FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE POLICY

APPLICANT GUIDANCE MANUAL

NOVEMBER 2024

FOR 2024-25 CALL 1 REVENUE - <u>GOOD RELATIONS SMALL GRANT APPLICATIONS ONLY</u>

Contents

Introduction

1.1. The purpose of this document is to provide guidance for organisations applying for financial assistance from Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council. It is inevitable that a guidance manual cannot cover every single aspect of funding therefore potential applicants are encouraged to discuss individual applications with the relevant Council officer if they are uncertain about their eligibility.

1.2. If Council is made aware of a potential breach of health and safety legislation e.g. in relation to fun days or events, we reserve the right not to fund, or to withdraw funding

1.3. The guidance document sets out the grant programmes and describes the process for making applications. In addition to the criteria used for each grant programme, Council will also consider a range of other factors to determine whether grants should be paid and at what level. These will include Council's strategic priorities, the number and range of applications received and the amount of funding available. These factors will vary from year to year and it does not follow that something, which Council funds one year, may be funded in subsequent years.

1.4. In an attempt to minimise wasted effort on ineligible or ill-conceived applications, a self-assess eligibility check should determine whether an application will progress towards assessment. Council would recommend that you do not submit an application if your organisation or project appears to be ineligible without first discussing with a Council Officer. Unless stated, most evidence/documents will only be requested if an application is successful, although applicants are asked to ensure these are available when they apply.

1.5. Please note it remains the responsibility of the organisation to check the application details are correct prior to submission. The assistance of a Council officer in developing the application does not automatically guarantee that the application will be successful as all applications are subject to a scoring process.

1.6. **This version of the Applicant Guidance Manual is only relevant for GR Small applications, for Financial Assistance in Call 1 Revenue Grant Programmes 2024 - 2025 (4 November – 29 November 2024). Separate Guidance Manuals exist for you to use during application for each revenue grant. Do not use this manual in any later calls.**

1.7. All applications must be submitted by **12 noon on Friday 29 November 2024**

Contact Point:

The initial point of contact for financial assistance is as follows:

Tel: Valerie Armstrong on 07515 607480

Email: fap@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk

2. What Financial Assistance Does Council Offer?

2.1. Council offers six funding programmes to community groups as follows:

Grant Programme	Sub-Programme	Open this call?
Revenue Grants		

Community Grants	a. Community Development Grants
	  i. Micro Grants (up to £1,000) to include seeding or start up grants
	  ii. Small Grants (£1,001 - £2,000)
	  iii. Medium Grants (£2,001 - £10,000, max 50% of eligible costs)
		Yes

Arts, Culture and Events Grants	a. Community Events Fund (up to £1,000) b. Large Event Fund (up to £10,000) c. Arts Projects Fund (up to £2,000) d. International Tourism Event Fund (up to £15,000)	Yes
Good Relations Grants	a. Micro Grants (up to £1,000) b. Small Grants (£1,001 - £2,000) c. Medium Grants (£2,001 - £10,000, max 50% of eligible costs)	Yes
International Linkages Grant	up to £3,000	Yes
Civic Representation Grant	a. From individuals: max funding of £200 per individual where at least one overnight stay is essential, or £100 where no overnight stay is required. b. From constituted organisations: max funding of £500 based on costs of up to £500 for overnight accommodation, or up to £250 where no overnight stay is required.	No
Capital Grants		
Capital Projects Grants	a. Small Scale Capital Project Fund	No
	b. Large Capital Project Fund	No

2.2. Each grant programme and sub-programme has distinct criteria and indicative maximum funding.

2.3. Groups can hold a maximum of two successful applications per financial year. Applications to the following do not count towards the two successful grants:

- An application to the Community Event Fund for financial assistance for a Christmas Tree Switch-on event in a village or small town where Council provides either the tree or the lights.

