

East Herts Council Non-Key Decision Report

Date: 8 September 2020

Report by: Executive Member for Communities

Report title: Changes to Crowdfunding application criteria

Ward(s) affected: All

Summary

- The report outlines the rationale for changing one of the key criteria for applicants in submitting applications to the East Herts crowdfunding pilot.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DECISION:

- (a) That the requirement for applicants for financial support from the council's Crowdfunding Fund to submit their application at least four to six months prior to the online campaign be removed.**

1.0 Proposal(s)

- 1.1 It is proposed that the application criterion that states applications should be submitted four to six months prior to 'go live' on the crowdfunding platform is removed to enable a greater number of community organisations to engage with the East Herts crowdfunding process.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The East Herts Crowdfunding Fund is due to be launched through Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) crowdfunding platform in September 2020, aiming to support community organisations to deliver projects that create stronger and more connected communities which, in turn, improve the health and

wellbeing of residents in East Herts.

- 2.2 HCC has chosen Crowdfunder, an organisation with a dedicated purpose of civic crowdfunding, to run the online platform for the county-wide pilot which East Herts Council has signed up to.
- 2.3 Organisations using the crowdfunding platform have the opportunity to access match funding from East Herts Council in the form of a pledge of up to a maximum of 50% of the total funding needed or £2,000 whichever is the lower. Once agreed, this pledge will appear on the campaign's page and help lever in other funds from the crowd and national/corporate pledges.

3.0 Reason(s)

- 3.1 Crowdfunder have recommended that East Herts Council remove the criterion requiring a four to six month lead time before a project could 'go live' as it is potentially prohibiting community organisations from submitting applications.
- 3.2 Removing this criterion is likely to make the crowdfunding approach more accessible for community organisations and increase the number of organisations engaging with this approach.

4.0 Options

- 4.1 Continue with the existing terms and conditions. NOT RECOMMENDED as this is thought to be a barrier to community organisations signing up to the crowdfunding platform.
- 4.2 Remove the four to six month lead time criteria from the terms and conditions. RECOMMENDED to encourage more community organisations to use the crowdfunding platform, helping to achieve stronger, more connected communities and

improved health and wellbeing for East Herts residents.

5.0 Risks

- 5.1 Should the criterion remain the same, community organisations may not engage with crowdfunding, potentially reducing the number of valuable community projects supporting residents in East Herts. To mitigate this, it is proposed that the criterion considered a barrier to accessing crowdfunding is removed from the terms and conditions for applicants.
- 5.2 Organisations may not manage to achieve their full funding target after the council has pledged its support, potentially resulting in the council funding an unviable project. To mitigate this, the council is entitled to withdraw its pledge (and as such, any match funding) should the target not be reached.

6.0 Implications/Consultations

- 6.1 This proposed change has been discussed with Crowdfunder, the Executive Member for Communities, the Head of Housing and Health, the Service Manager – Community Wellbeing and Partnerships and the Housing and Health Project Officer who is overseeing East Herts Council's involvement in the county-wide crowdfunding pilot.

Community Safety

No

Data Protection

No

Equalities

No

Environmental Sustainability

No

Financial

Yes – the crowdfunder campaign is backed by £10,000 of East Herts Council’s community grant money which is overseen by the Hertfordshire Community Foundation who are administering the pilot programme.

Health and Safety

No

Human Resources

No

Human Rights

No

Legal

No

Specific Wards

No

7.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material

7.1 N/A

Contact Member

Councillor Suzanne Rutland-Barsby, Executive Member for Communities. suzanne.rutland-barsby@eastherts.gov.uk

Contact Officer

Jonathan Geall, Head of Housing and Health, Tel: 01992 531594. jonathan.geall@eastherts.gov.uk

Report Author

Nick Phipps, Service Manager – Community Wellbeing and Partnerships, Tel: 01992 531484. nick.phipps@eastherts.gov.uk