

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

COUNCIL – 18 DECEMBER 2019

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES

REPORT TITLE: REVISED COMMUNITY GRANTS POLICY 2020/21

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

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**Purpose/Summary of Report**

- The council's Community Grants Policy includes the provision for members to review the priorities for grant giving on an annual basis. This report sets out the proposed revisions for 2020/21.

<b><u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL: That:</u></b>	
<b>(A)</b>	<b>the revised Community Grants Policy 2020/21, as detailed in Essential Reference Paper 'B', be approved</b>

1.0 Background

1.1 The council has allocated grants to the voluntary and community sectors and towns and parish councils for many years. The council does this to facilitate positive change at the local level, enable local people to develop their own infrastructure to bring about change and work collaboratively with our communities, leading to improved health and wellbeing for residents in East Herts.

1.2 The council's grants policy was subject to a major review in 2017/18, with a new approach adopted by full Council in July 2017. This revised policy included the provision for members to

review and amend the priorities for grant giving on an annual basis; a draft revised policy for 2020/21 is contained at ERP 'B'.

1.3 The Community Grants Policy is part of the council's policy framework and so it is determined by full Council.

## 2.0 Report

2.1 This latest review of the Community Grants Policy was conducted by officers of the Housing and Health service in consultation with the Executive Member for Communities, the Leader of the Council, the Executive Member for Financial Sustainability and members of the Community Wellbeing Forum.

2.2 The key proposals that have emerged from this exercise can be summarised thus:

- an amendment to the eligibility criteria to allow individuals and groups with no legal status to apply for small grants up to £300 so long as they have the agreement of an East Herts councillor to be a mentor for the project for which funding is sought
- that the above proposal should be piloted in 2020/21, with an evaluation of the approach being conducted to inform the 2021/22 policy
- grants of up to a maximum of 50% of the total funding needed or £2,000, whichever is the lesser, be provided for projects or schemes seeking crowdfunding support, with a view that around five such schemes will be supported in this way in 2020/21
- that all groups enquiring about applying for a community grant are encouraged to participate in the East Herts Lottery
- that two new priorities be added to the list of criteria for assessing projects/schemes, these being:
  - arts and cultural activities that increase residents' wellbeing and so further the aims of the Hertfordshire Year of Culture 2020

- high quality, accessible and environmentally sustainable community buildings and green spaces
- *note: the existing criteria of community issues, including engaging and consulting, and health for all still apply.*

2.3 All members are encouraged to serve in a mentoring role for informal groups and individuals wishing to apply. The role will require members to:

- assist in writing the application
- ensure safe and appropriate delivery and
- monitor the benefits of the scheme/project to the wider community.

2.4 The full revised draft Community Grants Policy 2020/21, incorporating the above amendments, is included at ERP 'B'.

### 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'**.

3.2 The latest draft of the Equalities Impact Assessment is included **ERP 'C'**. This recognises that the council may need to take additional efforts to publicise available grants among some harder-to-reach groups.

### Background Papers

A list of recently funded grants can be found on the council's website.

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