

Decision by Portfolio Holder



Report reference: HPS-001-2018/19
Date of report: 03-December-2018

**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Housing and Property Services

Author: Rachel Smith (Ext 2710)

Democratic Services: J Leither

Subject: Minor Estate Enhancements for Residents Associations

Decision:

- (1) That the Limes Farm Residents Association be granted £500 from the delegated budget for Minor Estate Enhancements for the year 2018/19, in order that minor estate enhancements may be carried out within the defined geographical area covered by the Limes Farm Residents Association.
- (2) That the Service Director (Housing and Property Services) be granted delegated authority to agree all future requests from recognised resident associations, for a delegated budget of up to £500, which may be requested annually, funded by the delegated Minor Estate Enhancement budget, in accordance with the conditions agreed by the former Housing Committee as set out at Paragraph 1 of the report, and the District-wide Tenant Participation Agreement 2018-21.

ADVISORY NOTICE: <i>A Portfolio Holder may not take a decision on a matter on which he/she has declared a Pecuniary interest. A Portfolio Holder with a non-pecuniary interest must declare that interest when exercising delegated powers.</i>	
I have read and approve/ do not approve (delete as appropriate) the above decision:	
Comments/further action required:	
Signed: Councillor S-A Stavrou	Date: 10 th December 2018
<i>Non-pecuniary interest declared by Portfolio Holder/ conflict of non-pecuniary interest declared by any other consulted Cabinet Member:</i> None	<i>Dispensation granted by Standards Committee:</i> Yes/No or n/a
Office use only: Call-in period begins: 11 th December 2018	Expiry of Call-in period: 17 th December 2018

**After completion, one copy of this pro forma should be returned to
Democratic Services IMMEDIATELY**

**Initialed as original copy by
Portfolio Holder:**

Reason for decision:

To enable Limes Farm Residents Association, Chigwell to secure £500 from the delegated budget for Minor Estate Enhancements, so that that minor estate enhancements may be carried out within the defined geographical area covered by the Limes Farm Residents Association. For reasons of efficiency, in future it recommended that delegated authority be granted to the Service Director (Housing and Property Services) to agree all future requests from recognised resident associations, for a delegated budget of up to £500, which may be requested annually, funded by the delegated Minor Estate Enhancement budget, in accordance with the conditions agreed by the former Housing Committee as set out at Paragraph 1 of the report, and the District-wide Tenant Participation Agreement 2018-21.

Options considered and rejected:

1. Not to agree the application made by the Limes Farm Residents Association to secure a delegated budget of £500, to enable minor estate enhancements to be carried out within the defined geographical area covered by the Limes Farm Residents Association.
2. To approve the application made by the Limes Farm Residents Association to secure a delegated budget for minor estate enhancements but for a different amount.
3. Not to grant delegated authority to the Service Director (Housing and Property Services) to agree all future requests from recognised resident associations, for a delegated budget of up to £500 and continue to seek a Portfolio Holder decision in each instance.

Background Report:

1. At its meeting on 21 March 2000 (Minute 117 refers), the former Housing Committee agreed that a budget of between £50 & £5,000 per annum be delegated to each recognised resident association, to be used to consider the provision of minor estate enhancements by the Council, with the approval of estate-based Tenant Participation agreements. It was agreed that resident associations would be allowed to carry forward underspends on delegated budgets for minor estate improvements into a maximum of two subsequent years, in order to accumulate funds to meet the cost of more expensive improvements on estates.
2. The District-wide Tenant Participation Agreement was developed in conjunction with the Epping Forest District Tenants Forum and formally agreed by both parties in March 2000. The Epping Forest District Tenant and Leaseholders Federation formally agreed an updated version of the Agreement in November 2011, which was further updated by the Tenant and Leaseholders Panel in 2018. Under the Agreement, the Council supports existing resident associations and encourages new associations by providing financial support. This support takes the form of annual Resident Association Support Grants of up to £250 and delegated budgets for minor estate enhancements of up to a maximum of £500. In 2016, delegated authority was given to the Director of Communities, to agree all future requests for annual Resident Association Support Grants, however the granting of delegated budgets for minor estate enhancements remained with the Housing Portfolio holder (HGG-005-2016/17).
3. The Delegated Budget for Minor Estate Enhancements is a sum of money, held by the Council to provide minor enhancements for housing areas that have formally recognised resident associations. The associations can decide how the budget should be spent in the area that they cover. The current amount of delegated budget available for each association is up to £500. Any works requested by the association from the delegated budget are undertaken by the Council, subject to the Service Director (Housing and Property Services) being satisfied that the proposed use of the funding would not be inappropriate.

