

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

22 June 2011

Joint Report of the Leader and the Management Team

Part 1- Public

Executive Non Key Decisions

1 COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT FUND – DRAFT CRITERIA

To set out suggested criteria which will govern the operation of the new community enhancement fund.

1.1 The Proposed Community Enhancement Fund

1.1.1 As announced at the budget meeting of Cabinet in February 2011, the award of additional monies to the Borough Council from the Government's New Homes Bonus scheme enables the Council to re-invest funding to support projects and activities within our local communities. This will be achieved by the introduction of a Community Enhancement Fund and £500,000 has been set aside for this to be spent over the next four years. The purpose of this report is to set out some suggested criteria which will guide the operation of the new Fund and to determine which local projects can be funded from it.

1.2 The Draft Criteria

1.2.1 Attached as Annex A to this report is a set of draft criteria which aim to ensure that the Fund is operated on a fair and transparent basis and provides clarity for potential applicants. The draft criteria have been drawn up based on those applying to previous grant schemes operated by the Borough Council and seek to strike an appropriate balance between being sufficiently 'light touch' in nature whilst providing a fair chance for all local groups to obtain funding in support of their work.

1.2.2 As set out in the criteria, the intention is to hold two bidding rounds each year (one in 2011/12) with a Panel of Members established to assess grant applications and make recommendations on awards to the Cabinet Member for Communities. Provision has also been made for the Cabinet Member to approve urgent grant requests on an exceptional basis. Grants which are focused on delivering a very local project, for example, in a single ward will need the counter signature of at least one of the Borough ward Members. Other grants covering a wider area will

require the counter signature of the Cabinet Member for Communities or another member of Cabinet.

- 1.2.3 It is intended that availability of the Community Enhancement Fund will be promoted as locally as possible, for example, via parish and local church newsletters and magazines, to encourage bids from within the local community. Additional publicity will be generated via the Council's website, Here and Now and other communication channels. To assist those bidders who may not be 'expert' in making funding applications, a single, simple application form will be produced along with guidelines both in hard copy and on-line via the Council's website. A helpline number will be provided to assist local groups in making their applications.

1.3 Legal Implications

- 1.3.1 None

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.4.1 Such matters will be assessed as part of the operation of the fund.

1.5 Risk Assessment

- 1.5.1 Monitoring of grant awards will be undertaken to ensure that funding is used for the purposes originally applied for and that applicants adhere to any terms and conditions attached to the award.

1.6 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.6.1 See 'Screening for equality impacts' table at end of report

1.7 Recommendations

- 1.7.1 That the draft criteria for the Community Enhancement Fund **BE ENDORSED**.
- 1.7.2 That, subject to the approval of Council, a Member Panel **BE ESTABLISHED** to assess grant applications and make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Communities.

Background papers:

contact: Mark Raymond

Nil

Mark Worrall
Leader

David Hughes
Chief Executive
On behalf of the Management Team

Screening for equality impacts:		
Question	Answer	Explanation of impacts
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	The purpose of proposed fund is to provide support to a wide range of local groups including, for example, disability groups.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality?	Yes	As above
c. What steps are you taking to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		

In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above.