

RECORD OF EXECUTIVE DECISION TAKEN BY AN EXECUTIVE MEMBER

This form **MUST** be used to record any decision taken by the Elected Mayor or an individual Executive Member (Portfolio Holder).

The form must be completed and passed to the Service Manager (Committee & Administrative Services) no later than NOON on the second working day after the day on which the decision is taken. No action may be taken to implement the decision(s) recorded on this form until 7 days have passed and the Service Manager (Committee & Administrative Services) has confirmed the decision has not been called in.

1. Description of decision

Bedford Borough Council accepts the award of £75,000 from the HCA to support the investigation of options for the development and delivery of Garden Villages

2. Date of decision

12 April 2017

3. Reasons for decision

Bedford Borough Council made a bid for funding to the Garden Villages programme in July 2016. The Council has, as a result, been offered a grant of £75,000. The level of funding offered recognises the early stage that the Council is at with this process. The terms of the offer of the grant are to help the Council further develop its thinking and strategy for the garden village proposal. The decision to accept the funding is to enable the Council resource further investigation of options and development of proposals.

4. Alternatives considered and rejected

If the grant funding is not accepted the Council will have to fund the investigation of these proposals and develop a strategy from its own resources or cease the activity

5. How decision is to be funded

Grant funding from HCA

6. Conflicts of interest

Name of all Executive members who were consulted AND declared a conflict of interest.	Nature of interest	Did Standards Committee give a dispensation for that conflict of interest? (If yes, give details and date of dispensation)	Did the Chief Executive give a dispensation for that conflict of interest? (If yes, give details and the date of the dispensation).

The Mayor has been consulted on this decision

JA

Signed D. Hodgson Date 12 April 2017 Name of Decision Taker MAYOR DAVE HODGSON

This is a public document. A copy of it must be given to the Service Manager (Committee & Administrative Services) as soon as it is completed.

Date decision published: 13/4/17

Date decision can be implemented if not called in: 26/4/17

(Decision to be made exempt from call in.....~~YES~~ or NO.....)

Bedford Borough Council – Report to the Mayor

Date of Report: 27 March 2017

Report by: Assistant Director Planning

Subject: Acceptance of Homes and Communities Agency Funding to progress the work on potential Garden Villages

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) is making funding available to local authorities to support their work on garden villages. Bedford Borough Council submitted a bid in July 2016. A sum of £75,000 has been awarded which recognises the early stage that the Council is at with this process.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Bedford Borough Council accepts the award of £75,000 to support the investigation of options for the development and delivery of garden villages.

3. Reasons For Recommendations

- 3.1 Bedford Borough Council submitted a bid for funding to the Garden Villages programme in July 2016. The Council has, as a result, been offered a grant of £75,000. The level of funding offered recognises the early stage that the Council is at with this process. The terms of the offer of the grant are that the funding is to be used as part of a supplementary support package to help the Council develop its thinking and strategy for the garden village proposal.

4. Key Implications

Legal Issues

- 4.1 Grants that contribute towards the cost of providing the sites are provided by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). The grant making powers of the HCA are governed by the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008. Section 17 of the Housing Act 1985

Policy Issues

- 4.2 The Local Plan 2035 (in preparation) includes consideration of potential new settlements

- 4.3 The Council bid for funding to the Garden Villages programme in July 2016. The Council's bid was not one of the 14 Garden Villages announced in early January,
- 4.4 A limited amount of funding has been offered recognising that the Bedford proposals are at an early stage.

Resource Implications

- 4.5 The grant of £75,000 is approximately 15% of what was requested. The scale of the work will not be as envisaged but this grant will support the further investigation of the options and potential. It is anticipated that the funding will be used in 17/18 and 18/19 financial years.

Risk Implications

- 4.6 There are no significant risks associated with accepting the grant.
- 4.7 The risk of not accepting the grant is that proposals to bring forward garden villages will be less well considered.

Environmental Implications

- 4.8 The aim of the Garden Villages programme is to secure environmental benefits in the design of settlements and in long-term provisions for stewardship of community assets.

Equalities Impact

- 4.9 In preparing this report, due consideration has been given to the Borough Council's statutory Equality Duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, as set out in Section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010".
- 4.10 A relevance test for equality has been completed. The equality test determined that the activity has no relevance to Bedford Borough Council's statutory equality duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. An equality analysis is not needed.

5. Details

- 5.1 £75,000 has been awarded by the HCA to support the Council's assessment of potential garden villages. Four proposals are being considered as part of the work on the Local Plan 2035. A bid for assistance was submitted in July 2016; the amount requested was £400,000. The sum offered cannot possibly carry the expectation that the scale of work indicated in the original bid will be delivered.

- 5.2 The letter from the HCA says “There is much interest in the success of this programme in delivering garden villages that are great places to live and we will be undertaking some light touch monitoring of the progress with developing the North Beds garden village proposal. We will be in touch with you about this and to explore how you will use the funding allocation, and what further support you may need from the Agency to help you develop the proposal.”
- 5.3 Discussions will now take place to determine how the funding should be used. Priorities include investigating the infrastructure requirements needed to support the scale of development being considered in the four locations that have been identified (for example highway impact and provision of utilities), and consideration of alternative delivery mechanisms that could be put in place to support the delivery of infrastructure and housing, long term stewardship and land value capture.
- 5.4 The work programme will be developed in consultation with the HCA in the light of any other resources that the HCA can make available and the progress that the Council has made in considering the Garden Village proposals already.

6. Summary of Consultations and Outcome

- 6.1 The following Council units or Officers and/or other organisations have been consulted in preparing this report:
- a) Finance – Principal Accountant
 - b) Legal – Service Manager Legal Services
- 6.2 No adverse comments have been received

Report Contact Officer: Jim Pollard, Housing Development and
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Previous Relevant Minutes: None

Background Papers: None

Appendices: None