

Cabinet Report



Listening Learning Leading

Report of Head of Community Services

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To: CABINET

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Capital Grants Policy update

Recommendation(s)

- a) That Cabinet approves the revised policy for awarding capital grants, attached in appendix one.
- b) Cabinet delegates authority to the relevant head of service in consultation with the relevant cabinet member to make minor amendments to the standard terms and conditions.

Purpose of Report

1. To seek Cabinet approval to revise the Capital Grants Policy, to introduce standard terms and conditions for all grants awarded under this scheme and to reflect the council's recent Climate Emergency Declarations.

Corporate Objectives

2. The Capital Grants Policy helps to achieve our corporate objective to build thriving communities, through offering grants towards projects that will benefit our communities. It also supports the equality objective to support communities to deliver better outcomes for disadvantaged groups and encourage community cohesion.

Background

3. The aim of the council's Capital Grants scheme is to fund community projects and initiatives that will improve the health, wellbeing and the quality of life of our

residents. We have a budget of £320,000 to award to new projects in 2019/20. The scheme has been running for many years and has helped to deliver some successful community projects such as village hall improvements, sports pavilion expansions and new playgrounds. The budget in previous years has been over £500,000 and is usually fully committed each year.

4. Officers review the council's grants policies frequently to ensure they still meet the needs of the council and the organisations the grants are supporting. The Capital Grant Policy was last reviewed in November 2018. Since then a number of improvements have been identified including some based on feedback from customers. The policy will be reviewed again in light of the new corporate plan priorities.
5. The main issue with the current scheme is the time it takes to release the funding for community projects over £25,000, which often leads to cash flow problems for organisations or delays to projects. It takes a minimum of three months after a grant has been accepted to release funding (but on average nine months), due to the current requirement for organisations to enter into a comprehensive legal agreement with the council. By replacing this requirement with standard terms and conditions that organisations will need to agree to at application stage, we can improve our relationships with these organisations but also community outcomes by releasing the money quicker and enabling community projects to get off the ground sooner.
6. This approach will mean organisations are clear from the outset the requirements for receiving a grant as they will be asked to agree to these before submitting an application. Currently this isn't clear until organisations receive a draft agreement following a decision, which often leads to some lengthy discussions with organisations as they try to negotiate the clauses/provisions.
7. The other changes proposed to the policy to streamline the process, improve community outcomes and reflect the council's Climate Emergency Declaration, are as follows:
 - a) Lift the standard condition that all grants over £25,000 must register a restriction and/or charge on the registered property title in the council's favour. A restriction on the title gives the council visibility and oversight of the asset as the organisation is required to obtain the council's consent if it wishes to dispose of it first. This gives the council the leverage to consider seeking to recover a proportion of the grant awarded. A 'charge' means there are financial implications for the organisation in selling the property, which in this case would be to pay back a proportion of the grant. However, since the introduction of these clauses, the council has not needed to enforce them in order to recover any grant funds, nor has the council wished to do so. There remains the option to add the condition of a charge or restriction if it is felt necessary. These conditions will be determined using a risk matrix in consultation with the Cabinet member and presented to the Community Grants Panel and Cabinet.
 - b) Change the definition of a long-term asset from 12 months to, at least five years for a grant up to £25,000 and ten years for grants over £25,000. This is to reflect the time we feel these assets could reasonably be expected to last and is based on reviewing projects we have previously funded.