2.4. The two applications can be made to the same grant programme but a group can only hold

one of the following larger revenue grants:

- Community Development Medium Grant
- Large Event Fund
- International Tourism Event Fund
- Good Relations Medium Grant

2.5.   Once a group has submitted their signed Form of Acceptance and received a payment, it is deemed at that stage they hold a successful grant even if they subsequently decline it.

2.6.   Groups cannot submit two separate applications for the same project, even if applying for different elements of the same project - this includes core-running costs.

2.7.   All offers of financial assistance unclaimed at the end of the financial year following the year offered are withdrawn.

2.8.   Groups who hold a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Council:

- cannot apply to the Financial Assistance Programme if the value of their SLA(s) exceeds £10,000*
- can hold one successful application if the value of their SLA(s) is up to £10,000* - any application to FAP cannot be to 'top-up' what has been awarded to the group under the SLA i.e. it must be for a different project

(*Applications for Christmas Tree Switch-on events are exempt from the above)

3. Application Timetable

3.1.   Groups applying in Call 1 can expect to hear the outcome of their application in February 2025.

3.2.   If successful, the grant will not be paid to a group until all outstanding paperwork from any previous year's funding is provided, satisfactorily vouched, and any monies due are returned.

3.3.   Details of the calls for applications for revenue projects taking place during the 2025-26 financial year are as follows:

	Open for applications	**Project delivery Period**
Call 1	4 Nov – 29 Dec 2024	01/04/2025 – 31/03/2026
Call 2	24 March – 25 April 2025 **(Subject to Budget and change)**	01/07/2025 – 31/03/2026
Call 3	18 August – 12 Sept 2025 **(Subject to Budget and change)**	01/12/2025 – 31/03/2026

4. Who Can Apply for Financial Assistance?

4.1.   Except where specifically stated for certain grant programmes, applications will only be accepted from formally constituted, community managed, and autonomous organisations. Such organisations should be not-for-personal profit, with wider community interests at heart, working at a local community level. The organisation's governing document must clearly state that:

- Membership is inclusive of the identified community and open to its full range of opinion.
- Each year the organisation holds an Annual General Meeting (AGM) at which each member has an equal vote.
- The organisation has a management committee or board of directors which is appointed at the AGM using a clear democratic process for the selection of members i.e. election.
- The committee/board presents the report for the year at the AGM; and
- An annual statement of accounts is presented at the AGM

4.2.   It is important that the groups funded are inclusive of their identified community and open to its full range of opinion i.e. do not exclude any part of that community. Each member must have equal status and be entitled to vote at the AGM.

4.3.   Decisions about the organisation and its activity must only be made by members and no other organisation can have the ability to impose a decision on the group i.e. they must be fully autonomous organisations. Groups must be managed by their community which means that the management committee/board has to come from the membership and be elected at the Annual General Meeting.

4.4.   The management committee or board must be accountable to their membership for the work done and money spent during the year. Groups should be able to provide a copy of independently audited/verified accounts upon request.

4.5.   Values inherent to community development include social justice, self-determination, working and learning together, sustainable communities, participation and reflective practice. These values are aligned to Council's statutory duties in tackling inequality and promoting good relations and the groups that Council fund must in no way contribute to inequality or poor relations.

4.6.   Council will not consider applications from:

- Organisations that:
  - discriminate against anyone on the basis of religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation, gender, or disability.
  - are in poor financial health or cannot show effective financial control.
  - are not prepared to share learning from their project with Council and other relevant groups.
- Individuals (only constituted groups/organisations can apply for funding)
- Commercial organisations (except social enterprise).
- Statutory organisations (except through a partnership arrangement with Council where key priority outcomes are delivered)
- Schools, Parent Teacher Associations (PTA's) and After school activity projects, run by either internal or external organisations, except where there is a clear need demonstrated that the project being funded will serve the wider community and this need is not being met by another organisation e.g. inter-school activity.

