



To: Executive Councillor for Climate Change and Growth  
Report by: Head of Corporate Strategy  
Relevant scrutiny committee: Environment Scrutiny Committee 11/1/2010  
Wards affected: All Wards

## **REVIEW OF SUSTAINABLE CITY GRANTS Not a Key Decision**

### **1. Executive summary**

- 1.1 This report reviews the administration and core purposes of Sustainable City Grants and recommends that they are combined and re-focused mainly on specific project based activity which delivers the Council's environmental objectives as well as encouraging a reduction of the reliance of organisations on core funding from the City Council.
- 1.2 The report recommends that the administration of Sustainable City grants is moved into Community Development so that administration, approval and monitoring processes can be simplified and aligned with other funding streams.
- 1.3 The report also reviews existing core funding commitments for organisations and partnerships supported by Sustainable City grants.

### **2. Recommendations**

The Executive Councillor is recommended:

- 2.1 To rationalise both Sustainable City grants budgets into a single project based grants budget of £50,000.
- 2.2 To move the administration of this budget into Community Development and align the management, application and approval processes to those used by Community Development for other Council grants budgets.
- 2.3 To confirm the existing core funding commitments for organisations and partnerships as set out in Section 6.

### **3. Background**

3.1 Sustainable City grants are currently administered by the Sustainable City team which re-located into the new Corporate Strategy section in August.

3.2 The Council currently provides two types of Sustainable City grants:

#### **Core funding grants**

3.3 These are for organisations working locally to progress the objectives within the Cambridge Environment Strategy. They help cover the expenditure associated with an environmental organisation's essential or basic workload such as accommodation, staff or general administration costs.

3.4 The 2010/11 budget for core funding was provisionally set at £68,840 for 2010/11 but was reduced to £51,750 in January 2010 as part of the budget setting process for 2010/11 and to reflect the fact that the budget was under-subscribed.

#### **Project grants**

3.5 Sustainable City Project Grants are available to locally based organisations or community groups undertaking practical projects which:

- Support one or more of the priority areas identified by the Environmental Framework, and
- Involve and/or bring benefits to the residents of Cambridge.

3.6 The 2010/11 budget for project grants was £11,090 but was boosted to £41,090 on a one-off basis through the amalgamation of the residual capital budget of £30,000 with the revenue budget following a report to Environment Scrutiny Committee on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2010. The capital programme ends in March 2011.

3.7 As of November 2010, £13,780 of the 2010/11 budget for Sustainable City project grants had been allocated. Further applications are currently being evaluated.

### **4. Review of Sustainable City Grants**

- 4.1 Officers have reviewed the way Sustainable City grants are administered, allocated and their effectiveness at helping to deliver the Council's environmental objectives.
- 4.2 In particular we have looked at the core funding grants budget which was not fully allocated in 2010/11 and will not be fully allocated in 2011/12, based upon current commitments.
- 4.3 We are proposing that we move towards a position where:
- We encourage organisations to reduce dependency on core funding from the City Council.
  - We work with groups and organisations to help signpost them to other funding sources such as the government's £100m 'Transition Fund', which will help voluntary groups and social enterprises adapt to the tougher financial climate.
  - Grants are focused more on defined projects which will deliver specific outcomes aligned to our environmental objectives.
  - We proactively seek local organisations who could deliver small environmental projects by working with local people through area committees.
- 4.4 To help achieve this, the following actions are proposed:
- Combine the Sustainable City core funding and project grants into a single budget.
  - Re-focus the grant criteria to focus on delivery of specific outcomes.
  - Move the management and administration of Sustainable City grants to Community Development and align the application and approval process to the other grants that they administer.
  - Retain the responsibility for approving applications for Sustainable City grants with the Executive Councillor for Climate Change and Growth through Environment Scrutiny Committee (as shown in the table at 4.6).
  - Retain expertise on the Sustainable City grants priorities within Corporate Strategy to provide advice to Community Development officers and to advise and encourage local groups and organisations in making applications.
- 4.5 These changes, alongside the reduced demand for Sustainable City 'core funding' in 2010/11 and 2011/12 mean that we can make an on-going saving of £17,530 from April 2011. This will leave a single Sustainable City grants budget of £50,000 from April 2011.

4.6 It is proposed to simplify the application process and align it with the process used by Community Development as shown in the table below.