- c) Reduce the maximum grant an applicant can request from the full budget available for each round to £75,000 to enable more projects to benefit from and apply to the scheme.
- d) Open for two rounds of funding instead of three as we're likely to have committed the budget in the first two due to the reduced budget this year and need to have sufficient funds left to justify a further round.
- e) Introduce a condition that organisations must formally accept the grant offer within four weeks, or the offer will be withdrawn. This will incentivise the organisation to commence their project or risk losing financial support for it. It will also help to release funds back into the grants budget for other organisations to apply for, which given the reduced budget and potentially more competition will deliver more community outcomes.
- f) Increase the thresholds for completing projects to deliver more community outcomes. Currently projects under £10,000 must complete within 12 months and we're proposing to increase the threshold to £25,000. Projects currently awarded over £10,000 must start work within 18 months and complete within 36 months. We would like projects awarded over £25,000 to start within 12 months and complete within 24 months. This change will encourage organisations to apply for funding when they're ready to progress their project and mean community benefits are delivered much sooner.
- g) Introduce a new scoring matrix which is clearer to evaluate applications against and reduces subjectivity (appendix one). It will include examples for what officers are looking for and scoring applications against. It will also include weighting for projects that demonstrate energy saving measures.
- h) Introduce a condition to require applicants to measure relevant energy use before and after refurbishment measures according to guidance provided by the council. This will help to contribute towards the Climate Emergency Declaration.
- i) Introduce a condition that grants must be claimed within six months of the project completing or the funds will return to the grants budget. This will incentivise organisations to submit their final claim in a timely manner. It will also release the funds back into the grants budget or council reserves rather than remaining committed to a project.

Options

- 8. To continue with the status quo and operate the scheme under the existing policy. However, this will mean continuing with full legal agreements for grant awards over £25,000, which may continue to cause organisations cash flow problems and delay projects. This option is not recommended.
- 9. To only implement some of the proposed policy changes set out in this paper. This option is not recommended, as it would reduce the ability to improve the experience for the applicant and the effectiveness of the policy for the council

Financial Implications

10. The proposed changes to the policy would not result in any additional costs to the council.
11. The terms and conditions contain a provision to reclaim grant funds at our discretion if organisations fail to comply with any of the conditions, examples include closing the organisation, selling the property, obtaining duplicate funding from a third party for the project or acting illegally or negligently at any time. We would consider this on a case by case basis. The council could look to recover funds as a debt should it be necessary.
12. There may be potential savings for organisations as the terms and conditions are easier to understand than legal agreements so organisations may not need to employ a solicitor to understand their obligations. There could also be an indirect financial benefit due to reducing the need for legal staff resource.
13. Organisations who do not accept the grant offer within four weeks, will have the offer withdrawn making the funds available for other applicants to apply for. This will also apply to grants not claimed within six months of the project completing. Funds will be returned to the reserves if there is not another round of grant funding that year.

Legal Implications

14. The proposed approach may reduce the resource currently required to prepare legal agreements.
15. The council's legal team have been involved in the development of the proposed terms and conditions.
16. The terms and conditions include reference to the relevant legislation that organisations need to comply with during the period of their grant.
17. When submitting the application, applicants must confirm they have their organisation's authority to make the grant application and agree to the terms and conditions. They will also have to confirm that they have all of the relevant permissions in place such as planning permission, landlord consent etc. Failure to do this will mean the application is not valid and will proceed no further.
18. There may be state aid implications of awarding some grants. State aid considerations arise whenever public funds will provide organisations with an 'advantage' over their competitors¹. For example, if a grant given to one organisation to expand their business gave them a commercial advantage over another. However, given that only not for profit organisations can apply to this scheme this is highly unlikely, but the application will include questions that will enable officers to identify whether state aid will apply and take the appropriate action.

¹ The definition of state aid is very broad because 'an advantage' can take many forms. It is anything which an undertaking (an organisation engaged in economic activity) could not get on the open market.

