

**REPORT TO:** Cabinet

**MEETING DATE:** 9 March 2010

**BY:** Executive Director of Community Services

**SUBJECT:** Community Housing and Property Management  
External Grant Awards and Contributions 2010/11

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## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To recommend External Grant Awards as detailed in Appendix 1.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked to approve the External Grant Awards totalling £607,893 as detailed in Appendix 1.

## **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Council has for a considerable number of years made awards to external bodies for grant funding. In September 2003 a procedure was introduced and this was reviewed as a Community Housing & Property Management Procedure Note in August 2004.

- 3.2 The Council budget was submitted for approval to a Special Meeting of the Council on 9 February 2009.

- 3.3 The following summarises the External Grant applications which are being recommended for approval:

**3.3.1 Care and Repair East Lothian – Funding recommended £316,303 (increase of £10,949 or 3.6% from previous year)**

Care and Repair East Lothian has been operating in East Lothian since 1987. Care and Repair East Lothian and the Small Repairs Service assist elderly and disabled homeowners and private tenants by providing practical help with adaptations, repairs and household maintenance.

The administration of Care and Repair funding transferred to the Council in April 2005 and it is wholly funded through Scottish Government Private Sector Housing Grant (PSHG), which is currently ring-fenced. Ring-

fencing of PSHG will be removed from 2010/11 and funding distributed with the Authority's General Capital Grant. However, the Grant will continue to be separately identified as PSHG until 2013/14.

In March 2009 Cabinet approved a two-year grant award to Care and Repair covering 2009/10 and 2010/11. The award approved for 2010/11 is £316,303, which represents an increase of £10,949 or 3.6% over the award recommended for 2009/10.

### **3.3.2 East Lothian Energy Advice Centre (ELEAC) – Funding recommended £63,545 (5% or £3,345 reduction from previous year)**

ELEAC provides an energy and fuel poverty advice service to householders of all tenures in East Lothian. This helps the Council meet its obligation under the Home Energy Conservation Act (1996) (HECA) and is in line with section 88(1) of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. The project delivers its service via the issuing of tailored reports for advice and by direct advice to vulnerable households through the outreach advice worker. The project also engages in marketing of energy efficiency objectives and conducts talks to schools and community groups.

An evaluation of the service provided through ELEAC is currently ongoing to inform the external grants process for 2011/12.

No increase in funding was requested and the service can continue to operate with a minor decrease in hours worked per annum.

### **3.3.3 Warm and Well – Funding recommended £12,171 (5% or £641 reduction from previous year)**

The Warm and Well project provides a mechanism to allow health professionals to access energy efficiency improvements for their patients who are living in cold, damp or hard to heat homes and whose health is consequently at risk because of their housing conditions.

No increase in funding was requested and the 5% reduction can be made with a minor decrease in service from 0.2 full time staff member to 0.18 full time staff member.

### **3.3.4 East Lothian Women's Aid – Funding recommended £73,506 (5% or £3,868 reduction from previous year)**

The main aim of East Lothian Women's Aid is to provide crisis support to women and accompanying children experiencing domestic abuse. The grant funds:

- A Crisis Support Service, which provides confidential emotional and practical support and advocacy to women who have experienced emotional, physical or sexual abuse from a partner.

- A Children and Young Persons Worker's post, which provides support to children and young people living in refuge or second stage accommodation, in dealing with their experiences of domestic abuse.

The funding for both services is now administered through Community Housing & Property Management. The Children and Young Persons Worker's post funding was previously administered through Children's Services.

No increase in funding was requested and the services can continue to operate, being jointly funded through additional sources.

### **3.3.5 Shelter East Lothian (SELP) – Funding recommended £107,317 (reduction of 5% or £5,648 from previous year)**

SELP was established in October 2000 and provides an independent housing advice and advocacy service in East Lothian.

SELP is funded in the context of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, which sets out Local Authority duties to make homelessness advice and information available in their area.

It was reported to Cabinet during March 2009 that this service would be procured competitively during the 2009/10 financial year, with a new service to commence in April 2010. However, due to other commitments this did not take place and it is envisaged a re-tendering process will commence in May 2010.

An increase in funding of £2,814 or 2.5% was requested, despite being advised that no inflationary uplift would be provided. Given substantial increases in funding in recent years and implications for equalities, it is recommended that a 5% reduction be applied.

