

## DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIRECTORATE	ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH AND HOUSING COMMITTEE	13 MARCH 2018	4

### COMMUNITY HOUSING FUND GRANT POLICY

#### PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

#### SUMMARY

The Community Housing Fund was announced in December 2016 by DCLG and provides revenue grant funding to enable community-led housing (CLH) schemes. Fylde Council was allocated a sum of £440,381 from the fund. Future allocations of funding for community-led projects will be via Homes England.

The initial grant allocation is to be used to build capacity within local groups such as improving technical skills, setting up support hubs to offer advice, business planning and providing staff to review local housing needs. In January 2018 a part-time Community Housing Fund (CHF) Development Officer was appointed to progress community-led development within the borough. The post is shared with Lancaster City Council and is funded from the grant allocation.

This report seeks approval to the adoption of the Community Housing Grant Fund Policy. The policy establishes the criteria required to access the Community Housing Fund grant in Fylde.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

##### The Committee are requested to:

1. Note the contents of the report and the proposal to introduce a Community Housing Fund Grant Policy;
2. Approve the adoption of the Community Housing Fund Grant Policy as attached as Appendix 1 to this report; and
3. Subject to 2 above, to approve expenditure to a total sum of £60,000 in respect of the provision of grants in accordance with the Community Housing Fund Grant Policy.

#### SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

##### Minutes of Council 17<sup>th</sup> October 2016

It was RESOLVED to:

1. Approve a fully funded addition to the Capital Programme in the sum of £550,00 – “Affordable Housing Scheme at Church Road Methodist Church” – for 2017/18 to be fully funded from part of the balance of S106 developer contributions for affordable housing currently held by the Council for this purpose (from Agreement Ref: 03/0157 – Queen Mary School Development: a total capital contribution of £550,000 to deliver 10 units for affordable rent at Church Road Methodist Church, St Anne’s to Great Places Housing Association); and
2. Authorise expenditure in the sum of £550,000 to Great Places Housing Association in relation to the scheme after regard and consideration of the compliance with the financial regulations covered within the body of the

report.

Minutes of Environmental, Health and Housing Committee 20<sup>th</sup> June 2017

It was RESOLVED;

1. To note the contents of the report and the proposals to take forward the Community Housing Fund in Fylde, noting that the funds in Year 1 should be used to develop an approach that fits within the current situation within the borough and a need to raise awareness of the Community Led Housing;
2. To recommend to Council approval of a fully-funded revenue budget increase for the total sum of £440,381 funded by the Community Housing Fund grant in the same sum;
3. Subject to 2 above, approve the engagement of a shared Community Housing Fund Development Officer (with Lancaster City Council) initially for a 12-month period to identify and build capacity within local groups by mapping existing interest and developing supporting information for groups to enable the local authority to draw down subsequent years funding to deliver housing on the ground for local people; and
4. Subject to 2 above, approve that part of the funding in the sum of £100,000 be used to provide support for the Church Road Methodist Church Project, (Committee 17<sup>th</sup> October 2016) which would in turn allow the S106 funds previously ear-marked for this project to be re-directed to support other affordable housing developments elsewhere in the Borough.

Minutes of Council 17<sup>th</sup> July 2017

It was RESOLVED to;

1. Approve a fully-funded revenue budget increase in the sum of £440,381, funded by the Community Housing Fund grant in the same sum, as recommended by the Environment, Health and Housing Committee at the meeting of 20<sup>th</sup> June 2017; and
2. To note that Subject to 1 above, part of the funding in the sum of £100,000 will be used to provide support for the Church Road Methodist Church Project, (Committee 17<sup>th</sup> October 2016) which would in turn allow the S106 funds previously ear-marked for this project to be re-directed to support other affordable housing developments elsewhere in the Borough.

**CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

Spending your money in the most efficient way to achieve excellent services ( <b>Value for Money</b> )	√
Delivering the services that customers expect of an excellent council ( <b>Clean and Green</b> )	
Working with all partners ( <b>Vibrant Economy</b> )	
To make sure Fylde continues to be one of the most desirable places to live ( <b>A Great Place to Live</b> )	√
Promoting Fylde as a great destination to visit ( <b>A Great Place to Visit</b> )	

**REPORT**

**COMMUNITY HOUSING GRANT FUND POLICY**

1. The Community Housing Fund was announced in December 2016 and will provide nationally £60million per year of revenue grant funding to enable community led housing (CLH) schemes.
2. Fylde Council were allocated a sum of £440,381 to establish community-led housing within the borough. The fund provides revenue and capital funding as an alternative to, or to augment and bridge gaps in existing funding to increase genuinely community led housing in areas with high levels of second home ownership.
3. The Community-led concept is about local people playing a leading and lasting role in solving local housing problems, creating genuinely affordable homes and strong communities in ways that are difficult to achieve through mainstream affordable housing provision.
4. The initial grant funding does not have to generate quick delivery of units on the ground. There is flexibility for local authorities to develop an approach that fits within the current approaches that exist within their boroughs. It is expected subsequent years funding will be managed by Homes England and paid direct to established community groups for projects they are working on.