Risks

19. The main risks with this approach are:

- a) The terms and conditions proposed are intended to be legally binding but are not as comprehensive as the previous formal grant agreements and as such could be difficult to enforce. However, as organisations will have to agree to these before applying and will be clear on the expectations from the outset the risk of this is small. The council could pursue recovery of any grant funds as a debt. Officers will also support organisations throughout their projects to iron out any potential issues through building positive working relationships with them throughout the process. However, since the introduction of the more robust grant agreements, the council has not needed to enforce them in order to recover any grant funds, nor has the council wished to do so.
- b) Removing the requirement for a restriction on the property title, means should the organisation wish to dispose of a property, the council would not be alerted to the disposal and is likely to lose visibility and oversight of it. However, the terms and conditions include a requirement to inform the council in writing if the organisation is transferring their assets to, or merging or amalgamating with, any other body or if they plan to sell or give away assets. This risk is relatively low as the policy also requires the organisation to keep the asset for five or ten years for community use. They could however choose to transfer and be in breach of our policy. There remains the option to add the condition of a restriction if it is felt necessary. These conditions will be determined using a risk matrix in consultation with the Cabinet member and presented to the Community Grants Panel and Cabinet, who will meet twice a year in line with the number of rounds.
- c) Lifting the requirement to include a 'charge' would make it difficult for the council to recover any of the grant if it wished to in the future. However, as above we can add this as a condition of any grant where we think it's appropriate and will do this by evaluating applications against a risk matrix. The terms and conditions also contain a provision to reclaim grant funds at our discretion if they fail to comply with any conditions of the grant, but this may be difficult to enforce.

Other implications

20. We have considered our public sector equality duties under the Equality Act 2010. Officers do not consider any of the proposed changes to have a negative impact on those protected by the Act. The policy actively encourages applications from organisations who represent minority or vulnerable groups, particularly that improve outcomes for disadvantaged groups and encourage community cohesion.
21. The grants scoring criteria prioritises projects that benefit the whole community, everyone can access, or will have a significant impact on the health or wellbeing of one group. The terms and conditions refer to compliance with relevant law, government requirement and best practice including equal opportunities.
22. We have considered the impact of including carbon reduction elements in the scoring matrix on those applications where energy saving measures are not a feasible option due to the type of project. 13 of the 23 projects awarded last year fall into this category. The remaining 10 in principle would have been able to include measures. In order to ensure that projects unable to include energy measures are

not disadvantaged they will need to score well in all other categories and help to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents. We, therefore, propose adding a category, enabling these projects to score one point if they have an ongoing carbon neutral footprint.

Conclusion

23. The proposed changes to the policy will help to:

- Speed up the process for the organisation receiving their grant, through the introduction of standard terms and conditions, and potentially reduce the cost to them through not needing to employ a solicitor.
- Encourage the organisations to work with officers to iron out any issues with the projects so that they successfully complete the project in a timely manner.
- Make the budget available to more organisations through introducing a cap on the maximum request for funds.
- Improve the effectiveness of the policy through releasing funds back into the capital budget or council reserves for projects either not accepting their offer or claiming the funding within the timescales set out.
- Release staff resource to support applicants by reducing the number of rounds.

Cabinet are asked to:

- a) Approve the revised policy for awarding Capital grants, attached in appendix one.
- b) Cabinet delegates authority to the relevant head of service in consultation with the relevant cabinet member to make minor amendments to the terms and conditions.

Please note any decision that has financial implications must be made with the knowledge of the council's overarching financial position. This is as reflected in the council's medium term financial plan (MTFP) as reported to Full Council each February as part of the budget setting report. The February 2019 MTFP and the budget report showed that the council was due to receive £3.3 million less in revenue funding than it planned to spend in 2019/20 (with the balance coming from reserves and accumulated New Homes Bonus). This funding gap is predicted to increase to over £6 million per annum by 2023/24. Every decision should be made in cognisance of the need to substantially reduce this funding gap over the medium term and to eliminate it after five years.

Background Paper

- Draft terms and conditions

Appendix 1

Capital Grants (CG) Policy

(REVISED AUGUST 2019)



Introduction

The council provide grants to voluntary and community organisations to help build thriving communities and improve the quality of life for the residents of South Oxfordshire, through projects that; improve health, wellbeing, delivering better outcomes for disadvantaged groups, encourage community cohesion and contribute towards the council's Climate Emergency Declaration.

Applicants apply online through the council's website, where the full guidance is available to help the applicant submit the best possible application.