4.7.   In two particular grant programmes (i.e. '1b - Community Development Grants' and '4 - Good Relations Grants') the Medium Grant sub-programme is aimed at Forums and Network Support Organisations. Our definition of these is as follows:

- A Forum is where a number of organisations come together to work for the benefit of a community defined by geography or interest. Membership must predominantly be made up of group representatives (rather than individuals) and this must be clearly stated in the Forum's constitution. Council would expect there to be a minimum of 8 groups represented in a Forum's membership.

- A Network Support Organisation also has a membership made up of groups, but its purpose is to provide support to those groups through the delivery of a range of services including, but not restricted to, training, regular information-sharing (e.g. newsletters), networking events, physical support services, and practical assistance to groups (e.g. applying for funding). Such organisations must be open to membership from, and delivering services, across the Borough.

4.8.   If you are a branch of a larger organisation, please see the guidance in Appendix 9.2 about how you may apply.

5.   <u>What Can We Apply For?</u>

5.1   Council will only consider funding for projects, activities and organisations which meet the basic eligibility criteria.

5.2   The list below only includes those elements which are common to all. An application that falls outside these eligibility criteria will not be considered further.

5.3 <u>Basic Eligibility Criteria</u>

The overarching principle to be applied to all financial assistance should be that of meeting local needs which have been identified and prioritised by Council or by others but acknowledged by Council. Any use of funding that cannot be shown to meet the following basic requirements will not be provided with funding:

- Have a clearly identified need.
- Can deliver outcomes which meet this need.
- Fit with a clear corporate objective or priority of Council.
- Be delivered by a credible organisation with the capacity to deliver the project as stated.
- Meet the specific objectives of the grant programme being applied to

Council will **not** consider applications for projects which:

- Have no significant benefit to the ABC Council area.
- Provide no potential benefit to the public, either in the short or long term.
- Could be carried out on a commercial basis.
- Have already taken place or are already under way at the time of the assessment.
- Duplicate what already exists.
- Are fundraising events or activities.
- Are of a party-political nature.
- Promote a particular religion; or
- Are against Council policy

Good Relations Small Grants

Grant Programme: Community Development Grants	
Summary	To facilitate the work of small groups and enable larger groups to attract funding from other sources. Grants will focus primarily on core funding but be associated with very specific outcome targets where there is a clear community development focus
Award	Small Grants: £1,001 - £2,000
Grant Programme Eligibility	Groups/projects must: • Be community based/not for personal profit • Have 90% of beneficiaries in the ABC Council area • Have a clear community development focus

Good Relations Programme Objectives

Projects must contribute to <u>at least</u> one of the themes of the Executive Office's Good Relations strategy 'Together: Building a United Community' i.e.
      • Our children and young people
      • Our shared community
      • Our safe community
      • Our Cultural expression

How will applications be assessed?		
Grant Programme Eligibility (see also Basic Eligibility Criteria, 5.3)	Community based/not for personal profit	Y/N
	90% of beneficiaries in ABC Council area	Y/N
	Clear community development focus to group/project	Y/N
Assessment Criteria (Small Grants)	Level of need demonstrated	0-5
	Ability of group to deliver	0-5
	Value for money (cost per significant beneficiary impact)	0-5
	Council funding % of total	0-5
	Fit with Council priorities	0-15
	Specific grant programme objectives	0-15

Notes:
a) An application to this grant programme should be for either:
    i.   Annual core running costs (see (f) below), or
    ii.   Programme costs (see (g) below)
b) Applications to this grant programme for an event(s) will be ineligible. Applications for an event(s) should be made to one of the events grant programmes.
c) Where a group is eligible to apply for core running costs, only one application for core running costs is allowed per annum and the group must be the owner or leaseholder and responsible for utility bills to claim these costs.
d) See Section 3.3 of this Manual for details of the period covered in this call.
e) Annual core running costs:
    i.   Groups applying for annual core running costs must be primarily community development focused. This means their core purpose(s) must be about working for the betterment of either a geographical community (examples of groups include community associations, resident associations, rural development associations, forums, or network support organisations), or they must be working for the betterment of a community of interest (e.g. Section 75 groups). Groups who are ineligible to apply for annual core running costs include, but are not restricted to:
        • those whose focus is arts or sports
        • groups where the statutory responsibility is with another body (e.g. youth clubs, playgroups and childcare)