### **3.3.6 Bridges Project – Funding recommended £9,500 (5% or £500 reduction from previous year)**

The main objective of the Bridges Project is "To enable disadvantaged young people aged 16 to 21 years to become self reliant through the delivery of local services which focus on the acquisition of skills to: manage tenancies; become employable; combat poverty and exclusion; become contributing members of the community; access further education and establish community anchors".

The Bridges Project operates both in East Lothian and Midlothian. The grant provided by the Council is a contribution towards the cost of its work within East Lothian. No increase in funding was requested and the service can continue to operate with a 5% reduction.

### **3.3.7 East Lothian Voluntary Organisations network Furniture Recycling Project (ELVON) – Funding recommended £17,507 (5% or £921 reduction from previous year)**

The project aims to provide good quality recycled furniture and other household goods through a referral system used by, among others, the Council's Homelessness Unit. No increase in funding was requested and the service can continue to operate with a 5% reduction, with additional funding secured from another source for 2010/11.

**3.3.8 Four Square (Scotland) Prison Outreach Project – Funding recommended £3,548 (5% or £187 reduction from previous year)**

This project provides housing advice to prisoners given a custodial sentence in HMP's Edinburgh, Cornton Vale and Polmont. It assists service users in making decisions about their accommodation, seeking to prevent homelessness and providing assistance to rough sleepers upon release. No increase in funding was requested and the service can continue to operate with a 5% reduction, with grant funding from the Council comprising a small percentage of overall service funding.

**3.3.9 Shelter Gypsy/Traveller outreach, information and advice service – Budget recommended £4,496 (10% or £499 reduction from previous year)**

Until January 2009, Save the Children provided an outreach, information and advice service to Gypsies and Travellers, ensuring Gypsies and Travellers received access to mainstream services as necessary and were facilitated to participate in meetings with Statutory Authorities. This service was jointly funded with Midlothian Council. Since January 2009 there has been no information and advice provision to Gypsy Travellers.

A contract with Shelter is currently being agreed via a single sourcing procurement process for the provision of a replacement information and advice service. It is envisaged that this service will commence from 1 April 2010 for a two-year period.

It is recommended that a 10% reduction from the agreed funding level during 2009 be applied for a two-year period in order to commission this new service, with Midlothian Council contributing the same level of funding.

**3.3.10 Small Contributions**

**Scottish Council for the Single Homeless – No funding recommended from this source**

In March 2009, Cabinet approved the removal of membership subscriptions from the External Grants and Contributions process. During 2009, Scottish Council for the Single Homeless comprised the only remaining small contribution. It is recommended that from April 2010, this membership subscription is accommodated within the Homelessness Strategy budget, as this provides daily access to a national homelessness network service, essential for benchmarking purposes and is therefore not to be considered simply a membership subscription.

## **Tenants Information Service (TIS) – No funding recommended**

The Tenants Information Service received grant funding of £1,267 from the Council up to March 2008 and was informed in December 2008 that TIS would not be in the grant programme for 2009/10. In December 2009, TIS requested that this grant be reinstated.

In March 2009, Cabinet approved the removal of membership subscriptions from the External Grants and Contributions process and in line with this it is recommended that funding is not reinstated

### **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are no policy implications arising from this Report.

### **5 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

5.1 Equalities – An equalities impact assessment has been completed and no negative impacts have been found.

### **6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Financial – The overall financial implication is a 5% cost reduction across External Grants and Contributions with the exception of Care and Repair East Lothian and has been approved by the Head of Finance.

6.2 Personnel – None.

6.3 Other – None.

### **7 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

7.1 Appendix 1 – Grant Awards 2010/11 attached.

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## Appendix 1 - External Grant Awards and Contributions 2010/11

<b>External Grants</b>	<b>Amount 09/10 (£)</b>	<b>Amount 10/11 (£)</b>	<b>Difference (£)</b>	<b>% difference</b>
East Lothian Care and Repair	305,354	316,303	+10,949	+3.6
Energy Advice Service -				
ELEEAC	66,890	63,545	-3,345	-5
Warm and Well	12,812	12,171	-641	-5
Women's Aid	77,374	73,506	-3,868	-5
Shelter East Lothian	112,965	107,317	-5,648	-5
Bridges base project	10,000	9,500	-500	-5
ELVON	18,428	17,507	-921	-5
Four Square (Scotland)	3,735	3,548	-187	-5
Shelter Gypsy Traveller Project	4,995	4,496	-499	-10
Total	612,553	607,893	-4660	