What type of project will the scheme fund?

We are keen to fund projects that support community initiatives and facilities; that improve the health, wellbeing and the quality of life of our residents and contribute towards the council's Climate Emergency Declaration. They must take place in the district or within a three-mile radius of the district boundary and be able to demonstrate significant numbers of South Oxfordshire residents will benefit, or that the project that will improve outcomes for disadvantaged groups and/or include energy saving measures.

We will only fund capital expenditure (excluding vehicles) from this scheme like buying, building, replacing or making improvements to long term assets (buildings, play areas and equipment). To us a long-term asset must have a life of at least five years for a grant of up to £25,000 and ten years for grants over £25,000. It must remain the property of the organisation we are funding for the requisite 5 or 10 year term.

We won't give grants towards loans, mortgages and revenue costs like maintenance, rent, clothing or salaries. We can award grants for certain repairs, but it depends on the scale and nature of them, so we recommend applicants contact the community enablement team on 01235 422405 before applying.

We only accept applications for projects that haven't already started, however in exceptional circumstances (like a major funder pulling out or unforeseen additional works) then we may make an exception at our discretion.

Organisations cannot apply to this scheme for projects we have awarded grants to before.

Who can apply to the scheme?

- Town & Parish Councils
- Non-profit businesses & Community Interest Companies

- Community based organisations

Organisations will need to be able to provide a copy of their signed constitution or equivalent governing documents.

We are committed to promoting equality and diversity, and welcome applications from organisations who represent minority or vulnerable groups.

Who is not eligible?

- Other local authorities/public sector bodies (for example Oxfordshire County Council, NHS trusts)
- Organisations that are funded by public sector/statutory bodies (for example Schools, GP practices)
- Groups who raise funds on behalf of or will improve/create facilities that will predominately benefit an ineligible organisation (for example PTA's delivering projects to benefit their school)
- Projects that usually fall to other public sector/statutory bodies to provide, or will primarily benefit organisations under their remit
- Individuals (this includes making any payments to individuals on behalf of community groups)
- Profit-based businesses
- Projects for residential buildings

What are the minimum and maximum amounts for the scheme?

Organisations can request a minimum of £1,000 and up to 50 per cent of their total project costs. In exceptional cases, like a major funder pulling out of a project that offers significant benefit to our residents we may consider a request for more than 50 per cent.

To request an exceptional amount, applicants must get approval from us (via the community enablement team) before submitting an application.

We will not award more than the amount requested.

The maximum an applicant can request is the budget available for each round of applications up to a maximum amount of £75k per application, which will be published on the council's website before and after each round of awards. However, we are very unlikely to commit all of the available funding to a single project.

We award our grants as a percentage of the total project costs. If a project ends up costing less than expected we will pay the awarded percentage of the final cost, however if it costs more, we limit our award to the maximum amount agreed.

Opening and closing dates

We will usually open for applications twice each financial year (if there is enough budget available). Except in the financial year during which a district council election is held, when we may only open once. We publish the opening and closing dates on our website.

We will open each round of funding for a minimum of six weeks and subject to committee deadlines will usually make decisions within 12-14 weeks of the closing date.

Scheme eligibility criteria

In addition to meeting the requirements above, applicants must provide:

- a copy of the latest statements for any bank/building society accounts in the name of the organisation
- two quotes for the project or a professional estimate for any building work for projects under £10,000 and three quotes for over £10,000
- a breakdown of the budget for the project including all the sources of funding.

And must confirm:

- they sign up to our standard terms and conditions before proceeding with the application. These are available to download from the website and grants system
- they have a signed constitution and could provide it on request (except parish or town councils, churches or similar organisations that are governed by a central body and therefore don't have their own constitution)
- organisations have the correct authority in place for their representatives to apply and enter into the Grant Agreement and legally bind the organisation. Parochial Church Councils and parish councils have own governing arrangements for this, which should be followed
- the project won't start before a decision has been made, which is usually 12 -14 weeks from the closing date
- they have all the necessary consents such as planning permission, listed building consent, Diocese faculty, landlord or Head lease consent, compliance with any restrictions on the property title etc. and could provide these on request
- they will provide additional information to help us evaluate their application on request.

