

Nottingham City Council Delegated Decision



Nottingham
City Council

Reference Number:

3547

Author:

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Department:

Development and Growth

Contact:

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Subject:

Acceptance of Homes England Community Housing Fund revenue grant and creation of new temporary Community Housing Officer post

Total Value:

£30,067 (Type: Revenue)

Decision Being Taken:

1. To accept a Homes England Community Housing Fund grant of £27,060 to create a temporary Community Housing Development Officer post in Regeneration (Development and Growth), to support Community-led Housing projects.

2. To agree to contribute £3,007 from the Housing Revenue Account to supplement the grant from Homes England.

3. To recruit for a temporary Community Housing Development Officer post in Regeneration.

This decision contains both executive and non-executive aspects approved under delegation 16.

Reasons for the Decision(s)

Community-led housing designates several distinct, but often related, types of development: community land trusts, shared equity housing co-operatives, co-housing and custom/self-build. The Government is encouraging community-led housing developments as a way of delivering additional affordable housing. Homes England has invited local authorities to bid for Community Housing Fund revenue grant to fund Community Housing Development Officer posts and to cover training, professional fees and other costs associated with community-led housing projects. This bid was submitted as a result of a discussion with one of several existing community-led housing groups in Nottingham about ways in which the Council might be able to support local projects. Homes England is also providing capital funding grants, and the new officer's tasks will include preparing and co-ordinating capital funding bids.

The Homes England grant will fund a 1 year, part-time Community Housing Development Officer post (grade H) in Housing Strategy and Partnerships for the financial year 2019/20, at a cost of £20,067. The remaining £6,993 will fund grants to cover community housing group start-up costs and other costs associated with community housing projects.

The Council is required under the grant conditions to make a contribution of 10% towards the total cost of £30,067 (£20,067 for the post and £10,000 for small grants). This contribution of £3,007 will be funded from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). It is appropriate for this contribution to come from the HRA because the role will involve investigating ways in which the Council would be able to facilitate community housing, principally through the provision of an element of HRA-owned affordable housing, delivered by Nottingham City Homes, within community housing developments.

The post-holder will provide a dedicated resource to support this innovative way of increasing the supply of affordable housing and diversifying the tenure mix. The post-holder's main responsibilities will be: to establish local demand; to promote community housing; to enable the formation of new community housing groups; to support existing community housing groups to develop sustainable organisations; to identify and secure appropriate sites; to plan viable schemes; to access training, funding, technical and other expert/professional support; to liaise with national networks and other organisations; and to bid for capital funding.

Other Options Considered:

Not to bid for Homes England Community Housing Fund revenue grant. This option was rejected because it would have resulted in missing an opportunity to support projects that may lead to an increase in the supply of affordable housing and a more diverse tenure mix, and which demonstrates the Council's commitment to innovative forms of housing provision, at a low cost to the Council.

Background Papers:

None

Published Works:

None

Affected Wards:

Citywide

Colleague / Councillor Interests:

None

Consultations:	Those not consulted are not directly affected by the decision.
Crime and Disorder Implications:	None
Equality:	EIA not required. Reasons: This decision does not propose changes to policies, services or functions.
Relates to staffing:	Yes
Decision Type:	Officer
Executive Decision?	Yes
Scheme of Delegation Reference Number or Other Source of Delegation:	16
Subject to Call In:	No The call-in procedure does not apply to the decision because the value of the decision is below the call in threshold.
Advice Sought:	Legal, Finance, Human Resources
Legal Advice:	<p>Prior to the grant being accepted, the grant agreement, and any additional documentation concerning the grant, should be checked by the Commercial, Employment and Education Legal Team (Andrew James). In addition to that, the basis of the additional funding for start-up costs should be checked, to ensure that we are aware of the circumstances under which we may use this funding.</p> <p>The advice from HR should also be followed in terms of contract type and term and dates.</p> <p>Advice provided by Raina Mason (Senior Solicitor) on 01/05/2019.</p>

Finance Advice:

The decision is to accept a grant of £27,060, which will be used to fund the creation of a temporary post and associated costs. The Council are required to contribute 10% towards this, i.e. £3,007, resulting in a total budget of £30,067.

The Council's contribution will be made from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), as an aim of the post is in supporting new housing developments, which include Council-owned housing, alongside community housing. The contribution will be funded from budget underspends from Retained Housing budgets within the HRA, and therefore have no impact on the Council's medium-term financial plan.

Advice provided by Julie Dorrington (Senior Accountant (Housing Revenue Account)) on 10/05/2019.

HR Advice:

Given the part-time, fixed term and specialist nature of this role, whilst the post should be advertised through an open recruitment exercise, consideration should also be given to this opportunity being made available as a secondment/development opportunity for Nottingham City Council employees.

The post holder should be appointed on a fixed term contract, given the limited funding. Advice should be sought from the Grantor on whether the funding can be carried forward to 2020/21, given the delay to the recruitment to this position

Advice provided by Shilpa Arya (HR Consultant) on 25/04/2019.

Signatures:

Chris Henning (Corporate Director for Development and Growth)

SIGNED and Dated: 06/06/2019