- counselling organisations, advice service providers.
    ii. Groups eligible to apply for annual core running costs can only apply for the following costs:
    - Insurance
    - Rent
    - Heat and light (oil, electricity etc)
    - Water rates
    - Telephone
    - Broadband
    - Cleaning materials
    - Stationery
    - Accountancy
    - Equipment (up to £500)
    - 1 x IT Licence fee e.g. Zoom (up to a maximum of £200)

    iii. Core running costs are only available for groups based in the Council area. Costs for premises outside the Council area are ineligible.

f) Programme costs:

Eligible Costs	Ineligible costs
Sports Coach or a Programme Facilitator should not exceed £30 per hour (we will assume each session is for 1 person for 1 hour only unless advised otherwise in the application)	Gifts, donations, prizes, flags, bunting, bank/loan interest, musical instruments, legal fees, kits/uniforms, private or unfunded pensions, alcohol, refreshments, food (except in exceptional circumstances e.g. sweets/selection boxes for Christmas Tree Switch-on events)
Venue hire – This must be a publicly recognised venue e.g. a community centre (not a domestic property)	Any costs or projects which are clearly another statutory agency's responsibility
Best practice visits where directly linked to the programme	Projects or activities which are delivered outside the Council area
Travel and transport costs for Small Grants within the Council area where they are directly linked to the programme.	Salaries, wages and administration costs
Hire or purchase of equipment up to £500, must be linked to the programme. If you want to purchase equipment ONLY then please apply for a small capital grant.	Costs incurred prior to a funding offer from Council (retrospective funding)
Training or facilitation costs.	Fundraising events and projects
Printing costs for advertising only linked to the programme and not exceeding £200	Trips of any kind
Materials relevant to the programme	Costs which are not clearly linked to the project
	Costs that are poor value for money, or that are purchased from outside of Council procurement guidelines
	Costs that are already covered by other funding or income sources.

	Costs that can be recovered from elsewhere, e.g. VAT.
	Payments made to any members of the applicant group or organisation for goods or services.
	Insurance costs for a programme (this is only eligible in running costs)
	Facilitators and coaches must be independent/external from the organisation and no committee members can receive payment
	Fireworks or Beacons of any kind (Includes lantern & balloon releases)

i. Groups can apply for time-bound programmes of activity where there is a community development focus to the project i.e. a 12-session programme addressing an issue, improving skills etc. For example, a group could apply for costs associated with delivering a twelve session IT class, or a four session First Aid class, or buy-in speakers for their weekly or monthly meetings

ii. The maximum programme duration per application will be 12 sessions within a period of four consecutive months.

iii. If you apply for more than 12 sessions, your award (if successful) will be restricted to 12 sessions.

iv. If you apply for a programme to be delivered over more than 4 consecutive months, your award (if successful) will be restricted to 4 months.

v. If applying to run a summer scheme, you should apply for a programme (rather than annual core running costs). Summer schemes are not subject to the 12-session rule. However, the amount awarded is capped at £1,000 for one week and £250 for each additional week up to a maximum grant of £2,000.

