

RECORD OF DECISION MADE UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

Any interest to declare/ or conflict and any dispensation granted for the Officer or Executive Member
[NO]

Any conflict with any Member of the Panel and the bodies concerned **[NO]** *If yes indicate who and what below*

SERVICE DIRECTORATE: Legal and Community

1. DECISION TAKEN

1.1 The approval of the allocation **Community Facility Capital Grant** funding of:

1.1.1 **£34,750 to GARDEN CITY COMMUNITY GROUP** who operate Mrs Howard Hall, towards updating the heating system and bespoke oak doors for the main hall in keeping with the listed status of the building

2. DECISION TAKER

Cllr Dennis-Harburg (Leader of North Herts Council) in consultation with the Service Director – Legal and Community.

3. DATE DECISION TAKEN:

9.05.23

4. REASON FOR DECISION

4.1 The **District Wide Revenue and Capital Grants Panel** held on 2 May 2023 considered the funding applications from the Garden City Community Group and recorded their recommendations to the Leader of North Herts Council for the formal commitment of capital funds via the delegated authority process. This would be subject to the considerations noted at item 6 below. The reduction of the amount requested, the amount available in the capital budget and the previous decision to provide a grant once the lease is signed off.

5. CONSULTATION WITH MEMBERS

5.1 Consultation on grant applications for consideration took place with the Members of the District Wide Capital and Revenue Grant Panel at a virtual meeting held on 2 May 2023. The grant applicant made a presentation to the Panel in support of their applications and answered questions raised by the Panel in relation to the grant funding request. The decisions outlined in this report are based on the Panel's recommendations.

5.2 The Members of the District Wide Revenue and Capital Grants Panel voted to recommend that Letchworth Garden City Community Group receive the full amount of £35,000 as requested in their application.

Result: Unanimous in favour of

6. APPLICATION DETAILS

6.1 Mrs Elizabeth Howard Memorial Hall

Applicant	LGCCG (Letchworth Garden City Community Group) Project Replacement of heating system and two external doors
Sum requested	£35,000.00
Total project cost	£48,008.00
Match funding	£13,008 through building hire/reserves
Previous support	None in the last 10 years
Council Objectives	People First, Sustainability

6.2 LGCCG were awarded £36,000 to replace the heating system in Mrs Howard Memorial Hall in September 2021. This was awarded with the condition that they signed the full repairing lease agreement with North Hertfordshire Council.

More than 12 months passed from the funding being allocated and the lease had not been signed, although negotiations were ongoing. Under the terms of the Community Facilities Grant Criteria the group were required to report back to the panel for a further recommendation.

In the meantime, some of the urgent work was completed with financial assistance from budgets provided by NHC Estates team, leading to LGCCG amending their application to £30,000.

A meeting of the Community Facility Capital Grant panel took place in November 2022 at which Members voted in favour of the amended grant application on condition that copies of quotes for the work were received. Members also requested that LGCCG, with assistance from the Community Partnerships team leader, discuss their needs with the NHC Conservation officer. At the time the Leader (exercising the function of Executive Member for Community Engagement) was consulted and agreed that any grant would be conditional on the signing of the full repairing lease, which has now taken place (signed off on 29th March 2023).

Since the meeting in November, Community Partnerships officers have liaised with the group on various occasions and have noted that they have additional needs regarding capital works. Following advice from the Community Partnerships team leader, LGCCG have now amended their grant application to include a request for funding for two external doors.

6.3 Outline of project

- Replacement of the existing heating system to a fully operational standard. To reduce wasted heat and to improve thermal efficiency within the premises.
- To replace the main hall external doors to prevent heat loss and additional security.

The new heating system will allow the building to operate fully rather than in partial closure every time the system malfunctions. The current external main hall doors do not provide adequate security or heat retention and are beyond repair. The external doors are unfit for purpose with half inch gaps at both the top and sides.

The boiler does not meet current efficiency standards and as a small charity, any money that can be saved is always welcome.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Chapter 1, s1-8 of the Localism Act 2011 provides a General Power of Competence which gives local authorities the powers to do anything if it is not specifically prohibited in legislation.
- 7.2 Section 137 Local Government Act 1972 provides specific authority for the Council to incur expenditure on anything which is in the interests of and will bring direct benefit to its area. This includes a charity or other body operating for public service.
- 7.3 The decision taker signing the Decision Notice has delegated authority to take such a decision in accordance with the North Hertfordshire District Council Constitution under section 14.6.8(b)(ii)(A) and as Leader of the Council under section 14.6.16.1 *“the Leader can make any decision which is delegated to any Executive Member”* in the absence of an appointed Executive Member in relation to Community engagement and development, including financial assistance and grants to external organisations.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The project allocation remaining amount is £89,750. Of that, £55,000 is ringfenced for previous grants agreed. £50,000 allocated for the construction of a new sports pavilion in Pirton and £5,000 final instalment to Therfield, Royston & Kelshall Sports Association (TRAKSA) on completion of the Therfield sports pavilion.
- 8.2 The amount available to recommend for allocation at this meeting equates to £34,750.
- 8.3 The Panel members recommended that the full amount is provided as requested which would leave an overspend of the capital budget of £250. The Chief Finance Officer was consulted on this recommendation and indicated that it would not be appropriate to allocate beyond the budget. Additionally, Garden City Community Group had indicated at the Panel meeting that this above budget amount of £250 would not be a problem if not awarded.
- 8.4 If the decision is made to agree this grant the Community Facility Capital Grant fund will have been fully allocated.

9. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no relevant risk entries that have been recorded on Pentana Risk, the Council's performance and risk system. Individual events should have their own risk assessments in place to mitigate any health and safety issues. Whenever a request for grant funding for equipment is received, the recipient of the funding will be advised to obtain insurance for the item to avoid a repeat request for funding in the event of the equipment being stolen or damaged. There are no pertinent risk implications for the Authority associated with any items within this report.

10. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 10.2 Grant funding is awarded to community groups that clearly demonstrate positive

impact on the community and wider environment. The projects outlined in this report seek to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

11. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The Social Value Act and “go local” requirements do not apply to this report.

12. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

12.1 The Heating system being purchased is the most environmentally sustainable and thermally efficient that can used in a grade 2 listed building of this age.

13. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are no pertinent Human Resource implications with the item outlined in this report.

NOTIFICATION DATE

12.05.23

Signature of Executive Member taking the decision



Date ...9.5.23.....

Signature of Service Director Legal & Community consulted



Please Note: that *unless urgency provisions apply* EXECUTIVE decisions cannot be implemented until 5 clear working days have elapsed after the decision has been taken to allow for scrutiny call-in.

Call-in does not apply to NON-EXECUTIVE DECISIONS