

UPDATE ON THE INNOVATE AND CULTIVATE FUND

To: **Communities and Partnerships Committee**

Meeting Date: **24 August 2017**

From: **Sarah Ferguson: Assistant Director, Housing, Communities and Youth**

Electoral division(s): **All**

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

Purpose: **To update the panel on plans for the Innovate and Cultivate Fund**

Recommendation: **The Committee is asked to comment on and agree the recommended process for awarding funds from the Innovate and Cultivate Fund as set out in paragraph 2.3 of this report.**

<i>Officer contact:</i>		<i>Member contacts:</i>	
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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 At the 6th July 2017 Communities and Partnerships Committee it was agreed that the fund would be renamed as the Innovate and Cultivate Fund and a number of proposals were confirmed, including:
- Creating a small grants (£2k- £10k) strand within the overall Fund focusing on capacity building and developing and strengthening networks on the ground to go through a simpler application process with a single panel decision.
 - Retaining a large grants scheme (up to £50k) with a focus on innovative projects involving, as presently, a two-stage application process.
 - Rather than continuing the current open process with no deadlines, to develop timelines for small and large grants with set application deadlines.
 - Renaming the Fund 'Innovate and Cultivate Fund' to reflect the two separate segments of the fund – community capacity building and innovation.
 - Service Leads identifying gaps and challenges within their service areas where bids would be welcomed and communicating them to applicants via workshops and promotional campaigns/materials.
- 1.2 The Committee decisions included those recorded as:
- That the Committee Chairman and Vice Chairman be appointed to the Bid Assessment Panel.
 - That recommendations on grants from the Bid Assessment Panel are reported to this Committee for final decision
- 1.3 Previously General Purposes Committee (GPC) had delegated authority to fund any investments from the Innovation Fund below £50k to the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with Councillor Criswell. That delegation now rests with this Committee.
- 1.4 This paper proposes more detail on the process for application decision making.

2. MAIN ISSUES

- 2.1 Awards from the Innovate and Cultivate Fund will result, in effect, in the commissioning of services being delivered by others to communities in Cambridgeshire. When commissioning services it is usual that Members will have an oversight but would not normally be so involved in individual decisions. In the case of Innovate and Cultivate Fund however, as awards are via a grant scheme, with a focus on a return on the council's investment, it is recognised that Members have a role to play in making these awards.
- 2.2 Membership of the Recommendation Panel (previously called the Selection Panel and more recently referred to in July as the Bid Assessment Panel) currently includes two County Council Service Directors, Chief Finance Officer/Head of Finance, a senior officer involved in managing the fund, a trustee of Cambridgeshire Community Foundation (who administer the fund on behalf of the Council and add value by directing applicants to other

potentially more suitable sources of funding) and the Chair and Vice Chair of this Committee as mentioned in paragraph 1.1.

2.3 In order to address concerns raised at the Communities and Partnerships Committee in July, which included a request for increased transparency of the allocation of the up to £1million fund and greater member involvement, the Committee is asked to consider the following proposals:

- To expand the Recommendation Panel and replace the previously named Committee representation of Chair and Vice Chair, as shown at paragraph 2.2, with representation of up to five County Councillors primarily from this Committee allocated on a politically proportionate basis; three Conservatives, one Liberal Democrat and one Labour from the committee membership including substitutes.
- That all members of the Recommendation Panel have equal scoring 'rights' along with the other panel members.
- That the Recommendation Panel presents the Communities and Partnership Committee with a summary list of applications they recommend for final decision.

3. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all

There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- The focus of the Fund is supporting people to live healthy and independent lives.
- It focuses upon the most vulnerable groups who are most likely to experience health inequalities

3.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- The focus of the Fund is to enhance delivery against this priority e.g. where the support of the voluntary and community sector could make a real difference to the lives of vulnerable people.

4. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Resource Implications

The following bullet points set out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- The review aims to ensure that the Fund makes most efficient use of resources. Implications of the recommendations include more effective use of officer time. The finance team have agreed all recommendations

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

Procurement advice has been taken on the grant application process and member involvement in recommending bids for award and final decision of award.

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

Legal advice has been taken in the setting up of this Fund and in the creation of the grant application and monitoring process.

4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

The focus of this Fund on supporting the most vulnerable will mean this investment will make a positive contribution to issues of equality.

4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

The plans for engagement and communication of this Fund are as agreed at July Committee.

4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

The following bullet points set out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- Community empowerment sits at the heart of the Innovation Fund. The refreshed Fund will enhance the opportunity for local community organisations to bid for projects which harness the energy of their community.
- If agreed, Members will play a greater role in considering each application on its own merits and against the fund criteria. The Communities and Partnerships Committee will receive recommendations for funding from the Recommendation Panel.

4.7 Public Health Implications

- The Innovate and Cultivate Fund affords opportunities for individuals and communities to develop their skills and resilience to undertake initiatives that improve health and well being.

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 Finance?	Yes Name of Procurement Officer: Gus de Silva

Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by LGSS Law?	Yes Name of Legal Officer: Fiona McMillan
Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact?	Yes Name of Officer: Sue Grace
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 Councillor Steve Criswell Name of Officer: Wendy Lansdown
Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health	Yes Name of Officer: Val Thomas

Source Documents	Location
See: https://www.cambscf.org.uk/icf.html	Cambridgeshire Community Foundation website