4. Only resident associations that meet the Council's recognition criteria are formally recognised by the Council. Included in the process of formal resident association recognition is the requirement for local estate based agreements. These are drafted by the Council and must be agreed by new associations within three months of their Constitution being approved by their membership. Resident associations must apply for recognition by the Council each year.
5. The following resident associations are currently recognised by the Council:

Limes Farm Resident Association
Oakwood Hill Residents Association (OHERA)
Shelly Residents Association
Romeland Residents Association
Epping Forest Leaseholders Association
Epping Forest Sheltered Forum

It should be noted that although agreements are in place for the Epping Forest Leaseholders Association and Epping Forest Sheltered Forum and as such are recognised by the Council, they do not receive Support Grants or delegated budgets for minor estate enhancements.

6. It is recommended that the Limes Farm Residents Association be granted a delegated budget of £500 from the delegated Minor Estate Enhancement budget, to enable minor estate enhancements to be carried out within the defined geographical area covered by the Limes Farm Residents Association.
7. It is also recommended that approval for future requests from the delegated Minor Estate Enhancement budget, received from recognised resident associations, in accordance with the conditions agreed by the former Housing Committee as set out at Paragraph 1 of the report, and the District-Wide Tenant Participation Agreement, be delegated to the Service Director (Housing and Property Services).

Resource Implications:

£500 from the delegated Minor Estate Enhancement budget within existing resources, to enable minor estate enhancements to be carried out within the defined geographical area covered by the Limes Farm Residents Association.

An additional £1,500 may be required from the delegated Minor Estate Enhancement budget, should the remaining recognised Residents Associations also apply for the maximum allowance. Similarly, this could be financed from within existing resources.

Legal and Governance Implications:

Housing Act 1985

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

This grant is to enable the Resident Associations to take responsibility locally for improvements they feel are important to local residents. It is not possible to define any safer, cleaner and greener implications since the grant is for the resident associations to decide on its best use.

Consultation Undertaken:

N/A

Initialled as original copy by Portfolio Holder:

Background Papers:

- District-wide Tenant Participation Agreement 2018-2021.
- Decision by Portfolio Holder in October 2013 *“Tenant Participation Agreement, Tenant Association Recognition, Support Grants & Delegated Budget”*.
- Decision by Portfolio Holder in October 2016, “Support Grants to Residents Associations”.

Impact Assessments:**Risk Management:**

Limes Farm Residents Association has identified as a collective, a number of minor enhancements that they would like to be carried out within the defined geographical area that the association covers. Not providing a delegated budget of £500 from the delegated Minor Estate Enhancement budget would prevent the Limes Farm Residents Association from enabling these minor estate enhancements. This fledgling group receives intensive support from the Council’s Tenant Participation Officer and granting a delegated budget of £500 for minor estate enhancements will give the group a sense of purpose, helping to retain the interest of its members.

Key Decision Reference (Y): N**Equality Analysis:**

The Equality Act 2010 requires that the Public Sector Equality Duty is actively applied in decision-making. This means that the equality information provided to accompany this report is essential reading for all members involved in the consideration of this report. The equality information is provided as an Appendix to the report.