



Agenda Item No: 2.2

Community Led Housing Support Funding

To:	Housing and Communities Committee
Meeting Date:	7 October 2022
Public report:	Yes
Lead Member:	Councillor Lewis Herbert, Lead Member for Housing and Communities
From:	Roger Thompson, Director of Housing and Development
Key decision:	No
Forward Plan ref:	N/A
Recommendations:	<p>The Housing and Communities Committee is recommended to:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Recommend that the Combined Authority's Board allocates further funding of £100,000 to support community led housing initiatives across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.</p>
Voting arrangements:	A simple majority of all Members present and voting.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This report seeks a recommendation from the Housing and Communities Committee for the Combined Authority's Board to allocate funding of £100,000 to support established community led housing groups across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

2. Background

- 2.1 On 8 June 2022 the Combined Authority's Board approved the Community Homes Strategy as previously approved by the Housing and Communities Committee at its meeting on 10th January 2022 (attached at Appendix A to this report).
- 2.2 In accordance with the approved strategy the Combined Authority's advisors Eastern Community Homes have been engaging with Community led housing groups across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough with the exception of East Cambridgeshire where these groups are assisted by a dedicated officer resource independently provided by East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC).
- 2.3 In July 2022 officers from ECDC approached the Combined Authority for additional funding to support established community led housing groups within East Cambridgeshire.
- 2.4 Eastern Community Homes were consulted and confirmed that similar appetite for support funding exists across the whole of the Combined Authority's (CA) region.

3. Matter for Consideration

- 3.1 The Community Homes Strategy provides a start-up grant facility to support community homes groups during the initial stages of a proposal, and this can facilitate the incorporation of community groups as legal entities.
- 3.2 Further funding challenges are often met by incorporated community led housing groups in the early stages of a project. Examples include meeting the costs of viability appraisals, addressing legal and planning issues, addressing site specific issues such as ground investigations, entering into arrangements for securing a legal interest in a site, conveyancing and preparation of partnership arrangements.

Other organisational development needs include community consultation, training on working as a team, and business planning.

In addition, as a group evolves governance complexities emerge such as finance and taxation issues, contracting and partnership options, and other business planning work that requires professional input.

- 3.3 The proposal is to provide a source of follow-up funding in circumstances where it can be demonstrated that funding could provide a useful resource to address challenges and maintain project momentum.

Applications for funding will be expected to fulfil the criteria specified at Appendix B and applications shall be assessed initially by the CA's community homes advisors.

- 3.4 Applications will be submitted using an application form on a rolling basis to suit project timescales.

The CA and its community homes advisors will promote grant availability to ensure awareness across the CA's region.

- 3.5 Groups should have established status as an incorporated body to access funding and will need to demonstrate a clear and deliverable plan to undertake pre-development work and progress towards a new housing scheme.

Applicants' track record or knowledge of the development process can help to evidence deliverability. However where applicants do not hold a track record for previous development, a plan for accessing appropriate support and advice from experts or professionals will be required at the time of the application.

- 3.6 The amounts of grant funding awarded for applications is likely to vary, so there will be no stated ceiling on the amount of funding that can be applied for. However, the underlying principle is that the whole of the allocated funding is intended to serve multiple schemes across the CA's region.

Significant Implications

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 The Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for 2021 – 2025 included a budget of £100,000 per annum for 2 years towards community housing and the £100K homes projects. The draft MTFP for 2022-23 includes a revised budget for community housing of £70K per annum until 2025 – 2026 to reflect the closure of the £100K Homes project. There is further funding that is yet to be approved of £50K for 2022-2023 and £50K for 2023-2024 and Board are asked to approve this budget to fund the proposal.
- 4.2 There is sufficient headroom in this budget to cover the costs of appointing community homes advisors and to provide funding of £100K.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 The recommendations accord with CPCA's powers under Part 4 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Order 2017 (SI 2017/251). The CPCA will issue grant funding agreements to successful applicants.

6. Public Health implications

- 6.1 No associated public health implications have been identified.

7. Environmental and Climate Change Implications

- 7.1 The report recommendations have neutral implications for the environment and climate change.

8. Appendices

Appendix A – Community Homes Strategy

Appendix B – Funding Criteria

9. Background Papers

[Combined Authority Housing & Communities Cttee 10 Jan 2022](#)

[Combined Authority Board 8 Jun 2022](#)