (Runnymede Borough Council) as it is on their land and they insure and inspect the fitness equipment.
7. Core Judo have experience of delivering projects through recently completing the re-build of the new build judo club for £250,000. Costings were projected at £400,000 however a lower value was achieved through having a rigorous material sourcing process, using known contractors and volunteer contributions both in terms of materials, manpower and expertise. The planning permission granted for the Judo Club building also included the car park and fitness area works.
8. RBC have confirmed their support and permission for the project through their contribution 'in kind' to the maintenance and inspection of the community fitness amenity as well as insuring the new equipment within its existing outdoor gym equipment insurance.
9. It is planned to introduce more activities on the Green such as walks for the elderly and those with dementia; a new 5km bike to park run and the on-site café to be meeting point to reduce isolation for members of the community

10. The Core Judo Academy gives back to the community through funding over 40 scholars who do not pay tuition. They have also partnered with Belron, so their Friday scholars can receive free healthy evening meals for them and their family. Freshly prepared healthy meals are prepared on the Belron main site and distributed from the judo club – this program will continue weekly for the foreseeable future. The club also runs the Surrey Youth Games Judo competition.
11. Core Judo also propose to install, from their own funding and not part of this funding request, a passing bay on the access road to ease congestion on Green Road and a stretch of footpath for users, so they are safer on this narrow stretch of road. This road is a Highway and they are undertaking this work in conjunction with RBC. This follows feedback from local residents.

Details

Description of project benefits

12. This project links with the needs and aims identified in the Runnymede 2035, 2016 Open spaces plan that states – ‘A large part of the Borough does not meet the recommended accessibility standard for the Amenity Green Spaces classification, in particular the areas of Ottershaw and Virginia Water.’ It also states, ‘All areas of the Borough should provide, where practicable, outdoor sports facility provision, play provision and allotments to meet future need over the plan period up to 2035.’
13. This project also links with the 2019 Surrey Health and Well-being Strategy, which states that, ‘A whole system approach to physical activity including improving green spaces, transport initiatives and healthy planning’ and ‘Promotion of healthy, inclusive and safe places through planning and transport policies’.
14. Officers consider the project contributes towards the following areas of the SCC priorities 2021-2026:

Growing a sustainable economy so everyone can benefit

- Increase in trade, more customers likely to the Rose and Crown Pub. More customers to the Core Judo Academy through increased use of car park facility and greater awareness of this sports club
- Increased local volunteers maintaining the car park and reducing litter.

Tackling health inequality

- Increase in users of outside space for wellbeing, physical and mental health

Enabling a greener future

- Installation of bicycle storage and electric vehicle (EV) charging points to increase sustainable transport methods
- New resurfaced car park using sustainable materials to be agreed with RBC (as an alternative to tarmac) including disabled parking bays will encourage greater accessibility to the Green
- Natural materials used in the outdoor fitness equipment
- Transforming existing wasteland into to community amenities
- Increased car parking will reduce parking on grass verges and near tree roots and wildflower reducing impact on plants and fauna on access road and Green

Empowering communities

- Reduction in fly tipping, anti-social behaviour and traveller incursions increasing public confidence to use the area and community cohesion
- Increase in customers to the onsite café and community benefit of local meeting point and place to interact for elderly and young mothers reducing social isolation
- Accessible community facilities encouraging more users, as a meeting place and rest stop to promote a greater sense of belonging and reduce social isolation

Project Timeframes

15. The project timeframes are approximately five to six weeks, comprised of:
- 15.1. Preparation of new car park and drainage, followed by resurfacing
 - 15.2. Installation of outdoor fitness equipment
 - 15.3. Landscaping

Management of the project

16. The project will be managed by a working group of 5 people from Core Judo, each assigned different roles complimenting their areas of expertise, including an Engineer, Consultant Project Manager, Building Contractor, Operations Manager and Lead Project Manager
17. The Core Judo Academy will maintain the car park for a 10-year period, as per the requirement of the planning permission for the Core Judo Club extension that has already been completed. After this, responsibility will revert to RBC. Core Judo propose to use its volunteer base to perform weekly and monthly inspections and carry out any work where needed. A sinking fund is proposed for this.
18. RBC will contribute 'in kind' costs for weekly, monthly and annual inspections and maintenance of the outdoor fitness equipment. The insurance liability will be covered by RBC by adding this site to their existing outdoor fitness provision. Core Judo will pay for any works outside of the manufacturer's warranty agreements, if necessary, after the annual inspection. Roles and responsibilities will be detailed in the lease with RBC.