Existing Process	Proposed Process
<p><b>Project Grants = £5,000 max</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applications invited every quarter for existing financial year</li> <li>• Officer recommendations to member panel</li> <li>• Member panel meets quarterly to agree applications</li> <li>• No report to Environment Scrutiny</li> </ul> <p><b>Core Funding Grants = no set limit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applications invited in one window Aug – Oct for next financial year</li> <li>• Decision is taken by Executive Councillor through Environment Scrutiny in January.</li> <li>• Executive Councillor agrees applications</li> </ul>	<p><b>Project based Grants (£5,000 max)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applications invited in one main grants round during Aug-Oct to allocate funding for the next financial year and reported to Environment Scrutiny committee in January.</li> <li>• After the above process is completed, applications can be made at any other time during the year and considered on an individual basis until the budget has been spent. In this case the following will apply:</li> <li>• Awards for £2,000 or under will be made by Officer Action (The Community Development Operations and Resources Manager in consultation with the Sustainability Officer)</li> <li>• Awards of £2,000 - £5,000 will be made in consultation with Executive Councillor for Climate Change and Growth plus Environment Scrutiny Chair and Spokes.</li> </ul>

4.7 Officers in Community Development intend to pull together an annual schedule of all grants awarded by the City Council across the different grants budgets at the end of each financial year. This will be made available to all members.

## 5. Review of Sustainable City Grants Criteria

5.1 Officers will be reviewing the eligibility criteria for voluntary groups and organisations wishing to apply for a Sustainable City grant to ensure they are aligned with the Environmental Strategy alongside those criteria used by Community Development. During 2011/12 the aim will be to move to a position where the Council uses one application form and a single process to manage its grants. The benefits of this will

include a simplified and common process for voluntary groups, better signposting and access to alternative grant opportunities and support, consistency in monitoring arrangements, greater transparency of where the Council's money is spent and a simplified process for voluntary groups. This approach will also help to facilitate any future options to devolve decision making down to an area level, should the Council wish to do so.

- 5.2 The combined Sustainable City grants will fund project based activity. Whilst this does mean that there will be no 'core funding' of groups or organisations (except for the existing funding commitments described in Section 6 below for 2011/12 and 2012/13), they will still be able to apply for funding to support projects undertaken. Applications will continue to be assessed in terms of their ability to support the priority areas within the Council's Environmental Framework and will be required to clearly demonstrate how the project will help to deliver one or more of the 3 outcomes set out within the framework.

Cambridge City Council Environmental Framework: Outcomes and Objectives

Outcomes	Objectives
A. Tackle the causes and consequences of climate change	A1. Reduce carbon dioxide emissions
	A2. Manage climate change risks.
	A3. Reduce fuel poverty.
B. Minimise waste	B1. Reduce the amount of waste generated
	B2. Increase waste reuse, recycling and composting.
	B3. Reduce waste sent to landfill.
C. Protect the local environment	C1. Reduce pollution of air, water and land.
	C2. Improve street and environmental cleanliness by reducing levels of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly-posting/fly-tipping.
	C3. Protect and enhance local wildlife.

- 5.3 Applicants will need to demonstrate why the project is needed and who it will benefit and will be required to supply the City Council with agreed monitoring information by specific deadlines.
- 5.4 Voluntary organisations and groups will be encouraged to sign the County-wide Compact. The Compact is an agreement between the

statutory and voluntary sectors setting out how will work together. It covers areas such as how we will consult, funding relationships, communications and equalities.

## 6. Existing core funding to Organisations and Partnerships

6.1 Officers have reviewed the existing core funding commitments which are shown in the table below.

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Cambridge Past, Present & Future	£3,000	-	-
Cambridge Carbon Footprint	£18,000	£15,000	-
Cambridge City Greenways	£16,500	£16,750	£16,995
Cambs Biodiversity Partnership	£3,500	£3,500	£3,500
Cambs Travel for Work Partnership	£10,750	£11,250	£11,750
<b>Total</b>	<b>£51,750</b>	<b>£46,500</b>	<b>£32,245</b>

### ***Cambridge Past, Present & Future***

6.2 This organisation is a charity whose aim is to vigorously champion the sustainable development of the city and its surroundings. They want growth and development to inspire creativity and vitality through quality of design and to contribute to the vibrancy and dynamism of the city. They help to do this by:

- Positively influencing planning developments
- Delivering environmental education
- Protecting and managing the green spaces and historic buildings in their care - for the benefit of all.

6.3 More information about Cambridge Past, Present and Future can be found at this website: <http://www.cambridgeppf.org/index.html>

### ***Cambridge Carbon Footprint***

6.4 Cambridge Carbon Footprint is a local, voluntary organisation concerned with climate change. Their aim is to help people work together creatively to make real reductions in their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Their core activities include running stalls, giving presentations, holding workshops and providing training in climate change communication for volunteers and groups and running a number of projects concerned with energy use in the home.

6.5 Existing core funding commitments to 2011/12 will stand. Any funding applications beyond 2011/12 will be for project based activity linked to specific agreed outcomes.