Applicants requesting more than £10,000 must also provide:

- copies of any necessary planning, listed building, Diocese faculty, landlord or Head lease consent, compliance with any restrictions on the property title and other relevant permissions
- their most recent financial accounts or their working budget and financial plan for the year if they're a new organisation. Parish Councils are required to submit their full accounts.
- a project plan including ongoing maintenance arrangements.

Applicants requesting over £25,000 must also provide:

- evidence of ownership of the property, interest in the property, or a lease with at least ten years remaining, including a copy of the Land Registry title register and plan of no more than 3 months old. If the property is leased, or the Land Registry

documents show another organisation has a claim on the title, please provide valid permission for the works from the third party (freeholder) / landlord.

The head of community services can decide to accept applications that don't meet all the above criteria and will do this on a case by case basis. Applicants must give clear reasons why they can't meet a particular criteria for us to consider an exception.

Organisations must formally accept the grant offer within four weeks of the date of offer letter otherwise the offer will be withdrawn.

Projects awarded up to £25,000 must complete within 12 months from accepting the offer. Projects awarded over £25,000 must start work within 12 months of accepting the offer and must complete within 24 months.

If there's any unexpected delays to the project, applicants can request one extension of up to 12 months, giving the reasons for the delay. We must receive these requests at least one month before the end of the original grant term.

We will send reminders for unclaimed grants three months before they expire for projects that have not started within the specified timescale. We will return any unclaimed awards after the expiry date to the council's general reserves or make the funds available for the next round.

Decision making

COMMUNITY ENABLEMENT TEAM

The community enablement team will review the eligibility of every application before using the scoring matrix in appendix one to suggest scores to the Community Grants Panel. They will also flag any concerns or issues for additional consideration, in order to support the panel's decision making.

HEAD OF SERVICE

In accordance with the council's constitution. The council's head of community services and when relevant, in consultation with the services cabinet member (using delegated powers) will decide:

- if we will accept requests for over 50 per cent of the total project cost
- if we will accept applications that don't meet all the eligibility criteria
- whether to give extensions to the term of any grant
- whether to amend award percentages beyond what was originally agreed, as requested by applicants. Increases will stay within the 50 per cent maximum limit for the scheme.

COMMUNITY GRANTS PANEL (KNOWN AS THE CG PANEL)

The CG panel considers officers suggested scores for each application and makes recommendations to Cabinet for awards base on the scoring matrix at appendix one.

Even if an application scores enough points, the panel can recommend not funding it if they:

- have serious concerns around the management of the project now or in the future
- believe the applicant has sufficient unrestricted reserves to fund the project themselves
- have serious concerns about the financial viability or appropriateness of the project
- believe the project doesn't meet the criteria or help deliver the council's strategic objectives.

The CG panel's recommendations are then presented to Cabinet to consider and decide which grants to award.

Standard terms and conditions for all grant awards

All organisations are required to sign up to our standard terms and conditions before proceeding with the application.

We may add extra conditions to any grant if we consider it necessary. This may include the use of a charge or restriction to protect the council's funds. These conditions will be determined using a risk matrix in consultation with the Cabinet member and presented to the Community Grants Panel and Cabinet.

The head of community services has delegated authority to remove any agreed grant conditions.

We will confirm applicants have met all the conditions before making any payment. Failure to meet all the agreed conditions may delay payment or, in extreme cases, result in us withdrawing our grant offer.

Payment of grants

We will only pay towards costs incurred after the date of the council's decision to award a grant.

We pay the grants in two stages, half when we receive a valid signed acceptance form and terms and conditions. We pay the balance when the project completes, upon receipt of evidence (receipts/invoices) of expenditure.

