

CABINET
28 JANUARY 2020

PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

6a – 6e - ITEMS REFERRED FROM AREA COMMITTEES REGARDING THE COMMUNITY GRANTS POLICY REVIEW

6a ITEM REFERRED FROM LETCHWORTH COMMITTEE: 7 JANUARY 2020 - GRANT POLICY REPORT

The Community Engagement Team Leader presented the report entitled Community Grants Policy Review and highlighted the following:

- The report outlined the proposed changes to the grants policy;
- The process had been simplified;
- The policy was last updated in 2016, and since then, the Area Committee Budgets had been reduced by 20% year on year;
- Organisations with charitable status, voluntary sector groups, community groups, Community Interest Companies, Community Interest Organisations, Schools, Academies, Business Improvement District Groups, Parish and Town Councils were now able to apply for grants;

The following Members made comment and asked questions:

- Councillor Ian Mantle

RESOLVED: That the proposed review of the Community Grants Policy and criteria be noted.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: That the Community Grants Policy, criteria and outline consultation process be approved by Letchworth Committee, subject to the following amendments:

- That the word “quarterly” be removed from paragraph 4.3 of Section 4 - Application Submission Process; and
- An addition be made to the report in respect of Paragraph 6 – Terms of the Award, requesting feedback to the specific Area Committee that had initially awarded the grant funding.

REASON FOR DECISION: The awarding of grant funding awards to organisations, charities and voluntary groups, and the use of grant budgets devolved to Area Committees allows the Authority to further its aims and overarching Priorities of the Council and District.

6b ITEM REFERRED FROM SOUTHERN RURAL COMMITTEE: 8 JANUARY 2020 - COMMUNITY GRANTS POLICY REVIEW

The Community Engagement Team Leader presented the report entitled Community Grants Policy Review and advised the following:

- The report outlined the proposed changes to the grants policy;
- The process had been simplified;
- The policy was last reviewed in 2016;
- Changes to the eligibility criteria were on page 90 of the report at paragraph 8.2.1;
- Organisations with charitable status, voluntary sector groups, community groups, Community Interest Companies, Community Interest Organisations, Schools, Academies, Business Improvement District Groups, Parish and Town Councils were now able to apply for grants;
- The 2016 Policy stated that applicants were ineligible for funding if they had other funding from NHDC within 2 years. This would no longer apply under the new policy;
- These changes would encourage a variety of organisations to apply and;
- The new criteria was similar to that of other local authorities.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor John Bishop;
- Councillor David Barnard;
- Councillor Faye Frost;
- Councillor George Davies;
- Councillor Claire Strong and;
- Councillor Sam North.

Members raised the following:

- There was a concern expressed in relation to the policy change detailed at paragraph 8.2.3 in regards to allowing applicants to apply for a grant despite receiving funds within the 2 years;
- The types of organisations that would be eligible for funding and;
- Whether grants should only be awarded to organisations based within North Hertfordshire rather than the broader eligibility criteria of 'be for the benefit of North Hertfordshire residents' as detailed on page 96 of the report under Eligibility Criteria.

The Community Engagement Team Leader provided the following responses to points and questions raised:

- In order to be eligible for funding, organisations would need to be a CIC/CIO, hold charity status or have a Constitution;
- Area Committee Grants were not as substantial as pre-2016;
- District wide Community Grant applicants may be considered by a proposed District-wide panel and;
- A proposed change in the Council's constitution will allow for the relevant Executive Member to authorise a District-wide grant.

RESOLVED: That the proposed review of the Community Grants Policy and criteria be noted.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: That the criteria and outline consultation process be approved, subject to the following amendments:

- Grant eligibility criteria clause B on page 96 of the report - grants to only be given to organisations based within the North Hertfordshire District rather than broadly 'be for the benefit of North Hertfordshire residents.'

REASON FOR DECISION: The awarding of grant funding awards to organisations, charities and voluntary groups, and the use of grant budgets devolved to Area Committees allows the Authority to further its aims and overarching Priorities of the Council and District.

