

## EAST HERTS COUNCIL

### COMMUNITY SCRUTINY - 22 NOVEMBER 2011

REPORT BY CLAIRE PULLEN, COMMUNITY PLANNING  
AND PARTNERSHIPS MANAGER

### UPDATE ON COMMUNITY GRANTS

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

#### Purpose/Summary of Report

To provide members with an update on the community grants process and provide information that members may consider, looking at the range of grant “pots” and how they might be refocused to better achieve the Council’s corporate priorities

	<b>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMMUNITY SCRUTINY:</b>
<b>(A)</b>	<b>To note progress on community grants processes as set out in Section 2.2; and</b>
<b>(B)</b>	<b>That Members consider possible alternative focus for community grants and options for implementation (Section 2.3)</b>

#### 1.0 Background

- 1.1 The council’s community grants process, administered by the Community Projects Team, underwent an internal review in July 2011 to look at how they might be improved or streamlined. A report was submitted to the C3W Programme Board on 12 July 2011 which contained 10 improvement options.
- 1.2 Of these 10 recommendations, three were not agreed, four were agreed and three were considered to need Member approval.

- 1.3 Information about the range of grant “pots,” criteria and priorities for community grants – as well as information on organisations allocated a grant in 2011– can be found online at [www.eastherts.gov.uk/grants](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/grants) . **Essential Reference Paper “B”** attached, lists the 12 “pots” and their current budgets.

## 2.0 Report

- 2.1 This report notes progress on agreed review recommendations and offers members options for implementation, which arose during the review.
- 2.2 Since July 2011, progress has been made in several areas, including:

### Application Process

- 2.2.1 A PDF and Word version of all grant applications are now available on the council website and applications can also be submitted on line.
- 2.2.2 A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) list has been produced and is posted on the Council website.
- 2.2.3 All successful applicants are now required to sign a Grant Claim Form whereby they agree to Terms and Conditions requiring them to provide appropriate publicity and marketing materials which demonstrates how people and groups have been helped and supported by the scheme and the importance of the assistance provided by East Herts Council.

### Publicity/Marketing

- 2.2.4 Information on recently allocated grants is regularly distributed to the Communications Team, Members’ Bulletin and the Council for Voluntary Services Broxbourne and East Herts.
- 2.2.5 Adverts, listing available funding and closing dates, have been published in local newspapers.

2.2.6 A presentation about the criteria and priorities of Council funding and eligible projects was delivered at the Rural Parish Conference on 15 September 2011.

2.2.7 A separate flyer about the Performance to Excellence (Sports) grants has been produced and distributed to council leisure venues and sports clubs.

### Payments

2.2.8 The grant claim form has been amended to require bank account details be provided in order that payments are made by direct bank transfer wherever possible.

2.3 The table below summarises options for Members' consideration:

Initial thoughts	Possible Options for Implementation
<p>Create a single grants fund from which all grants that the Community Projects Team administers are paid out.</p> <p>The fund would continue to have the overall purpose of improving economic, environmental and social well being.</p>	<p>Single fund (both capital and revenue) to include other grant schemes such as commissioned services, Local Environmental Action Fund (LEAF) and Senior Citizen/Disabled Persons Holiday Parties.</p> <p>Proposed name: <i>People, Places &amp; Prosperity Community Fund</i>.</p> <p>Proposed priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Vulnerable groups</li><li>• Community safety</li><li>• Economic growth, and</li></ul> <p>East Herts Local Strategic Partnership themes such as East Herts Character - built &amp; natural, and East Herts health, well-being and play.</p>

Initial thoughts	Possible Options for Implementation
Delegate officers to assess and authorise all small grant payments without the need to get approval from a director or executive member.	Proposed that officers can authorise grants under £2,000
Split the single grants fund into Large Grants (£2,001 or more) and Small Grants (£2,000 or less)	<p>Small grants to have simpler application process, light touch assessment.</p> <p>Small grants could be paid out within three to five weeks.</p>
Expand grant categories or themes so that more people and groups can apply	<p>Proposed one-off themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2012 Olympics – Ready4Winners</li> <li>• Diamond 60 Street Parties (Neighbourhood grants, community celebrations)</li> </ul>

2.4 It is proposed that the “legacy” outcomes of the single grant fund are:

- Improved access to indoor/outdoor sports and leisure facilities, especially for vulnerable groups
- More people taking responsibility/interest for the area around them
- More people feeling like they belong to their neighbourhood, and believing that people of different backgrounds get on well together (social cohesion)

- 2.5 The majority of the grant funding available is in the form of capital grants. Capital grants provide the right tools for people to get involved with projects that improve facilities such as green spaces or community buildings – inspiring ownership and pride. Community buildings that are “fit-for-purpose” provide pleasant places for all people in the area to meet up, especially those without access to a car, and participate in community events and festivals.
- 2.6 Members are asked to consider options for implementation and advise officers how they wish to proceed.
- 3.0 Implications/Consultations
- 3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper ‘A’**.

### Background Papers

**Report :** “Review on Council’s Discretionary Community Grants Programme” Community Scrutiny 27 July 2010.  
<http://online.eastherts.gov.uk/moderngov/CeListDocuments.aspx?Committeeld=116&MeetingId=1457&DF=27%2f07%2f2010&Ver=2>

Hard copies can be made available for Members on request from the Community Projects Team.

Contact Member: Councillor Linda Haysey, Executive Member for Health, Housing and Community Support

Contact Officer: Claire Pullen, Community Planning and Partnerships Manager, Ext 1459

Report Author: Claire Pullen, Community Planning and Partnerships Manager, ext 1459

## ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives (delete as appropriate):	<p><b>Promoting prosperity and well-being; providing access and opportunities</b>  <i>Enhance the quality of life, health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities, particularly those who are vulnerable.</i></p> <p><b>Pride in East Herts</b>  <i>Improve standards of the neighbourhood and environmental management in our towns and villages.</i></p> <p><b>Caring about what's built (and) where</b>  <i>Care for and improve our natural and built environment.</i></p> <p><b>Shaping now, shaping the future</b>  <i>Safeguard and enhance our unique mix of rural and urban communities ensuring sustainable, economic and social opportunities including the continuation of effective development control and other measures.</i></p> <p><b>Leading the way, working together</b>  <i>Deliver responsible community leadership that engages with our partners and the public.</i></p>
Consultation:	Various discussions with other officers administering grant schemes
Legal:	None
Financial:	No new budgets
Human Resource:	None
Risk Management:	None