- 6.6 More information about Cambridge Carbon Footprint can be found at this website: <http://cambridgecarbonfootprint.org/>

### ***Cambridge City Greenways***

- 6.7 The Cambridge City Greenways Project is managed by the Wildlife Trust. It aims to enhance wildlife habitats within the city of Cambridge through practical management work including raising the profile of the wildlife in the city and its value to the local community, and encouraging local people to get involved. The project focuses on four identified Greenways, as well as County and City Wildlife Sites within the City. Greenways are corridors of wildlife habitat leading into the City that are designated on the City's Local Plan.
- 6.8 The project began in 1998 and is principally funded by Cambridge City Council. Existing core funding commitments to 2012/13 will stand. Any funding application beyond 2012/13 will be for project based activity linked to specific agreed outcomes.
- 6.9 More information about Cambridge City Greenways can be found at this website: <http://www.wildlifebcnp.org/citygreenways.htm>

### **Existing core funding to Partnerships**

- 6.10 Currently, two partnerships are funded from the Sustainable City core funding budget. Officers do not believe that these partnerships should be funded from a grants budget designed to provide support to locally based community groups and organisations. Therefore, it is proposed that funding for these two partnerships, as set out below, is removed from the Sustainable City grants budget and retained within the Strategy and Partnership's base budget. A decision on whether to continue funding beyond 2012/13 will be made in 12 month's time.

### ***Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biodiversity Partnership***

- 6.11 This partnership promotes the conservation of habitats and species in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough through the production and implementation of Local Biodiversity Action Plans. The plans outline the necessary action for the next 10 years to preserve and enhance biodiversity in farmland, woodland, wetland grassland and urban areas.
- 6.12 More information on the work of the partnership can be found at its website:  
<http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/environment/natureconservation/action/partnership/>

6.13 Officers believe that the partnership presents good value for a relatively small contribution of £3,500 per annum. It is proposed to continue funding this partnership until 2012/13 as set out in the table at 6.1.

### ***Cambridgeshire Travel for Work Partnership***

6.14 Travel for Work Partnership's (TfW) aim is to get as many employers in the County as possible implementing measures to reduce drive alone commuting and travel on business. They aim to do this by supporting employers to develop workplace travel plans.

6.15 TfW was established in 1997/8. The City Council was one of five founding partners. Initially, funding provided for one person to support the City, South Cambridgeshire and County Councils, Addenbrooke's Hospital, the Health Authority and University with establishing their own travel plans. All these organisations, including the City Council, now have functioning travel plans. They continue to fund TfW to support these travel plans and to support the wider environmental, health and economic objectives of the individual organisations.

6.16 Since that time the Partnership has grown and now employs one manager and 2 officers. The partnership now works with 87 employment sites employing over 61,000 commuters. More information on the partnership's work can be found at its website: <http://www.tfw.org.uk/>

6.17 Currently there is some doubt about future funding via Cambridgeshire County Council. TfW is awaiting a decision on whether Local Transport Plan funding will continue and a bid has been made to seek funding from highway related developer contributions for the next three years.

6.18 The City Council is a major funder of the TfW partnership. We understand from discussions with other partners that continued funding of TfW at the present level is subject to decisions that they will need to make in the context of wider budget pressures.

6.19 Officers believe that the City Council's current funding level is high compared to other partners and should be aligned to South Cambridgeshire District Council and NHS Cambridgeshire. We also believe that the TfW partnership should seek other funding opportunities. For example, by charging non-funding businesses for their services.



6.20 Therefore, it is proposed to reduce funding to £8,000 in 2011/12 and to £6,000 in 2012/13. We also propose that any City Council funding is conditional on partners confirming their current funding levels.

6.21 The current year funding for TfW is shown in the table below.

<b>TfW funding 2010-11</b>			
Cambridge City Council		<b>£10,750</b>	Sustainable City Grant
Cambridgeshire County Council	£40,000	<b>£77,419</b>	From LTP funds (2010-11 is last year of current allocation. Currently awaiting outcome of LTP rewrite for 2011-16)
	£37,419		Special one-off grant to cover balance of 2010-11
NHS Cambridgeshire		<b>£6,000</b>	
Huntingdonshire DC		<b>£1,500</b>	
South Cambridgeshire DC		<b>£6,000</b>	
University		<b>£2,000</b>	
Other		<b>£7,900</b>	Repayment of TfW from Travel Plan Plus Project
<b>Total</b>		<b>£111,569</b>	

## 7. Implications

### Financial

Combining the Sustainable City Grants budgets as proposed in section 4 would deliver an on-going saving of £17,530.

Reducing funding to the Travel for Work Partnership as proposed in paragraph 6.20 would save an additional £3,250 in 2011/12 and £5,750 in 2012/13.

### Staffing, Equal Opportunities, Procurement, Environmental

This proposal will have a minimal affect on staffing because the 'sustainability' expertise and advice will remain within Corporate Strategy.

Re-focusing the grants budget on smaller project based grants and encouraging groups to submit applications for funding will broaden the number of local people engaged with the Council on sustainability issues.

**Community Safety**

None directly

**8. Background papers**

Links to the websites of the organisations that we currently core fund are given within the report.

**9. Inspection of papers**

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

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