

ENVIRONMENT INITIATIVES FUND (EIF)

GUIDANCE AND PROTOCOL

INTRODUCTION

The Environment Initiatives Fund (EIF) was established by Cabinet in June 2006 and endorsed by Council in July 2006.

The Council made available a sum of £515,000 as a specific fund to take forward its corporate priorities but specifically the “Caring for the Environment” corporate priority and related cross-cutting issues.

This links to two major strategic policy initiatives:-

- (1) The establishment of an Environment Portfolio in May 2006.
- (2) The Notice of Motion (debated at Full Council in October 2006) making “Caring for the Environment” the top priority for the Council.

The Notice of Motion focussed on two key cross-cutting environmental issues:-

- (1) The need to decrease carbon emissions to prevent global warming.
- (2) The need to sustain and conserve material resources.

An application for EIF funding must be able to satisfy one or other of these criteria.

As part of that Notice of Motion there were a number of key actions that the Council will seek to undertake. These are:-

That the Council works towards:-

- (1) Improving the energy and water efficiency of its own buildings.
- (2) Working with local businesses to encourage them to improve energy and water efficiency.
- (3) Implementing renewable energy and cleaner fuel technologies in Council buildings and vehicles, including Council owned housing.
- (4) Raising awareness of climate change and the simple actions that the whole community can take to help.
- (5) Using procurement policy to support environmentally friendly initiatives.

These key environmental actions will be given priority in the allocation of the EIF and as part of the environmental assessment of any proposed Council initiatives.

The Environment Initiatives Fund (EIF)

The Fund is available to meet the Council's seven corporate priorities and twelve strategic actions. Funding can be linked to projects that help deliver larger council initiatives. All proposals for financial support from the Fund will be subject to an environmental assessment before any approval is given. This environmental assessment will be one of the key factors in determining the allocation of the Fund to resource Council initiatives.

The Fund will operate as an "all bids together" process with an agreed deadline each year for the submission and consideration of bids. There will be a minimum funding per scheme level of £30,000 and a maximum of £100,000. The Cabinet would retain the right to agree exceptional awards outside these limits.

The attached criteria and application process are intended to assist in the allocation of the Fund and this should be completed in making an application for financial support from the Fund.

ENVIRONMENT INITIATIVES FUND (EIF)

APPLICATION CRITERIA

1. The scheme* must address one of the Council's seven corporate priorities but must make a significant contribution to the priority on "Caring for the Environment".
2. The scheme must address one of the Council Strategic Actions, Corporate Improvement Actions or Corporate Service Actions.
3. The schemes to be given top priority in terms of the Environment Initiatives Fund are those schemes which also take account of the two key cross-cutting environmental issues and the five key actions outlined in the Council's Notice of Motion on caring for the environment.
4. **The scheme:-**
 - (1) It must have clear targets and agreed outputs.
 - (2) It must link to a current specific measurable target and there must be a methodology for measuring and validating improvement.
 - (3) It must show an element of further enhanced performance over the current agreed target (ie, an additional "stretch" element). This would be an agreed stretch target. For example, if the current target is a 5% improvement in an area of work and by EIF investment an additional 2% improvement is anticipated then 7% will be the stretch target.
 - (4) If the project is a new scheme it must contribute to one of the overall Council targets and must have identified local performance indicators that identify an agreed stretch target over a minimum of two years.
 - (5) Where the scheme can be shown to contribute to either encouraging or developing joint working between agencies this will be given a higher priority.
 - (6) The funding can only be used for "one-off" schemes and should not create a long term revenue or capital commitment or a potential legacy cost that cannot be met from existing budgets. Schemes for "staff only" bids are unlikely to be considered unless there is a significant income generation or value for money benefit.
 - (7) It must have a District-wide benefit. Schemes concerned only with a local, neighbourhood area will be given a lower priority.
 - (8) It is not anticipated that schemes would extend beyond a maximum of two years (24 months).

- (9) Whilst there is no maximum level of funding per scheme it is unlikely that funding of more than £100,000 per annum per scheme will be awarded from the EIF. The Cabinet reserve the right to make exceptional awards if a scheme merits funds above that level.
- (10) The funding can only be used for the purposes allocated and no reallocation can be made without reference back to the Cabinet.

(* "Scheme" includes a project, an improvement initiative, etc.)

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APPLICATION PROCESS

1. The Director or Head of Service draft the application for consideration by the relevant Cabinet Member.
2. Any application, before it is submitted to the Cabinet Member, must contain the following:-
 - (a) A Financial Assessment – discussed and agreed with the Director of Resources.
 - (b) A Policy Assessment – discussed and agreed with the Executive Director (Corporate Policy & Improvement). This should also include clarifying whether there is a statutory/mandatory duty on the Council.
 - (c) An Environmental Assessment – discussed and agreed with the Head of Environment.
3. The draft application is submitted to the relevant Cabinet Member for their initial approval as to whether or not it should be considered for EIF funding.
4. Applications are then submitted to:-
 - (a) Corporate Management Team – for endorsement or comment.
 - (b) The Portfolio Holder (Resources) - for consideration and recommendation to the Cabinet.
5. Applications for EIF funding are considered by the Cabinet and the allocation of funding from the EIF is made by the Cabinet.
6. Council endorsement of the EIF allocation is sought if required.
7. The EIF bidding process will commence in the Autumn each year with applications for funding submitted by the relevant Director by mid February to the Director of Resources (for a financial assessment), to the Executive Director Corporate Policy & Improvement (for a policy assessment) and to the Head of Environment (for an environmental assessment).
8. Following consideration by the relevant Cabinet Member, the Corporate Management Team and the Portfolio Holder (Resources), the annual deadline for receipt of bids by the Cabinet for funding support from the EIF will be the end of March. The Cabinet will consider EIF applications in April each year, with schemes commencing in the new municipal year.
9. The timing of the application process will be subject to review following the allocation of underspends to the EIF.

(Points 7 and 8 have subsequently been amended by the Leader in December 2006).

EIF - Scheme Applications Evaluation and Recommendations

Scheme	Cost £	Department	Policy Assessment	Financial Assessment	Environmental Assessment	Other Comments	Recommendation by CMT and Cabinet
Installation of Invertors in Swimming Pools	12,000	DDS Property Management	✓	✓	✓	Scheme provides ongoing revenue funding savings in addition to environmental benefits (two-year pay back).	Approve
Implementation of Energy Action Plan	25,000	DDS Property Management	✓	✓	✓	Scheme provides potential revenue savings in addition to environmental benefits (£210,000 over five years).	Approve
Water Conservation Scheme A - £22,00	33,000	DCS Parks & Open Spaces	✓	✓	✓	Schemes offer revenue savings in addition to environmental benefits (£3,000 per annum - ten-year pay back).	Approve
Water Conservation Scheme B - £11,000		DCS Parks & Open Spaces	✓	✓	✓		Approve
Cavity Wall and Loft Insulation for Rural Housing	64,500	DCS Housing	✓	✓	✓	Provides significant environmental benefits. No residual costs. Low risk of cost over-run.	Approve
Business Environmental Accreditation and Support Programme	66,600	DCS Environment	✓	✓	✓	Provides support to external groups to provide environmental benefits. Unsecured funding bids risk.	Defer
Tree Planting to Off-set Carbon Emissions	76,000	DCS Parks & Open Spaces	✓	✓	✓	Scheme submitted provides environmental and open spaces benefits. Ongoing revenue costs met within existing budget.	Defer