Theme 1: Our Children and Young People		
Aim	**Project/s**	**Outcomes**
To continue to improve attitudes amongst young people and to build a community where they can play a full and active role in building good relations	Under this theme your project should involve children/young people in activities (and where appropriate the planning of activities)	Improving attitudes of children from different backgrounds Young People engaging in bringing the community together
Theme 2: Our Shared Community		
Aim	**Project/s**	**Outcomes**
To create a community where division does not restrict the life of individuals and where all areas are open and accessible to everyone.	Projects under this theme should focus on making communities welcoming and bring people together in a positive way i.e. creating an environment that promotes community spirit and good relations.	Increased use of shared space and services Shared space accessible to all

Theme 3: Our Safe Community		
Aim	**Project/s**	**Outcomes**
To create a community where everyone feels safe in moving around and where life choices are not inhibited by fears around safety	Projects delivered under this theme should address perceptions around safety in the community.	Reduce the prevalence of hate crime and intimidation A community where spaces and places are safe for all
Theme 4: Our Cultural Expression		
Aim	**Project/s**	**Outcomes**
To create a community which promotes mutual respect and understanding, is strengthened by its diversity, and where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced.	Under this theme it is expected that projects will encourage participants to explore culture and traditions encouraging learning and respect.	Increased sense of community belonging Cultural diversity is celebrated

c) Further information on Together Building a United Community (TBUC) Strategy can be found on: https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/together-building-united-community-strategy

5.4 Applications for a Medium Grant (either Community Development or Good Relations) should note we will only fund a maximum of 50% of any specific eligible cost requested. This means we will only vouch 50% of any invoice.

5.5 Applications to any of the Revenue Grant Programmes (i.e. Community Grants, Arts Culture and Events Grants, Good Relations Grants, International Linkages Grant, Commemorative Events Grant) will be deemed ineligible if only applying for equipment. Applications solely for equipment should be made to the Small-Scale Capital Project Fund when open for applications.

1. <u>Submitting Your Application</u>

6.2 The following are the important matters in relation to submitting your application:

- All applications **<u>must</u>** be submitted online through the Council's Online Funding Hub.
- The deadline for receipt of all applications is **12noon on Friday 29 November 2024.**
- Please note for grants commencing after 1 April 2023 there will be a requirement to submit all acceptance paperwork, vouching information and evaluation information by electronic means. An electronic reminder will be issued to all successful groups, who will need to login to the Funding Hub, where they made the original application and attach or enter this detail. If a group is unable to submit vouching information or evaluation information electronically, they should contact the FAP team and arrange for an appointment to meet with an Officer at Council offices in order to submit the information.
- Please note Council is seeking to continuously update and improve the service,

hence in 2023/2024 all applications will also be asked to complete an Equality Monitoring Questionnaire. This will be entirely separate from the assessment process and will be used for the purposes of equality monitoring only. Assessment panels will not have sight of the equality monitoring information.

- All applications received after this time will be deemed ineligible.
- It is <u>essential</u> that you avoid trying to submit your application at the last minute as any holdups may result in a late submission and your application therefore being deemed ineligible.
- Support to submit an application online will be available to those groups who request it. Anyone requiring such support should seek it early and not leave it until the last minute, as we cannot guarantee the availability of assistance for everyone approaching the deadline.

2.   **Assessment Process**

7.2   Assessment will be carried out by officers using a standard assessment process. In broad terms the assessment will consider:

- A basic eligibility check, applicable to all
- A grant programme eligibility check

7.3   Applications which pass the eligibility checks will proceed for further assessment as follows:

- For grant programmes offering funding up to a maximum of £1,000 (Seeding Grants, Community Development Micro Grants, Community Events Fund, Good Relations Micro Grants) applicants must meet the assessment criteria for that grant programme If the application meets the criteria, funding will be offered.
- For all other grant programmes applicants will be scored against the assessment criteria for that grant programme

7.4   Some awards are determined by event/project duration or population size

7.5   Scoring and Awards

- Applications which are scored will not be funded if they **do not score 50% or more**
- Applications scoring 50-69% will be awarded that percentage of the total eligible costs applied for
- Applications scoring 70%+ will be awarded 100% of the eligible costs they applied for

7.6   Where a Call is oversubscribed, all applications eligible to be funded will have their award reduced by the same percentage (top sliced) to ensure the funding offered is within the budget available.

