

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

COUNCIL – 18 JULY 2017

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

DISCRETIONARY COMMUNITY GRANTS POLICY

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To seek approval of full Council to changes in the discretionary community grants policy in order to maximise health and wellbeing outcomes for residents in East Herts

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL: that:

(A)	the new grants policy as detailed in Essential Reference Paper ‘B’, be approved, including proposals listed in paragraph 2.7 to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• open the fund up to not-for-profit organisations;• remove the requirement of match funding for building projects; and• increase the maximum revenue grant from £1,000 to £3,000
(B)	new priorities and outcomes, as detailed in Appendix 1, Essential Reference Paper ‘B’, be approved.

1.0 Background

1.1 The Council has allocated grants to the voluntary and community sector, towns and parish councils for many years. The purpose of this service is to take forward the vision of health and wellbeing and facilitate positive change at the local level. The Community Grants Policy is part of the Council’s Policy Framework and is determined by full Council.

1.2 A report from the Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing was received by Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny on the 14 March 2017 to look at the key ways in which the different services of the council can and do work towards maximising health and wellbeing outcomes and to reconsider the Council's vision. At this time, Members requested that a review of the focus for community grant giving take place.

2.0 **Report**

2.1 The review was led by an informal group of Members including Councillors Alder, Ballam, Moore, Hollebon, Woodward and Symonds. The Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing chaired the meetings which were held on 12th April and 24 May 2017.

2.2 Members of the group agreed that a review was required so that the Council's limited funds are targeted on reducing health inequalities and directed to evidenced areas of need, whether this be geographic areas experiencing income deprivation or population groups living with a particular health condition.

2.3 It was also important that the Council's grants policy be more closely aligned to emerging health and wellbeing priorities (including NHS Sustainable Transformation Plans and Hertfordshire County Council's new public health strategy).

2.4 The group considered information on emerging social demographic trends, Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), and areas of deprivation with identified need in East Herts as there is a proven link between deprivation and health and wellbeing.

2.5 The main topics discussed by the group were:

- Why do we give grants
- Who do we want to help
- Where do we want to focus
- What health and wellbeing outcomes do we want grant giving to achieve
- How do we best target our resources

2.6 This report proposes changes to the following:

- eligibility criteria

- priorities/outcomes
- implementation and assessment

These proposals are designed to create a more proactive grant giving process that steers applicants to solve problems in their areas that further the health and wellbeing outcomes the council would like; and actively tackles problems in the most income deprived areas of East Herts.

2.7 Eligibility – In order to maximise health and wellbeing outcomes, and facilitate projects/activities in more income deprived areas, the council needs help from a range of organisations to deliver innovative projects and activities. The following proposals will enable this to happen:

- opening the fund up to not-for-profit organisations; they have a valuable role to play, especially in delivering services in areas that lack a robust volunteer infrastructure/capacity
- removing the requirement of match funding for building projects. Removing the pre-condition to have one-third of the cost of the project up front will open the pot to a wider range of organisations. How much match funding is committed voluntarily will be assessed through the new scoring system. (see para 2.12)
- increasing the maximum revenue grant from £1,000 to £3,000 (10% of available budget). It is hoped this will generate interest from health charities to submit bids for innovative, longer-term interventions that result in health behaviour lifestyle changes

2.8 Priorities for 2017/18 – It is the intent that grant giving will be more outcomes-focused. A copy of the amended grants policy and list of proposed health and wellbeing outcomes the policy is aiming to achieve are given in **Essential Reference Paper 'B'**. Members are asked to note that several outcomes are continuing from previous years.

2.9 Applicants must demonstrate that a revenue grant or capital grant will either directly or indirectly support at least one of the priorities listed in the policy.

2.10 Implementation and assessment - It is proposed that the existing discretionary community grants scheme consisting of a split between capital grants and revenue grants (Summer Activities, Performance to Excellence, Community Activities pots) is replaced

with a single, pooled budget from 18/19; split only by definition of capital and revenue. To further streamline the process, there will be a single application form for all applications, regardless of the amount of money requested.

- 2.11 It is anticipated that the process of allocating grants will become more proactive - as the Council will take steps to raise awareness and identify need and potential additional/alternative grant funding sources. This would include working with the new Community Health and Wellbeing Forum, carrying out desktop research/consultation with residents and stakeholders in income deprived areas and holding an annual workshop with charities and other organisations working in the community.
- 2.12 All applications including those identified through the collaborative process above, council research and those that are submitted independently will be assessed on the following:
1. amount of match funding voluntarily committed or already raised (not a requirement, but those bids that have match funding will score more highly)
 2. whether the project is being delivered in a disadvantaged area of East Herts
 3. number of people that will benefit
 4. evidence that project/activity will realistically help the council deliver on at least one of our priorities/outcomes
 5. evidence of financial need
 6. evidence that consultation has taken place and the results support your project or activity
- 2.13 Applications will be judged on merit, but, unlike in the past, they will also be judged against each other and ranked in order of lowest to highest score.
- 2.14 In cases where an application's score means it would not be funded based on the bid alone, officers will consider placing additional requirements or conditions for funding such as expanding the project into areas that are known to have a high level of income deprivation.
- 2.15 Members are asked to note that the preferred way to apply for a grant is via an eform on the Council's website. However, paper copies will be made available if requested.

2.16 In addition, advice and guidance on completing the new form will be available from officers. Member Champions have agreed to help in this capacity as well.

2.17 Following a recent Equalities Impact Assessment (**Essential Reference Paper 'C'**) on these new arrangements, officers are confident that this service is open to all equally and does not disadvantage any groups or residents in East Herts.

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

A list of recently funded Summer Activities projects for 2017 can be found on the Council's website. Allocations from previous years for community activities and community capital can also be found here. <https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/article/35614/Grants-Awarded-and-Commissioned-Services-from-Not-for-Profit-Organisations>

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