In exceptional cases like property purchases, we may make a single upfront payment, which officers may recommend as part of their evaluation.

If the project costs less than expected, we will reduce our final payment accordingly and, if necessary, request back some of the first payment (the minimum amount for us to request repayment is £500).

Grants that have not been claimed within six months of the project completing will be closed and the final payment not issued if we do not hear from the applicant.

Scoring and award matrix for CG applications

SCORE	PRIORITY LEVEL	AWARDS (all awards are subject to sufficient budget. Medium priorities will only receive funding if there is budget left after all the high priority projects are awarded).
10 -13 points	High priority	Award full amount requested - budget permitting (capped at 50 per cent of the cost unless we allowed them to request more and they meet the criteria for an exception).
5-9 points	Medium priority	Award between 50 and 75 per cent of the amount requested, depending on their score - budget permitting
0-4 points	Low priority	No funding

Extra facilities/activities

Points	Criteria to score	Examples
0	The project doesn't allow any activities to take place or provide a facility for the community's use.	A decorative village sign doesn't allow any community activities to take place or give the community a facility to use.
1	The project replaces existing facilities or allows existing activities to continue. or The project moderately improves a minor community facility or activity.	It replaces furniture in the village hall with like-for-like replacements. Replacing existing park benches with longer-lasting ones.
2	The project moderately improves or extends a substantial community facility or activity. or The project significantly improves or extends a minor community facility or activity. or The project provides a new minor facility or activity for the community.	Replacing the chairs in the village hall with more comfortable ones or improve a play area to cater for more ages. Buying replacement boats for a small canoeing club. Installing three new noticeboards in the village.

3	The project will provide substantial new facilities or activities to the community. or The project significantly improves a substantial community facility.	Creating a brand-new play area where there wasn't one already. Adding a large extension to a village hall.
Deductions	Deduct one point if the project reduces the activities/facilities on offer. Deduct two points if the project removes a community facility or reduces/stops existing activities taking place.	Like a project to overhaul and landscape a car park that reduces the number of parking spaces. Demolishing an old skatepark without replacing it with anything.

Community Benefit

Points	Criteria to score	Example
0	The project offers little or no direct benefit to the community.	A decorative sign or boundary wall with no other purpose
1	A single sport or special interest group, like an art group, will benefit. However, if a sport club wanted to upgrade their pavilion and other groups frequently use it as well, it can score more.	A project to buy cricket pitch covers, IT equipment for a photography club or landscaping a nursery's garden is only benefiting their members/users.
2	Two or more specific groups will benefit. The project will have a significant impact on the health or wellbeing of one group	A football club is upgrading its changing room, which a hockey club also use Specialist equipment for a centre working with severely disabled people.
3	The project will provide a facility that's open/available to anyone to access, (not just members) Limit the maximum score for projects on sites owned by religious organisations to two points, as they can limit who can access them under special rules in the Equalities Act.	Play areas, community building or recreation ground. (e.g. a church hall or Islamic centre)
Deductions	Deduct at least one point if the project will reduce (two points if it totally removes) an existing benefit to the community	Replacing a recreation ground with tennis courts for a member's club (open community benefit is reduced as only

	without replacing it. Remove one point if there are concerns over the ownership/lease of the property.	tennis members will benefit going forward). Like the term of their lease is too short or their ownership evidence is unreliable.
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Finance

Points	Financial overview
0	They don't have a plan of how they'll fund the rest of the project and haven't secured any other funding yet. They haven't given details of how they'll fund the ongoing maintenance and eventual replacements.
1	They've got a funding plan but haven't applied for all of it yet. or They've applied for all the other funding needed but have secured less than 50 per cent so far. They've budgeted for the ongoing maintenance but don't say how they'll fund eventual replacements in the future (if applicable).
2	They've applied for all the funding needed and have already secured over 50 per cent of the balance. They've budgeted for the ongoing costs and have a general idea how they'll fund replacements eventually (if applicable)
3	They've secured all the other funding needed for the project already (including if they're funding the rest themselves). or The organisations have requested 100 per cent of the cost and have provided evidence that they've lost a funder, can't raise money themselves (e.g. via precept) and can't apply for other grants/funding. They've budgeted for the ongoing costs and have a fund/account/pot saving for the replacements in due course.
Deductions	Remove one point if the organisation's finances suggest they could contribute towards the cost but aren't, remove two points if they can afford the whole project without any funding.

