

Guidance for Revenue Community Grants

1. Aims of Community Grant

1.1 The Community Grants scheme awards discretionary grants to support a range of voluntary and community organisations to benefit and improve the wellbeing of residents and communities. The grant should support the Council's priorities and objectives as set out in our Corporate Plan, see newforest.gov.uk/corporateplan and directly benefit the people of the New Forest.

2. What do we fund?

2.2 Revenue Grants:

- Revenue grants – these are for the day-to-day running costs of providing a charitable or community service which benefits or supports local people.

3. Who can apply?

3.1 The following groups are eligible to apply:

- Community, voluntary and registered charitable organisations
- Not-for-profit groups that are properly constituted

4. What is not funded?

4.1 Community grants will not fund the following:

- Individuals or an item or project that mainly benefits an individual
- Projects from private companies, profit-making or trading organisations, or business enterprises
- Party political activities
- Religious worship or observance; or works to buildings or grounds that are used solely by a religious organisation
- Any organisation that is in poor financial health and may be unable to deliver the service
- Organisations that are based outside of New Forest District Council, unless they can demonstrate the benefits to our residents

4.2 Organisations delivering services aimed at children, young people or vulnerable adults will need to demonstrate to the Council that they have suitable safeguarding policies and appropriate checks in place.

5. Applications

5.1 Applications will be made online, and applicants can provide additional information to support their application.

5.2 Applications can apply for a grant of between £1,000 and £35,000. Applications below £1,000 can be made to individual ward councillors under the Councillors' Community Engagement grant scheme.

- 5.3 Applications from organisations can be made each year, however repeat applications are monitored and considered if still meeting priorities and objectives, or if advice given previously has been undertaken.
- 5.4 The Council may consider entering into a formal Service Level Agreement for revenue grants above £35,000 where the service provided is meeting a need that the Council considers important; or where the Council has asked an organisation to provide the service on the Council's behalf.

6. The Process

- 6.1 Applications will be on-line, and any received after the deadline will not be considered.
- 6.2 The information provided in the application must be up-to-date and complete at the time of submission. Where the financial context of the application changes, for example by a decision on a grant for the same project from another organisation, the Council must be told as soon as possible. The Council will not accept any other material changes once an application form has been submitted, unless the circumstances are exceptional, and the application still meets the eligibility criteria and the Council's priorities.
- 6.3 Once the application deadline has passed the Council's officers will assess each application to make sure that it meets the eligibility criteria and that it will provide positive benefits to local people. Only those applications which pass this initial assessment will progress to the next stage.
- 6.4 The next stage is that applicants are invited to attend a meeting of the Community Grants Task and Finish Group to give a short presentation, up to 15 minutes, about their application and to allow the group to ask questions about the application. These interviews take place in the autumn. If any organisation does not attend this interview process their application will not be considered further and will be declined.
- 6.5 When all presentations have been made the Task and Finish Group will consider the applications and present their recommendations to the Community, Partnership and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Panel. There is discretion to award a greater grant than the amount applied for where it can be demonstrated that there is additional benefit to residents and communities. Similarly, where a number of applications are received, recommendations may be for an amount which is less than the amount applied for so as to support as many organisations and groups as possible, and to recognise the benefits of the grant application.
- 6.6 In making their recommendations the Task and Finish Group will consider various factors, including, but not limited to:
- how well the application supports the Council's priorities and our services
 - evidence that the application is required and the extent to which it meets a community need without duplicating services
 - the efforts to secure alternative funding
 - the long-term benefits of the application
 - value for money
- 6.7 The Community, Partnerships and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Panel consider the recommendation and advises the Portfolio Holder for People and Places on their recommendations on grant awards. The Portfolio Holder presents the recommendations to the Cabinet, who will determine final awards at their meeting in February. Applicants will be notified of the decision on their grant following this meeting.

7. Payment of grants

- 7.1 The payment of successful Revenue Community grant awards will be made from 1 April by BACS.
- 7.2 All successful applicants are requested to provide an update to the Council on how the grants received has benefited our residents and communities.
- 7.3 Organizations receiving a community grant will ensure that the Council is acknowledged in any publicity to ensure the Council's support is recognised.