7.7   The exception to 7.6 is where a grant programme within a Call has a specific budget allocated to that grant programme. In this case, if the grant programme budget is oversubscribed, awards will be top sliced to ensure the funding offered is within the budget.

7.8   Grants will also have to be considered and ratified by elected Members through the Council Leisure and Community Services Committee.

7.9   Decisions

The assessment process will produce one of two outcomes:

- An application may be rejected as it fails to meet the criteria or has failed to reach the pass score. In such cases, officers will complete a tick box form setting out the reasons for the rejection and the group will receive a letter detailing reasons for rejection.

- Offer of assistance – a successful application would be given an offer of funding by email, setting out the amount of funding, monitoring and evaluation requirements and any other conditions to be applied. Acceptance of this would trigger the need for proof of other key documentation prior to release of grant.

7.10   Review Process

Please note we will not allow or proceed to any appeal from an Ineligible application outcome; however, you may still wish to request Feedback from an ineligible application within the correct timeframe.

Following the decision to reject an application, the applicant organisation will be informed in writing stating the reasons for the decision. The applicant organisation may request a review of the decision. The formal Review will provide an independent process through which the applicant organisation will have the opportunity to demonstrate in writing to the Review Panel that either:

- Option1 - the decision was wrong because the Council failed to take into account the information contained within the written application or took into account information that was not contained within the written application.

and/or

- Option 2 - there was a failure in adherence to procedures and guidance issued with the call for applications or systems that materially affected or could have materially affected the decision.

or

- Option 3 - that officers involved in the assessment process have had a clear Conflict of Interest and have failed to declare this in the appropriate manner.

Appeals on any other grounds will not be considered. It should also be noted that no additional supporting documentation will be permitted at this stage.

Requests for a review must be submitted online through the same system the application was submitted by the group. The request for a review must be made within 28 days of the date of the letter notifying you of the outcome of your application for financial assistance.

7.11   Payment of Grant

7.11.1   Any groups who are successful in their application will not receive any money until:
a)   All previous year's paperwork has been supplied and any outstanding monies have been returned. This includes satisfactory evidence of how previous grants have been spent (vouching) and a completed post-project evaluation form.
b)   All documentation requested within the new Letter of Offer has been provided.

7.11.2   Subject to the above point, groups awarded over £5,000 will only receive 75% of their grant upfront with the balance payable upon receipt of all post-project paperwork. Groups awarded up to £5,000 will receive 100% of their award upfront.

7.11.3   Reprofiling of award – if a successful organisation wishes to reprofile any part of their award this must be agreed in advance with a FAP officer. Reprofiling is allowed up to 15% of the grant total.

7.12 <u>Procurement</u>

Successful applicants must follow Council's procurement guidelines when purchasing items funded through the award ie: the number of written quotations which are required for all purchases are set out as follows:

Estimated Value	Process To Be Used
Where estimated cost does not exceed £1,500	No quotation required but reasonable effort must be made to obtain value for money.
Where estimated cost is £1,501 - £7,500	A minimum of 3 written competitive quotations required.
Where estimated cost is £7,501 - £30,000	A minimum of 4 written competitive quotations required.

Failure to provide evidence of appropriate procurement, if requested at the vouching stage, will result in that cost being disallowed.

Please note that Procurement guidelines apply to the total cost of goods & services and not just the percentage that Council is funding.

7.13 Conflict of Interest

Organisations should be aware of any potential conflicts of interest arising in their use of suppliers. Further information on managing conflicts of interest can be obtained from Charity Commission (Home | The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (charitycommissionni.org.uk) and NICVA (| NICVA).