6c ITEM REFERRED FROM HITCHIN COMMITTEE: 14 JANUARY 2020 - COMMUNITY GRANTS POLICY REVIEW

The Community Engagement Team Leader presented the report entitled Community Grants Policy Review and advised the following:

- The report outlined the proposed changes to the grants policy;
- The process had been simplified;
- The policy was last reviewed in 2016;
- Changes to the eligibility criteria were on page 90 of the report at paragraph 8.2.1;
- Organisations with charitable status, voluntary sector groups, community groups, Community Interest Companies, Community Interest Organisations, Schools, Academies, Business Improvement District Groups, Parish and Town Councils were now able to apply for grants;
- The 2016 Policy stated that applicants were ineligible for funding if they had other funding from NHDC within 2 years. This would no longer apply under the new policy;
- These changes would encourage a variety of organisations to apply and;
- The new criteria was similar to that of other local authorities.

Councillor Judi Billing, Executive Member for Community Engagement, informed the Committee that simplifying the Grants Policy was a priority for both her and Councillor Ruth Brown, Deputy Executive Member for Community Engagement, in order to help people obtain funding needed for their organisation.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Sam Collins; and
- Councillor Richard Thake.

In response to questions raised, the Community Engagement Team Leader provided the following:

- The word 'projects' would be deleted from the table heading at paragraph 3.1 of the Community Grants Policy on page 105 of the report, to read 'ELIGIBLE for funding' and 'NOT ELIGIBLE for funding'; and
- The first item under NOT ELIGIBLE would be made clear that this relates to retrospective funding and not events that happen each year.

RESOLVED: That the proposed review of the Community Grants Policy and criteria be noted

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: That the criteria and outline consultation process be approved subject to the following amendment:

- The deletion of 'projects' from the table heading found at paragraph 3.1 of the Community Grants Policy on page 105 of the report, to read 'ELIGIBLE for funding' and 'NOT ELIGIBLE for funding';
- That the first item under NOT ELIGIBLE should be made clear that this relates to retrospective funding and not events that happen each year.

REASON FOR DECISION: The awarding of grant funding awards to organisations, charities and voluntary groups, and the use of grant budgets devolved to Area Committees allows the Authority to further its aims and overarching Priorities of the Council and District.

6d ITEM REFERRED FROM ROYSTON AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE: 14 JANUARY 2020 - COMMUNITY GRANTS POLICY REVIEW

The Policy and Community Engagement Manager presented the report entitled Community Grants Policy Review and advised the following:

- The report outlined the proposed changes to the grants policy;
- The process had been simplified;
- The policy was last reviewed in 2016;
- Changes to the eligibility criteria were on page 90 of the report at paragraph 8.2.1;
- Organisations with charitable status, voluntary sector groups, community groups, Community Interest Companies, Community Interest Organisations, Schools, Academies, Business Improvement District Groups, Parish and Town Councils were now able to apply for grants;
- The 2016 Policy stated that applicants were ineligible for funding if they had other funding from NHDC within 2 years. This would no longer apply under the new policy;
- These changes would encourage a variety of organisations to apply;
- The new criteria was similar to that of other local authorities and;
- Cabinet had approved two proposals relating to community grants which included the creation of a one-off District-wide pot of £10,000 in 2020/21.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Tony Hunter;
- Councillor Carol Stanier;
- Councillor Ruth Brown; and
- Councillor Gerald Morris.

The Policy and Community Engagement Manager provided the following responses to questions raised by Members:

- The District-wide pot of £10,000 would be administered by the Community Engagement Team, in the same way as the Capital Grants Fund is;
- Officers would promote the grant scheme to encourage applications from organisations who had not applied in the past; and
- Funding a statutory service such as waste collection at an event would need to be further looked at.

Councillor Ruth Brown, as Deputy Executive Member for Community Engagement, provided the following responses to points and questions raised by Members:

- Waste Collection at charity events should be eligible for funding;
- It was the intention to widen the scope and increase the number of applications;
- As a result of the policy change, the Committee may receive more applications than money to grant. In which case, the Committee would have to make decisions around who to grant money to; and
- If the same organisation repeatedly applied for funding, that would influence the decision as to whether to grant funding or not.

RESOLVED: That the proposed review of the Community Grants Policy and criteria be noted.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: That the criteria and outline consultation process be approved.

REASON FOR DECISION: The awarding of grant funding awards to organisations, charities and voluntary groups, and the use of grant budgets devolved to Area Committees allows the Authority to further its aims and overarching Priorities of the Council and District.

6e ITEM REFERRED FROM BALDOCK AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE: 27 JANUARY 2020 - COMMUNITY GRANTS POLICY REVIEW

The Meeting of the Baldock and District Committee is due to take place on Monday 27 January 2020. The referral from that meeting regarding the Community Grants Policy Review will be published on Tuesday 28 January 2020

(To be taken with Item 11)