

NEW HOME BONUS COMMUNITY GRANTS PANEL

Background Information

Following the receipt of a petition at Council in April 2014 the New Homes Bonus Cross Party Working Group was established and met on a number of occasions to discuss the issue and the way forward.

A residents forum was set up and a full presentation on the New Homes Bonus given to over 50 attendees on July 15th 2014. This gave interested parties the opportunity to question officers and members on the level of grant and the basis of calculation for the grant received. The presentation is available on the Council's website under agendas and minutes.

Following this meeting an email address was set up to receive input from any residents in relation to the New Homes Bonus and a 2 week period for comments were advised to Parishes, Councillors and to the public via the press and the Council's website. The Council received almost 150 responses which were collated and discussed by the Working Group.

Officers were then requested by the Working Group to develop a number of options to address the concerns raised, with the aim to propose a scheme that would enable an element of the future New Homes Bonus funding to be allocated for community schemes.

At the Cabinet meeting on 7th January 2015 a proposal from the Working Group was considered which recommended a scheme and the approval of a percentage of the additional New Homes Bonus grant received in 2015/16 to be used to calculate the amount to be allocated to the scheme. This proposal was approved by Cabinet and was then passed to full Council at its meeting on 19th January 2015 where the scheme was approved and the amount to be allocated to the scheme was deferred until the February 2015 meeting as part of the budget setting process. The sum of £87,000 was allocated to the scheme as part of that budget setting process.

Details in respect of the scheme and relevant application forms were then uploaded to the Council's website together with a timeline of the process and deadlines for completed applications.

The purpose of this meeting is to give each applicant an opportunity to present their application and respond to questions from Members, in order for Members to consider whether each application is a) appropriate and b) meets the criteria set down in the New Homes Bonus Community Grants Scheme and detailed in the relevant application forms.

Details of the scoring matrix that will be used are attached at agenda item 3.