

GRANTS – FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS

Types of grant

- (a) Rent Grants and Core Grants – currently considered by Grants Committee which makes recommendations to Executive.
- (b) NEW – awards from the Local Infrastructure Fund (part of the Council's New Homes Bonus receipts).
- (c) Community Grants – currently administered under delegated powers.

Proposed Panel

It has been decided by Executive that a new Panel will replace Grants Committee and will make recommendations in respect of (a) Rent Grants and Core Grants and (b) awards of more than £3000 from the new Local Infrastructure Fund.

Community Grants will continue to be administered under delegated powers. All applications for £3000 or less will be dealt with under this process.

The Panel will meet four times a year, and make recommendations as at present, through submission of minutes to Executive. The first meeting is likely to be on 14 June 2012.

The Panel will comprise four Members, namely the Leader, Portfolio Holders for (i) Sustainable Development and Transport and (ii) Housing and Community Involvement, plus one representative from the other two main parties. Relevant Members have been asked to confirm a name for the new Panel.

Local Infrastructure Fund – more information

This is part of the New Homes Bonus, which is a financial incentive to communities and local authorities to welcome new housing growth. The Government will match fund the additional Council Tax generated by new homes and empty properties brought back into use, for six years.

ECC's Executive has determined that 30% of the New Homes Bonus (after a top slice) will be available for localised community infrastructure to address existing deficiencies in local facilities, and to meet additional pressures put on existing facilities by an increasing population. Projects which could benefit include facilities such as meeting halls or open space enhancements.

This is entirely separate from the existing budget which funds Rent Grants and Core Grants.

Constitutional arrangements - recommendation

That Executive be recommended that:-

1. in Part 3 of the Constitution "Responsibility for Functions", references to Grants Committee be replaced by references to the new Panel;
2. appropriate powers be included in the Scheme of Delegations (for example a power to reject applications to the Local Infrastructure Fund that fall outside the applicable criteria);
3. any appropriate consequential amendments be made to the Constitution.