

Community Investment Fund

Community Reference Group: Terms of Reference

Oct. 2021

A Community Investment Fund of £1.5 million will be available for people of Southend to make a real difference in their community and help deliver the ambitions of Southend 2050.

The Southend 2050 ambition is bold and challenging and will need all elements of our community to work together to make it a reality. The Community Investment Fund has been created by Southend Borough Council to help build capacity in the community to drive towards achieving the outcomes of Southend 2050.

The fund will not be distributed by the Council but instead, SAVS and Southend Borough Council are working together to recruit 15 volunteers to a Community Investment Board made up of local 'experts by experience' to distribute the funds to the community. Experts by experience are people who have experienced challenges, whether directly or indirectly.

To support the Community Investment Board thinking about where and how to spend this money for the community of Southend, a Community Reference Group will form to bring together local voluntary and community groups, local health and care providers, and local health and social care professionals, to inform the strategy of the Community Investment Board. The group's function is to provide insight. They do not have decision making or executive powers.

Purpose: The purpose of the Community Reference Group is to provide professional expertise and advice to the Community Investment Board to help them identify and agree their priorities, what types of service and support they would like to exist and how it can be delivered.

Advice and expertise provided will include, but is not limited to:

- Advise on priorities of Southend 2050 and where there may be specific challenges.
- Sharing specialist expertise, knowledge and insights.
- Sharing the views of the sector they are representing.
- Provide challenge of any assumptions or recommendations based on inaccurate information.
- Act as an initial reference point and source of expertise to inform the CIB (if requested).

Objectives

1. Support the Community Investment Board in its mission.
2. Advise on the development of the Community Investment Board's strategy
3. Ensure that the Community Investment Board is kept informed of major developments in Southend
4. Serve as a channel of advice within the areas of expertise within the group
5. Offer insights and identify new opportunities and trends

6. Create links between the Community Investment Board and the communities within the relevant sectors for whom their work has particular relevance

The Community Reference Group is not a decision-making body and will not determine how the Community Investment Fund is spent nor will it formally review decisions made by Community Investment Board. By being part of the group members will not be able to enhance their ability to access investment from the community investment fund and board.

Membership

Any member of a Southend voluntary and community group, local health and care providers, and local health and social care professionals can join the Community Reference Group. Organizations based outside of Southend must be working in the area to become a member.

To be a member of the Community Reference Group, you must be part of an organization, body or profession, individuals are not able to join. Only one representative per organization is allowed to join to ensure membership is manageable and no one group is overrepresented at the meeting.

The Community Investment Board is seeking to secure a complementary range of experience and knowledge across the voluntary and health sectors within the Community Reference group

The members are invited to join as a representative of their community / area of work and ensure the focus remains on outcomes for residents of Southend.

The group will not include Southend Borough Council representatives (officers or Council members). The Community Investment Board has set principles with Southend Borough Council around the development of their plans and will consult with them separately. Council members can be members of the group where they are trustees or representatives of a voluntary sector or other organisations; they cannot attend as a representative of Southend Borough Council and will need to declare their interest when attending.

Any costs of attending the meeting will be at the organization's expense. There will be no expenses paid by the Community Investment Fund, SAVS or SBC to organizations to enable them to attend these meetings.

Meetings

The sessions will be facilitated by Community Investment Board members with the Community Investment Fund Coordinator.

The Community Reference group will normally meet twice a year. The number of meetings called is at the Community Investment Board's discretion.

Invitations will be sent to potential attendees at least two weeks in advance of the meeting date along with an agenda and any other information for the session.

Attendees should register in advance to attend the meeting. Details will be provided in an email sent out with the meeting invitation.

After meetings, meeting notes will be prepared by the Community Investment Fund Coordinator and circulated to attendees within a month of the meeting.

The meeting notes will then be shared with the Community Investment Board.

The Community Investment Fund Coordinator is responsible for providing feedback to the group on how its input has influenced thinking on the Community Investment Fund strategy. The feedback will be captured in the meeting notes.

The Community Investment Board may choose to explore points identified in the Community Reference group meetings deeper through individual engagement or other focus groups where needed.

Meetings will be held at a location in Southend as a preference, and held virtually should restrictions be in place requiring it.

Attendance at a Community Reference Group meeting does not guarantee or become in anyway an application or intent to apply to potential future support from the Community Investment Fund.

All attendees are to respect the views and thoughts of all those present. Should this not be maintained those attendees may be asked to leave the session.

Where attendees are unable to make the date provided the Community Investment Board would welcome their written feedback to be added to the notes of the session.