Project Lifespan

19. The wooden fitness equipment will not include overhead wooden structures to limit maintenance and risk of associated degradation over time. The metal structures offer longer warranties and are harder wearing and more sustainable in terms of their lifespan.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

20. YFS funding is requested for improvements to the car park adjacent to Thorpe Green and installation of outdoor exercise equipment.
21. Table 1. Financial Summary details the total project cost of £77,450.
22. Table 2. Project Cost Breakdown and Grant Utilisation, itemises the allocation of YFS grant against specific works.
23. As with all applications, there is a risk that construction and purchase costs will increase between application and approval due to the current economic environment. This is

mitigated by the contingency (which will only be released if there is demonstrated need). The applicant has secured quotes that support their costing, and will ultimately be funded based on evidenced, actual spend, up to the amount awarded.

Table 1. Financial summary

Amount applied for:	£68,000
Total project cost:	£ 77,450
Percentage of cost against total:	88%
Have other funding sources been secured?	Yes
Other funding:	£9,450 from Core Judo Club Unsuccessful in the following funding attempts: 1. London Marathon fund 2. Aviva communities fund 3. Biffa Award
Volunteer contributions	Yes £120
Is there a commercial element to the project?	N
Amount suggested for funding:	£68,000

Table 2. Project Cost breakdown and Grant Utilisation:

Activity	Total Cost	YFS Contribution
Car park costs (New car park in its entirety)	£37,788	£37,788
Calisthenic fitness equipment	£21,488	£21,488
Oak fitness equipment	£9,114	£5,184
Timber sleepers for landscaping fitness area	£2,800	£0
Landscaping materials, incidentals	£950	£0
Evaluation (2%)	£1,770	£0
Sub-total	£73,910	£0
Contingency	£3,541	£3,541
Total	£77,450	£68,000

Assessment of the application against the criteria for the fund:

22. This application for funding has been through the due diligence and agreed governance process for the fund, which are publicly available on the County Council website.
23. The application has been subject to a rigorous two step application process involving assessment and scoring by Your Fund Surrey Officers, with input from the Expert hub, a group of specialist Officers providing insight for the eligibility of funding. The application has been assessed and scored independently by three Officers whose scores are then moderated. A summary of the Assessment Report comments against the funds five published scoring criteria are set out in Annex 2.

