

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 10 JANUARY 2012

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR
HEALTH HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

COMMUNITY GRANTS – AMENDED POLICY

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To recommend amendments to the community grants policy

<u>RECOMMENDATION FOR EXECUTIVE:</u> that	
(A)	the simplification of the grant “pots” and the recommended amendments to the community grants policy, as set out in Section 2 of the report submitted, be approved.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 A report on the community grants process was submitted to Community Scrutiny on 22 November 2011 so that Members could look at the range of grant “pots” and consider how they might be refocused to better achieve the Council’s corporate priorities.
- 1.2 Following initial discussion at the Community Scrutiny meeting, it was decided that a smaller working/advisory group would discuss Community Grants in more detail with a view to presenting the full committee in February 2012 with options for ‘repackaging’ the existing funding pots – especially in light of community interest in the Olympics and Queen’s Jubilee celebrations in 2012.
- 1.3 The advisory/working group convened on the 2 December and discussed the timescale required to amend the

community grants policy so that projects celebrating the Olympics (Ready4Winners) and Queen's Jubilee could be eligible for a Council grant.

- 1.4 To allow the maximum time possible for marketing and promoting new criteria, it was agreed that members of Community Scrutiny would be sent minutes of the advisory/working group meeting and asked to consider them in lieu of a formal community report. This would allow the report to be presented to the Executive at the earliest opportunity in the new year and not wait until after the next full scrutiny meeting (28 February 2012).
- 1.5 Any feedback received on the recommendations were to be submitted to the Committee Chairman (Councillor Graham McAndrew) by 14 December 2011.
- 1.6 Information about current criteria and priorities for community grants – as well as information on organisations recently allocated a grant – can be found online at <http://www.eastherts.gov/index.jsp?articleid=10144>

2.0 Report

- 2.1 The section below summarises the advisory/working group's recommendations, which – if agreed – will be implemented from April 2012:
 - 2.1.1 To add the theme of Olympics 2012 (Ready4Winners) and the Queen's Jubilee to the list of projects eligible for funding.
 - 2.1.2 To merge the current strands of capital funding into one General Capital pot. Funding criteria to cover the same areas as currently, e.g. buildings, equipment, green space improvements, village hall competition.
 - 2.1.3 To create a simpler application and less rigorous assessment procedure for small revenue and capital grants under £2,000. It was agreed not to delegate the final signing off to an Officer panel.

- 2.1.4 To introduce a quarterly Review Panel (comprising of Director, Head of Service, Grants Officer and Executive Member) which would review previously funded projects and sign off on new applications.
 - 2.1.5 To retain the current scoring process for applications over £2,000 on an indicative level rather than a pass/fail test. An Officer Panel will continue to assess applications and make recommendations for funding.
 - 2.1.6 To submit a report on the dispersal of grants under the amended policy twice yearly to Community Scrutiny. It is planned to continue to inform all Members of grant allocations through the weekly Members Information Bulletin, but the reports to Scrutiny will allow for more detailed review and analysis.
- 2.2 Members will be aware that the community grants budget will be subject to further constraints agreed by the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). A summary of the simplified funding streams (pots) follows in **Essential Reference Paper B**.
- 2.3 Members are asked to agree this simplification of the grant “pots” and approve the recommended amendments to the Community Grants policy.
- 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

“Update on Community Grants,” 22 November 2011, submitted to Community Scrutiny.

Minutes of Grants Working Group, 2 December 2011.

Available online at www.eastherts.gov.uk

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

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

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

ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'B'

AMENDED EAST HERTS COMMUNITY GRANT "POTS"

CAPITAL GRANTS SCHEME

New Scheme Name	Incorporates the following "pots"	What is funded
<p>Large Capital Grants (£2,000 or more)</p> <p>(Budget is £120,000 in 2011/2012)</p>	<p>Community Capital Grants Scheme</p> <p>Partnership Investment Fund</p> <p>East Herts Village Hall Challenge</p>	<p>Refurbishment projects of community buildings – kitchen upgrade, disabled toilets, new roof</p> <p>Leverage to pull in external funding for large-scale community building projects</p> <p>Competition for rural village halls to identify "Best Run Village Hall"</p> <p>Large items of equipment such as (but not exclusively):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allotment shed • New boiler • Stage and lighting equipment • Play equipment • Raised vegetable planters • Start up office equipment
<p>Small Capital Grants (less than £2,000)</p> <p>(Budget is £20,000 in 2011/2012)</p>	<p>Community Planning Grant Scheme</p>	<p>Small items of equipment that improve community assets or services such as (but not exclusively):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Path and seating area construction in green space • New wood flooring • Flower boxes • Fencing around allotments or playgrounds • Outdoor lights • Lap tops & IT equipment • Audio visual equipment • Watering systems • Outboard motor for boat • Camping equipment (tents for scouts/guides)

REVENUE GRANTS SCHEME

New Scheme Name	Incorporates the following "pots"	What is funded
Small grants (Total budget is £22,100 in 2011/2012)	Performance to Excellence (Sports and Arts) (£4,100 in 2011/2012)	Special schemes geared to helping 11 to 16 year olds residents achieve sporting and artistic excellence
	Councillor Revenue Grants and Community Revenue Grants (£13,000 in 2011/2012)	Running costs for small community groups and health and social care charities that offer services directly benefitting local people
	Senior Citizen/Disabled Persons Holiday Parties (£5,000 in 2011/2012)	Funding at £1 per person for organisation having parties between Nov and January
	No named pot. Theme to be added to scoring criteria.	Community Celebrations and Queens Jubilee street parties that build social cohesion

The Summer Activities Fund and Arts Development Budget are exempt from the merger of revenue funds as they are commissioning schemes.