

Senior Officer Urgent Decision

Name of report writer: Jo Garfoot/ Amy Gilbert-Jeans

Date: 21 February 2022

Ref:



Title: Request for retrospective authority to bid and to proceed with the MoU required for the release of successful bid funding as part of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund

Exempt from publication

No

Summary:

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is required to be signed in order for us to meet the deadlines as set out by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy. Following our successful bid through Phase 1 of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Programme, we were alerted on the 7th February that we have successfully secured the funding we bid for. A number of documents including a MOU now need to be signed by the Authority in order for us to proceed.

This report also seeks retrospective approval to submit the above mentioned bid as outlined in both the recommendation and main report below

Recommendation:

(1) To retrospectively approve the bid submitted to the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund in August 2021 and to enter into the resulting MOU associated with the funding awarded.

a) Reasons for Recommendation

To ensure the Property and Asset Team are able to progress through the programme as set out and enter into an agreement with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. The deadlines for preparation of the required paperwork have been tight, the housing team have been supported by the legal team in order to ensure all relevant due-diligence has been carried out.

b) Alternative Options considered

There are no alternative options in this instance as the deadline is too close (28th February) to go through formal Council governance. Members are aware of our intention to secure funding through this route, it has been included in the Housing Service Plan 2022-2023 and the match funding through the Housing Revenue Account has been included as part of our draft budget for 2022/2023.

c) Risk Considerations

Negligible risk of us not fulfilling the terms of this programme as, prior to submission, the bid was fully scoped and designed to be easily deliverable within the expected timescales, all delivery partners and accreditations are in place and supply chains secured (as much as is possible in current Covid / Brexit circumstances) All delivery milestones are clearly understood and mechanisms in place to meet them in a timely manner, as we did with the GHG programme last year.

d) Policy and Budgetary Considerations

The internal financial (match-funding) element of the bid is already within our existing budget so there are no new budgetary considerations and all works will be completed within policy guidelines. The programme links closely with the Councils Climate Change Action Plan and will directly contribute towards the objective to improve our housing stock and ensure better carbon efficiency.

1. Main Body of the report

In order to support EDDCs aspiration to have a carbon neutral housing portfolio by 2040, a bid was written and submitted to the Government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) phase 1 in August 2021.

The funding level requested within the bid was £612k with EDDC match-funding £835,500 via the Housing Revenue Account. The reason the majority of this particular bid is 'self-funded' is due to us applying the learning from our successful delivery of the Green Homes Grant (GHG) programme and subsequently using a 'Fabric First / Least Regret' model for delivery this time. This means many of the costs sit within our existing maintenance budgets as incumbent landlord responsibilities.

We were successful in our bid and have been awarded the requested level of funding. In order to access the funding and start the delivery programme we have been sent a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which needs to be signed and returned by 28th February 2022.

Due to the very short deadline for returning the MOU we request the Senior Officer Urgent Decision process is actioned to expedite the signing of the necessary documentation.

Appendices – Final version of the MOU (Link to be added)

Background Papers - None

Legal Implications

Legal services have reviewed the MOU, there are no additional legal issues to be raised at this time. Any contract spend will need to be procured in line with the Council's Contract Standing Orders and the Constitution generally.

Financial Implications

“As mentioned in the body of the report, the funding required was included as a revenue contribution to capital during the 22/23 budget setting process”

Authority

Senior Officers delegated powers paragraph 1

Consultations

The Portfolio Holder for Homes and Communities has been kept informed through-out the process from the point at which the decision was made to bid for the fund. The Portfolio Holder is fully supportive and has highlighted this as excellent progress towards our journey to make our Council stock more energy efficient.

Cllr Arnott states; As Leader of East Devon District Council I am very pleased that we have been successful in our request for these welcome funds. I am happy to approve the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding.

Has the Chief Executive been notified?

Yes

Officer Decision

Decision:

To enter into a Memorandum of Understanding to access funding we have secured by bidding for resources under the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund.

Reasons for decision:

To access Government funding administered by the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy that will be used to improve the insulation of tenant's homes and provide alternative heating and hot water systems that support our programme of decarbonising our housing stock and delivering our Climate Change Strategy ambitions.

J. W. Golding

Signed

Dated 24th February 2022

Senior Officer job title and name: John Golding

Equalities impact

Will the proposal impact on promoting equality/opportunity as between people of different backgrounds [age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity]

Neutral impact

Details: The upgrades will provide affordable warmth for tenants.

Proposals to mitigate any negative impacts: None.