

<b>Committee:</b>	Cabinet	<b>Date:</b>	Thursday, 6 September 2018
<b>Title:</b>	Community Led Housing Grant Criteria		
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Portfolio Holder for Housing		
<b>Report Author:</b>	Judith Snares, Housing Strategy and Operations Manager jsnares@uttlesford.gov.uk Tel: 01799 510671	<b>Key decision:</b>	N

## Summary

1. This report sets out proposals for the use of the remaining grant funding received by this authority from the Government's Community Housing Fund.

## Recommendations

2. That Cabinet:
  - approve the awarding of small grants to groups for Community Led Housing (CLH) projects from grant funding received from the Governments Community Housing Fund
  - grant authority to the Director of Public Services in consultation with the Housing Portfolio Holder to determine the eligibility criteria and to allocate grants to groups.

## Financial Implications

3. Grants to be awarded from government grant funding received by this authority and ring fenced for this specific purpose. There is £25,000 available.

## Background Papers

4. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.
  - Community Led Housing Fund - grant criteria and application form.

## Impact

- 5.

Communication/Consultation	Groups applying for grants must be community led and must be able to demonstrate that they are working to meet the housing needs of the community
Community Safety	None

Equalities	Community led development is a way of ensuring the involvement of the local community in generating homes that are affordable and meet local need
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None
Sustainability	The provision of a small grant to CLH groups provides support for groups to investigate whether CLH models are right for their community
Ward-specific impacts	CLH models add to the number of affordable homes delivered in the District to meet the housing needs of residents unable to meet their housing needs through the open market. It can also support access to home ownership products that are not available through mainstream providers
Workforce/Workplace	Officer time in assessing grant applications

## Situation

6. Community Led Housing (CLH) is an umbrella term for non-profit, democratically elected, legally incorporated, community groups who seek to deliver housing for the benefit of their community.
7. CLH models include Community Land Trusts (CLT's), Cooperative and Mutual Housing Societies and Cohousing.
8. Depending on the legal model adopted, CLH has the flexibility to maintain affordable housing in perpetuity for future generations.
9. The Council received £34,224 from MHCLG in December 2016 from the Community Led Housing Fund. The funding was allocated to councils based on issues of affordability due to high land values and the number of second homes in the area.
10. Within the terms of the MHCLG CLH Fund, the Council is allowed to use the money received to further the CLH model by upskilling officers, Members and community groups as well as offering support for CLH groups who are seeking to address an unmet need within their community.
11. The Council agreed to pool funding to support a research project with East Herts DC and Epping Forest DC. In addition, Harlow DC were invited to be part of the project as they were part of the Social Housing Market Area (SHMA) and looking at meeting their housing growth through the Garden Communities principles.

12. Approximately £9,000 to date has been spent on commissioning the services of PLEione Consultants who provided support, guidance and information on best practice and policy formation from the Community Led Housing Sector.
13. The Council has approximately £25,000 left of the grant funding received from Government. As this money is ring-fenced, there is a need to commit any future spend against activity that meets the purposes of the grant and will enable community-led housing developments to be delivered across the district.
14. For example the funding could be used to build capacity within local groups to provide them with the appropriate skills and resources to become a community-led housing organisation.
15. It is therefore proposed that the remaining grant is set aside to help groups of local people to develop their own community-led housing solutions and provide support to them in overcoming any obstacles they currently face in making progress.
16. Community led housing groups will be able to bid for a grant of between £500 up to a maximum of £2,000 and will need to provide details of their group and their plans and demonstrate that they are working to meet the housing needs of the community.
17. An application process will be set up for community led housing groups to apply for funding and for this to be monitored. A draft application form for community led housing grants with detailed criteria for applying is attached to this report.
18. The decision on the allocation of a grant will be made by the Director of Public Services in consultation with the Housing Portfolio Holder.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
That the council does not use the monies it has been allocated by government for community housing projects. Officers have to report to government how this money has been spent	1. Little or no risk as the authority has a plan in place for spending this money on CHL	2. It will decrease the chances of future successful bids for government funds if the council cannot demonstrate that the money has been used on appropriate projects	Officers have a programme for how this government grant will be spent appropriately

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.