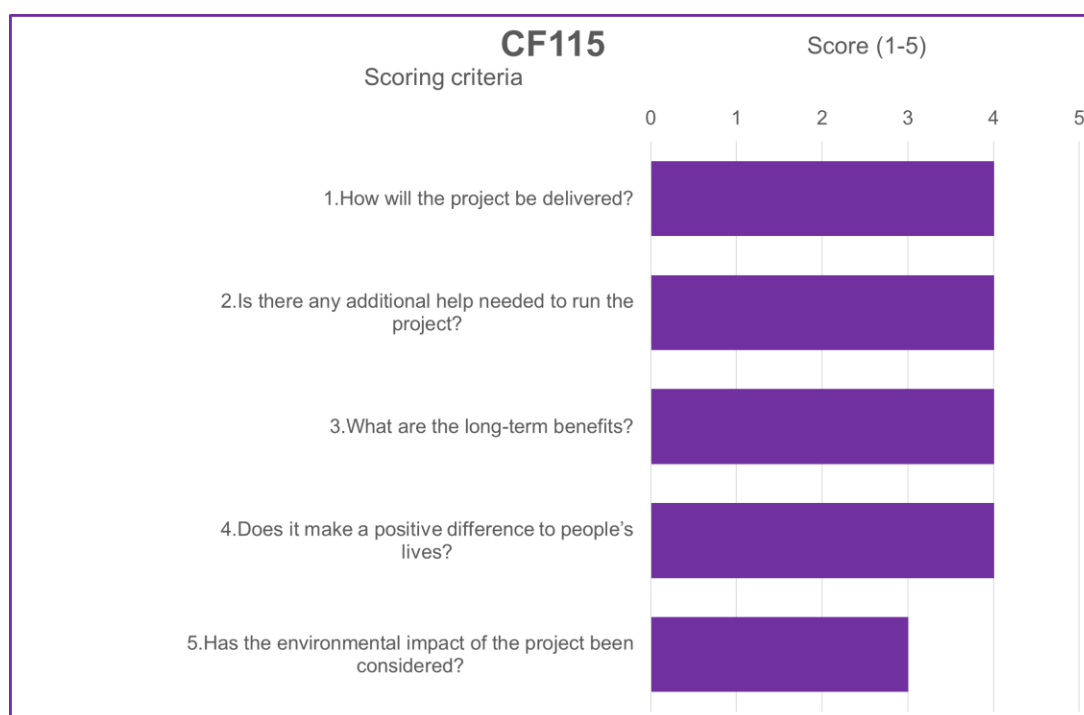
Expert Hub Review

24. Finance – This funding request is for investment into a community area, which will be managed by a local organisation. They are themselves contributing some funding to the project and have tried unsuccessfully to fund raise from elsewhere. The YFS contribution of 88% is relatively low risk given the nature of the project and the positive engagement with the RBC.

Score Breakdown

25. The application scored a total of 365 out of 500 when scored by Officers broken down as follows:

Figure 1. Assessment score breakdown



Advisory Panel Comments

26. The Advisory Panel functions in an advisory capacity and its role is intended to assist formal decision-making processes which sit outside the Panel. The role of the YFS Advisory Panel is to review shortlisted applications following the assessment and scoring of bids by Officers, and to advise and inform the final officer recommendations to the appropriate decision-maker on the proposed funding awards to be made.

27. The Advisory Panel met on 27th July and CF115 was discussed. Panel members were overall positive about the project but required further clarification on the accessibility of the location. The Divisional Councillor for Foxhills, Thorpe and Virginia Water was in attendance and explained how the venue is accessible via foot, bi-cycle and car. Panel members were happy with the response, and all were pleased to recommend the project for funding.

Consultation

Summary of Support

28. Have your say, which had the Thorpe Green Community Fitness and Public Amenities Project featured on the Commonplace website, received 116 comments. There was one negative comment which expressed concern over the increase in traffic down the narrow access road. Annexe 4 includes a copy of the Have Your Say report and a selection of comments received.

29. Letters of support have been received from:

- RBC - Community Development Officer (Sport and Health) (10/05/22)
- RBC – Green Spaces (16/12/21)
- RBC – Community Development (Sport and Health) (Nov 21)
- Neighbour (09/09/19)
- Users x 4 (June 2022)
- Cllr Linda Gillham - Independent Councillor - Thorpe Ward - RBC (14/12/21)
- Cllr Elaine Gill - Mayor of Runnymede & Cllr Thorpe Ward - RBC (14/12/21)
- Chairman Thorpe Ward Resident Association
- Dr Ben Spencer MP (07/04/22)

30. The Divisional Councillor Jonathan Hulley has commented as follows:

“I strongly support this project. The Judo Academy and associated Fitness Project is much needed in the communities of Thorpe and Virginia Water, particularly by younger members of the community who will derive great benefit from this facility”.

Risk Management and Implications:

31. This application for funding has been through the due diligence and agreed governance process. As part of this process the applicant has provided an overview of risks against the project. This is summarised in Table 3 below. Officers consider there to be adequate control measures in place.

Table 3. Summary Table of Risks and Key Mitigations

Risk description	RAG	Mitigation action/strategy
Risk of incident / injury using car park		Flow of car park to be designed so that disabled users have spacious bays, bike hoop users can access the site safely and the flow of the car park is clearly defined with appropriate signage and markings
Risk of incident / injury using exercise equipment		Insured and inspected periodically by RBC. Jointly maintained by Core Judo and RBC.

Section 151 Officer commentary:

32. Although significant progress has been made to improve the Council’s financial position, the medium-term financial outlook beyond 2022/23 remains uncertain. With no clarity on central government funding in the medium term, our working assumption is that financial resources will continue to be constrained, as they have been for the majority of the past decade. This places an onus on the Council to continue to consider issues of financial

sustainability as a priority in order to ensure stable provision of services in the medium term.

33. The long-term sustainability of the projects funded by Your Fund Surrey is a key factor in assessing their suitability. Certain projects are relatively straightforward, where ongoing sustainability relies only on identifying a modest and reasonably secure source of funds to maintain an asset.
34. The finance and commercial assessment is set out in paragraph 24, along with a summary of risk and mitigations set out in paragraph 32. These factors set out alongside the expected benefits of the project have been scrutinised and challenged by officers and are deemed acceptable in this instance. An important consideration is that Your Fund Surrey is a key part of the Council's Empowering Community approach focused upon enabling communities through investing in a meaningful and lasting way. Therefore, the success of Your Fund Surrey will set against establishing a different relationship with communities, empowering them to be more self-reliant. In forging that relationship, the success of individual projects will vary within the benefits delivered by the programme as a whole. Learning points from successful and unsuccessful projects will be taken and used to inform the development and evolution of the fund over time.
35. The borrowing costs associated with the fund have been fully built into the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
36. This is a low value and low risk project, providing assets directly to a community and is widely supported.

