

CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL COMMUNITIES CAPITAL FUND

To: **Communities and Partnership Committee**

Meeting Date: **12 March 2020**

From: **Adrian Chapman, Service Director of Community and Safety**

Electoral division(s): **All**

Forward Plan ref: **N/A** *Key decision:* **No**

Purpose: **To set out the mechanisms necessary to enable the effective delivery of the new £5m Communities Capital Fund.**

Recommendation: **The Committee is asked to:**

Approve the criteria and procedures set out in this report.

<i>Officer contact:</i>		<i>Member contacts:</i>	
Name:	Adrian Chapman	Names:	Councillor Steve Criswell
Post:	Service Director	Post:	Chairman
Email:	Adrian.Chapman@cambridgeshire.gov.uk	Email:	Steve.Criswell@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
Tel:	07920 160441	Tel:	01223 706398

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 At the County Council meeting on 11 February, the Council's business plan was approved, which included an amendment from the Conservative Group as follows:

"There is also abundant and increasing evidence that investment in our community infrastructure, community resilience and societal cohesion has amplified benefits for our citizens and positive impacts across all of the public services. With this in mind, we propose to make a further major capital investment of £5m into a fund to support the delivery of community capital projects that help the Council to deliver the outcomes and objectives that it has set out in the Strategic Framework. This project will be established and worked up through the Communities and Partnership Committee, which will also oversee the governance of the scheme and allocation of the funds."

- 1.2 This report sets out the proposed detail of how the Cambridgeshire County Council Communities Capital Fund (the "Fund") will operate, including the application and decision-making procedures.

2. MAIN ISSUES

- 2.1 The agreement to invest £5m to support the delivery of community capital projects represents a significant investment in community-led action and seeks to directly support the Council's overall strategic priorities. The Fund's purpose is to support community-led projects which improve the health, wellbeing, social and economic opportunities and outcomes in our communities.
- 2.2 The Fund will contribute to capital projects only, although it is not prescriptive beyond this. For example, projects could relate to buildings, land, equipment and vehicles, or other capital-related expenditure.
- 2.3 Applications will be considered which require a maximum County Council contribution from the Fund of £0.5m towards the total project cost. There is no lower limit, however it should be noted that, generally, for projects to be counted as capital expenditure they would normally need to be set at a minimum of £10k. Funding will be available from the start of the 2020/21 financial year; however, expressions of interest will be encouraged as soon as possible after approval of the eligibility criteria and application process set out in this report, to enable projects to begin to be approved at the earliest opportunity.
- 2.4 Applications will need to be supported and submitted by either the relevant local County Councillor, or the Community Champion for the area. Details of the Fund will therefore be shared with all County Councillors upon agreement of the detail of how the Fund will operate.

2.5 Eligibility Criteria

2.5.1 The following eligibility criteria is proposed:

- i. Funding will be awarded for eligible capital spend only, and must demonstrate how the purpose of the Fund, described at 2.1 above, will be met
- ii. Bids must be able to demonstrate additionality, including, for example, how communities will be improved or enhanced by capital investment in their community
- iii. Bids will be encouraged for projects which fill gaps or where there is an under-representation in council presence or access to public services or other activities within communities, where there is an evidenced need, or known or emerging demand for service. For example, we want to ensure that our rural communities have the same opportunities to engage with services or activities as all other communities
- iv. No bids will be successful without some level of match funding. Capital funding from the Fund should be awarded only where all other sources of funding have been exhausted, or where council funding would provide match funding alongside other sources of funding. Match funding may be intended rather than secured at application stage, and may include non-cash match funding (e.g. in-kind contributions, land transfer etc)
- v. Funding will not be awarded for repairs and maintenance on assets that haven't been subject previously to a regular repairs and maintenance regime. Even then, not all repairs and maintenance would be eligible to be funded through capital budgets, and so proposals that include this would need to be considered on their own merits
- vi. Proposals for capital projects with a potential impact on carbon emissions will need to demonstrate how these will be minimised
- vii. Funding will be awarded using the most appropriate financial model – for example, this may be in the form of a non-repayable grant, a loan to be repaid at agreed terms, or an equity-type investment in an organisation with a recurring return on that investment. All funding arrangements would need to comply with existing County Council policies, including for example the existing third party loans policy, which has specific requirements around security, interest rate, setup fees, and guarantees
- viii. Funding will be awarded only where there is a guarantee of no revenue implications for the County Council (aside from debt charges as a result of borrowing), except where an evidenced case can be made demonstrating how, in turn, an increased short-term revenue cost will lead to more substantial savings later
- ix. State Aid considerations will form part of the overall application and review process.
- x. Applications will need to be endorsed by, and submitted via, either the local County Councillor, or the County Council's Community Champion for the area

2.6 Application Process

2.6.1 We aim to implement an application process which is not onerous, and which provides ample opportunities for applicant organisations to seek advice and guidance from their local County Councillor, Community Champion, and/or council officers as necessary.