Other potential deductions/considerations:

- Their chosen supplier doesn't appear to offer value for money (their other quote was significantly cheaper for the same work).
- They have only provided one quote stating there is no alternative, but officers have found otherwise.

- Their start dates are too soon to work with our decision-making timeline for the scheme, unless we gave them permission to make an exceptional application before submitting their application.
- They are doing lots of small, similar projects instead of doing all the work in one go, which would be more cost effective.
- The community don't support the project or would prefer a different solution.

Carbon reduction/energy saving/renewable energy

Points	Criteria to score	Example
0	<p>The project does not include any energy saving or renewable energy proposals</p> <p>Or</p> <p>The project includes measures which will lead to energy saving improvements, but only through meeting building regulations and no more.</p>	<p>A project to upgrade toilet facilities in a community hub does not include energy saving features such as light sensors or water saving urinals</p> <p>A boiler is replaced with a more efficient one but only meeting building regulations</p> <p>A project to extend a village hall, proposes an extension built with cavity wall insulation that meets building regulations and no more (i.e. does not consider an even higher specification)</p>
1	<p>The project includes implementation of a range of good energy and/or water saving proposals.</p> <p>An energy audit is always recommended to highlight the most cost-effective energy saving improvements</p>	<p>Draught proofing is installed</p> <p>A timer is added to heating controls</p> <p>Lighting sensors are installed, to turn off when no movement is detected.</p> <p>Push taps or sensor taps are installed</p> <p>Energy saving lighting is installed in a kitchen area</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">2</p>	<p>The project includes implementation of significant energy and/or water saving proposals, based on an energy audit.</p> <p>or</p> <p>A project includes implementation of energy saving proposals and a renewable energy technology</p>	<p>A project to refurbish a village hall includes upgrading all building lighting to high energy saving standards and implementing appropriate controls.</p> <p>A project to renovate a community building includes fully upgraded insulation and a building management system</p> <p>A project to upgrade a pavilion includes installation of solar panels, or ground source or water source heat pumps.</p> <p>A project to expand a sports facility includes installation of EV charging points for electric vehicles.</p> <p>A project installs a new rainwater harvesting system</p> <p>A project ensures energy saving features are a high-profile feature of the facility, with energy monitors in public areas and information about the savings achieved presented in a clearly visible and attractive manner to users.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">3</p>	<p>The project delivers the benefits achieved as above (two points criteria) and in addition:</p> <p>The project adopts a long-term, costed plan to make the facility carbon neutral and is taking substantial first steps in the project plan</p> <p>Or</p> <p>The project invests substantially in renewable energy that will provide more energy than the facility itself requires (carbon positive)</p> <p>Or</p> <p>The project demonstrates an innovative technology and has a</p>	<p>A carbon neutral facility is one that minimises its energy use, uses renewable technologies where possible, and then balances any CO₂ emissions released into the atmosphere by a CO₂ reduction elsewhere.</p> <p>Solar panels are installed with a surplus of electricity. This could, for example, provide electric vehicle charging infrastructure for the local community or be used to supply neighbouring buildings via a private wire network.</p>

	communications plan for dissemination of the results across the district	An innovative technology is installed. For example, one new energy technology is 'Vehicle to Grid', which uses the extra power stored in electric vehicles to provide energy to the national grid at the end of the day when electricity demand across the network is at its peak.
Points for projects with no/little on-going carbon footprint		
1	The project has a good impact on health and well-being and has little/no ongoing carbon footprint	Example projects include a playground refurbishment, new boats for a rowing club