Equalities and Diversity:

37. Your Fund is designed to provide investment in schemes that encourage community participation, reduce isolation, and develop the potential for social wellbeing and economic prosperity. As such it is anticipated that it will have a positive impact on a number of those who may rely on or gain support from within the local community and those within protected characteristics that may be more likely to experience social and economic exclusion.
38. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been produced for YFS and was circulated as an Annex to the YFS Cabinet Report 26th January 2021.

Legal implications – Monitoring Officer:

39. The report sets out the information and steps for the consideration of the application further to the Council's governance arrangements for Your Fund Surrey.
40. Further to those arrangements, if approved, the Council and the organisation will enter into a comprehensive funding agreement which will include the performance measures that will be put in place to ensure the funding is used as intended as well as clearly describing any support or additional conditions agreed as part of the funding award.

Other Implications:

41. The potential implications for the following council priorities and policy areas have been considered. Where the impact is potentially significant a summary of the issues is set out in detail in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Implications for council priorities and policy areas

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No direct implications
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children & adults	The Core Judo Club have their own safeguarding procedures.
Environmental sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Installation of bicycle storage and electric vehicle (EV) charging points to increase sustainable transport methods •New resurfaced car park including disabled parking bays will encourage greater accessibility to the Green •Natural materials used in the outdoor fitness equipment and car park •Transforming existing wasteland into to community amenities •Increased car parking will reduce parking on grass verges and near tree roots and wildflower reducing impact on plants and fauna on access road and Green
Public Health	The project has a positive impact on wider health determinants with specific reference to users being encouraged to use outdoor space and increase their physical activity. The project also seeks to enhance social cohesion in an area close to areas of deprivation.

What Happens Next:

- Following Delegated Officer approval of the funding a notice of the records of decisions taken under delegated power, will be published within 3 days of the decision being made. A note of this decision will be included in the YFS Decision Tracker and the next Cabinet report containing an update on Your Fund Surrey.
- Officers will prepare the relevant schedules and funding agreements to enable payment of funds and monitoring and evaluation of the project against its outcomes.
- The YFS Team officers will then issue a provisional offer of funding to the applicant, including a copy of the draft Funding Agreement incorporating any additional conditions.

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Consulted:

Division County Councillor

Corporate finance

Annexes:

Annex 1: Summary Scoring Comments

Sources/background papers:

Your Fund Surrey Governance Document

Annex 1: Summary of Scoring Comments

Criteria 1 - How will the project be delivered?

Quotes have been provided by RBC approved contractors. They have a range of experienced people on board, who have a track record of delivering projects on time, on budget and to a very high standard. The team includes an engineer, 2 project managers and an operations manager.

There is a plan for Core Judo to maintain the car park for 10 years and the fitness equipment. Email letter of support in principle from Runnymede – outcome of committee meeting to confirm council backing not yet provided. No details of legal agreements required from landowner RBC.

Criteria 2 - Is there any additional help needed to run the project?

Sinking fund now evidenced in the cash flow projection will reach £6K after 10 years which will likely be sufficient for patching (rather than resurfacing) the car park.

Might have expected RBC to invest something into this project considering it is improving an amenity for residents.

Criteria 3 - What are the long-term benefits?

They have worked with both local resident associations whose remit this area comes under, both Thorpe Ward Residents association (TWRA) and the Virginia Water neighbourhood forum.

Through listening to feedback, they have modified parts of their proposal, so more age demographics can be catered for. The type of fitness equipment can be used by teenagers as well as older members of the community.

Criteria 4 - Does it make a positive difference to people's lives?

There are a good range of potential users identified, but as to actual engagement with these groups of people is lacking. Aside from elected members, RBC and the TRA, no other evidence of meaningful engagement with other community organisations.

They include information from the 2019 Surrey Health and Well-being Strategy & 2016 Runnymede Open Space Study which evidences the need for a project like theirs in the community.

Criteria 5 - Has the environmental impact of the project been considered?

Renovating the current waste land car park with a new surface and proper drainage to reduce mini lakes of dirty water.

Improving the visual amenity of the landscape, using natural finishes where possible.

CCTV to reduce instances of fly tipping.