

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM: 8</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING:</b>	<b>18<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2021</b>	<b>CATEGORY: * RECOMMENDED</b>
<b>REPORT FROM:</b>	<b>STRATEGIC DIRECTOR (SERVICE DELIVERY)</b>	<b>OPEN</b>
<b>MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:</b>	<b>IAN HEY (EXT 8741)</b>	<b>DOC:</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PARTNERSHIPS GRANT SCHEME</b>	<b>REF:</b>
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE: HS07 HCS</b>

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## **1.0 Recommendations**

1.1 That the Committee approves additional guidance notes and set new criteria to support applications to the Community and Environmental Partnerships Grant Scheme (CEPGS) whereby:

1.1.1 Any project receiving funding related to the improvement of premises, the applicant should either hold the freehold or have a lease with a minimum security of tenure.

1.1.2 The security of tenure held by applicants for projects requesting grants up to £10,000 should be a minimum of seven years remaining at the point of project completion and for grant requests between £10,001 up to the maximum of £25,000 there should be a minimum of 15 years remaining at the point of project completion.

## **2.0 Purpose of Report**

2.1 To review and set a minimum security of tenure for leases held by applicant(s) as a criteria for applying for a capital grant from the CEPGS.

2.2 CEPGS Guidance Notes currently do not contain any information to inform applicants on the length of security of tenure required to secure funding.

2.3 It is proposed to provide additional guidance notes and set new criteria to support applications to act as a framework for the panel members and to provide applicants with this information to support their proposals.

## **3.0 Detail**

3.1 The CEPGS offers capital grants of up to £25,000 to support projects brought forward from the voluntary and community sector (VCS). A sum of £250,000 has been allocated

to the Scheme since October 2019, to enable grants to be made in support of applications received during the current funding cycle.

- 3.2 An Assessment Panel comprising five Councillors, with support from the Community Partnership Officer, meets to consider applications that have been submitted.
- 3.3 Submitted applications are assessed against the guidance notes and set criteria that has been agreed at Committee. The aim is to ensure that any investment in communities via capital grants continue to provide good value. Part of assessing value with projects identified by applications is consideration of the security of tenure. This would identify the prospective lifespan for the grant could continue to provide benefits for the community.
- 3.4 CEPGS Guidance Notes currently do not contain any information to any information to inform applicants on the length of security of tenure required to secure funding. Other funding streams including National Lottery, Biffaward and Sport England require any land and/or facility where a project is sited is held with either a freehold or a lease, with a minimum security of tenure of between five and 25 years to secure grants of similar amounts.
- 3.5 It is proposed to provide additional guidance notes and set new criteria to support applications to act as a framework for the panel members and to provide applicants with this information to support their proposals.
- 3.6 Currently it is possible to award a lease for Council property and land for up to seven years without the need to refer to Committee. Therefore, it is proposed to use this length of lease (seven years), remaining at the point of project completion for projects requesting grant amounts up to £10,000.
- 3.7 For grant requests between £10,001 up to the maximum of £25,000 should be a minimum of 15 years remaining at the point of project completion. The aim of this is to ensure that any benefits from a grant investment are available to the community for at least 15 years.
- 3.8 The CEPGS guidance notes identify that the Council can be the first funder to make an initial offer of funding, with a view to attracting funding from additional funders/donors. Further to the lease remaining at the point of project completion has been identified, as it may take time between the initial offer of funding and project completion. Initial offers identify a 12-month period for any capital works to start.

#### **4.0 Community Implications**

- 4.1 The CEPGS maximises funding available for community investment by providing both direct funding and enabling leverage from other funding sources. It also continues to offer a direct line of communication and engagement with the voluntary and community sector.
- 4.2 The impact on the community and amount of community involvement in each individual project has been assessed as part of the appraisal process.
- 4.3 The adoption of these recommendations will ensure that the community continues to benefit from CEPGS grant awards for many years.

## **5.0 Conclusions**

- 5.1 The CEPGS continues to provide the Council with an excellent means to support a variety of community partners in improving the quality of life for residents. It also enables community partners to lever additional external funding to the District.
- 5.2 The proposed changes to the guidance notes and setting of new criteria will act as a framework for the panel members and provide prospective applicants with information to support them with their proposal and to help ensure value for money for the Council.

**END**