5. Within Fylde the concept of community led housing approaches is limited and resources will be required to establish what exists on the ground and possible opportunities that are community led.
6. The funding will be used to support challenges local authorities face in promoting community-led housing approaches and funding should be directed towards where the money is needed to:
  - a. Raise awareness and understanding of community led housing
  - b. Funding project development support within local authorities
  - c. Securing land opportunities
  - d. Pre-development funding
  - e. Safe capital grant
7. In order to tackle these challenges a grant fund policy has been developed to support identified Communities considering community led development to build capacity and confidence to take schemes forward. The full policy and application form is available in Appendix 1.
8. The fund can be used for:

Stage 1 costs (not exceeding £5k)

- Community development work – support community engagement work with local communities to set up and develop a community organisation.
- Community development/set up fund – to support the development of a specific group to ensure they fulfil the council's requirements and are a legal entity.

Stage 2 costs (not exceeding £15k)

- Feasibility Fund - support initial feasibility work for a potential community led housing scheme.

#### **COMMUNITY HOUSING FUND (CHF) DEVELOPMENT OFFICER SUPPORT**

9. The CHF Development Officer is split equally between Fylde Council and Lancaster City Council and has been in post since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018. The role is to strengthen the approach to delivery of community led schemes by identifying and working with community groups to identify projects and strengthen the capacity within groups to take schemes forward by;
  - a) Co-ordinate access to CLH information and resources. Appendix 2 contains an information leaflet for communities and information will be available on Fylde BC website.
  - b) Communicate and enthuse target audiences –Councillors' and Officers, Town and Parish Councils, the general public, developers, housing associations and builders.
  - c) Work with community groups to identify projects and ensure they have access to CLH specialist consultant project development and delivery and Housing Association support.
  - d) Ensure that the Councils CLH delivery plan is realistic, imaginative, and appropriate in bridging real revenue and capital funding gaps, to deliver schemes that are in the true spirit of CLH, and which secures subsequent years funding.
10. Table 1 gives details of the Work Plan for the CHF Development Officer post in Fylde.

<b>Project Description</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
Develop Affordable Housing Policy for Fylde that encompasses all options for affordable housing delivery	EHH Committee May 2018	
Develop a community grant policy and application process to access CHF and engagement process	EHH Committee March 2018	
Thorough communication of the spectrum of CLH types and support available.	Website/publicity/co mmunity events	Establishing new opportunities for future use of the CHF
Signposting to awareness raising material on website	Website/publicity/co mmunity events	Establishing new opportunities for future use of the CHF
All information to go through Communications Team for branding		

Promotion of affordable housing policy across community groups in Fylde including options for CLH.	Parish councils Town Councils Councillors via EHH Housing Show and Tell Church Groups Living above Shops initiative with local business owners in St Annes	Development of a robust plan to take schemes forward
Options for Community management on schemes that have sourced S106 funding	Church Road Methodist Sunnybank Mill	
Develop process for under taking ward level housing need surveys		
2018/19 Housing Need Surveys undertaken at: Lindsay Court, Warton, Elswick & St Annes		

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	This report recommends the adoption of a policy in respect of the award of grants for the development of community housing projects to be funded from the Community Housing Fund. Additionally, on the assumption that the policy is adopted, the report requests approval to allocate a total sum of £60,000 for this purpose.
Legal	None
Community Safety	Community led initiatives for affordable housing provision
Human Rights and Equalities	None
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	None
Health & Safety and Risk Management	None

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
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BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Minutes	17/10/16	<a href="#">Minutes of Council 17th October 2016</a>
Minutes	20/6/17	<a href="#">Minutes of Environmental, Health and Housing Committee 20th June 2017</a>
Minutes	17/7/17	<a href="#">Minutes of Council 17th July 2017</a>

Attached documents

Appendix 1 - Community Housing Grant Fund Policy

Appendix 2 – Community Led development Draft Leaflet