2.6.2 To facilitate this, applications will need to be submitted in a two-stage process:

- Stage 1: expression of interest; and
- Stage 2: full proposal

In order to pass from stage one to stage two, the following must be confirmed:

Based on evidenced need or forecast demand, does the project improve the outcomes described in the Fund's purpose, by:

- increasing resilience, fulfilling unmet need, and/or introducing new opportunities, including in rural areas, or
- enhancing or filling gaps in community facilities or activities, and
- having pre-agreed match funding in place, or a viable plan to achieve this, and
- not incurring revenue costs for the County Council after it is delivered, or, if it does, can these be justified as invest-to-save costs in the medium term

2.6.3 If the expression of interest can demonstrate the conditions set out at 2.6.2 above, a full proposal can be worked up and submitted.

A representative Member panel of any five Members of the Communities and Partnership Committee, including designated substitutes, subject to Political proportionality (currently 3 x Conservative Members, 1 x Labour Member and 1 x Liberal Democrat Member) will be formed, whose role will be to consider full proposals using the followings scoring criteria:

- Will the project improve specific priority outcomes for the local community, based on the Think Communities area profile, e.g. increasing skills, reducing loneliness, tackling obesity
POSSIBLE SCORE OF 30
- Will the project address inequality of access to services or activities, e.g. in rural communities?
POSSIBLE SCORE OF 30
- Will the project incorporate local community involvement in its design and implementation (including formal groups such as parish councils)?
POSSIBLE SCORE OF 20
- What level of match funding is being, or will be achieved (noting that external match or match via community action will score higher than match from other CCC sources)?
POSSIBLE SCORE OF 20

For projects to be recommended for approval, it is proposed that a minimum score of 60 points in total must be reached. No Member will be permitted to score a proposal relating to their own Division.

2.6.4 The Member panel will then present its recommendations to the next available Communities and Partnership Committee meeting for a decision to be made.

2.6.5 The process described above is summarised at **Appendix 1**.

3. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 A good quality of life for everyone

As described above, this new Fund seeks to improve the health, wellbeing, social and economic opportunities and outcomes in our communities, thereby helping to create or enhance a good quality of life for everyone.

3.2 Thriving places for people to live

This new Fund seeks to provide or enhance capital assets or facilities within our communities, helping to create increased opportunities and therefore thriving places for people to live.

3.3 The best start for Cambridgeshire's Children

Proposals for capital projects that have the potential to impact on all age ranges will be invited, including those aimed at creating the best start in life for Cambridgeshire's children.

3.4 Net zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2050

Proposals for capital projects with a potential impact on carbon emissions will be asked to demonstrate how these will be minimised.

4. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Resource Implications

The capital investment set out in this report was approved at Full Council in February 2020.

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

There are no significant implications for this category. However, any commercial opportunities will follow the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and contractual regulations as per existing policies.

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

There are no significant implications for this category.

4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no significant implications for this category.

4.5 **Engagement and Communications Implications**

There are no significant implications for this category.

4.6 **Localism and Local Member Involvement**

The application process for this Fund will be via the local County Councillor and/or Community Champion.

4.7 **Public Health Implications**

The Community Capital Fund will provide an opportunity for communities to secure funding that, combined with their own assets, will enable them to develop interventions that will improve the health and wellbeing of their community members. There is also the opportunity for the communities to, as part of the process, further strengthen their skills and assets.

Implications	Officer Clearance
Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance?	Yes Name of Financial Officer: Tom Kelly
Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the LGSS Head of Procurement?	Yes Name of Officer: Gus de Silva
Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by the Monitoring Officer?	Yes Name of Legal Officer: Fiona McMillan
Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact?	Yes Name of Officer: Adrian Chapman
Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?	Yes Name of Officer: Christine Birchall
Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact?	Yes Name of Officer: Adrian Chapman
Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health	Yes Name of Officer: Val Thomas

Source Documents	Location
None	N/A

Summary of Application Process

1. Expression of Interest submitted to the relevant Think Communities Area Co-ordinator, via the local County Councillor and/or relevant Community Champion
2. Officer panel, comprising senior representation from key services including Communities, Planning, Highways, Property, Finance and Legal, reviews the Expression of Interest to determine whether it meets the initial criteria, and to offer initial advice and guidance
3. If the initial criteria are met, applicants will be invited to develop a full proposal and submit to the relevant Think Communities Area Co-ordinator, via their County Councillor and/or Community Champion. The same officer panel (described above) will review the proposal, and provide advice and recommendations to the Member Panel
4. Full proposals are presented to the Member Panel, who will make recommendations to the Communities and Partnership Committee. Committee will consider Panel recommendations at its next available meeting
5. The relevant County Councillor and/or Community Champion, and the Think Communities Area Co-ordinator, will together ensure that approved projects progress in accordance with the approvals, with progress reported formally to Committee