7.14 <u>Fraud</u>

In the event of suspected fraud, or other irregularity, Council will refer the matter to the Council Fraud and Financial Investigation Panel for further investigation. Council retains the right to withhold making an award until the outcome of an investigation is complete and/or to impose appropriate sanctions in the event of an irregularity e.g. ineligible to apply to FAP until agreed conditions have been met etc.

3. <u>Acknowledging a Grant Award</u>

8.1 If your organisation is successful in securing financial assistance from Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council, it is mandatory to acknowledge this support by including the council logo on all promotional material (both print and non-print). The logo in its various forms and logo usage guidelines are available upon request from:

Armagh Office: Caitriona Rafferty   Tel: 0300 0300 900 Ext: 61291
Email: caitriona.rafferty@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk

Banbridge Office: Sharon Harrison Tel: 0300 0300 900 Ext: 61300
Email: sharon.harrison@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk

Craigavon Office: Hugh Carey   Tel: 0300 0300 900 Ext: 61295
Email: hugh.carey@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk

8.2   When the council logo is printed on publications (eg books/booklets) produced by your organisation, you must include the following statement:

8.3   If running a Large event, you must invite the Lord Mayor to attend. Occasionally you may be asked to attend a photo call/launch event.

8.4   Failure to acknowledge funding in this way may result in your organisation's award being withdrawn, which in turn may affect future applications.

4.   Appendices

9.1   Guidance for Branches of Larger Organisations

We expect groups who wish to apply for financial assistance to have a constitution (or rules/standing orders/bye-laws) in their own name. However, we recognise this may prove challenging for local branches of regional or national organisations.

If a branch of a larger organisation does not have a constitution in the name of the branch, then the branch has one of two options:

Option 1:

If the branch:

    i. has its own management committee,

    ii. has a UK bank or building society account in the name of the branch and,

    iii. produce their own annual accounts

Then the group can apply in their own name providing they get a letter of undertaking from the parent body (see required format below). The letter of undertaking states that ultimate legal and accounting responsibility for the grant will lie with the parent body.

Option 2:

Where Option 1 is not possible, then the group should get the parent body to apply on their behalf.

Letter of Undertaking

The letter of undertaking from the parent body must take the following form:

> To: The Financial Assistance Programme Manager.
>
> I confirm that *[write name of organisation applying]* is a branch of *[write name of bigger organisation]* and I am authorised to sign this letter on its behalf.
>
> My organisation supports the application from this branch and I understand that ultimate legal and accounting responsibility for the grant will lie with us as the parent organisation.
>
> I confirm that the answers in the application form submitted by the branch are true and accurate and that both the parent organisation and the branch will comply with the Council's terms and conditions of grant.
>
> Signed: Date:

Name:	Job title:

9.2 Council Priorities

Council's Corporate Plan

Any financial assistance provided by Council must further the delivery of Council's Corporate Plan 2023-2027. The table below sets out Council's priority areas and commitments relevant to the financial assistance programme. Applicants should consider this table and need to explain how their application can help further Council's priorities:

Community Wellbeing	Environment & Place	Economic Growth
• Encourage participation in arts, culture, heritage and physical activity. • Provide opportunities which improve quality of life and wellbeing for our communities and staff. • Support and empower communities.	• Actively respond to the climate crisis and support others to do likewise. • Seek investment to preserve the uniqueness of our heritage and places. • Shape our places to be attractive, accessible, healthy, safe and clean.	• Provide and facilitate opportunities for growth, investment, productivity and skills development in our local economy.

Council would also encourage uptake in areas where community infrastructure and capacity are under-developed. Applicants should consider the impact of climate change and where possible, take steps to mitigate the factors associated with climate change.

9.3 List of Required Policies and other documents

<u>Essential Policies and Documents</u>

Any organisation receiving funding from Council should be expected to have the following as a minimum (this is in addition to the Funders Passport documents eg constitution, accounts). Discretion will be used to determine how necessary each of these are depending on the size of the organisation and the nature of their work.

- Appropriate insurance cover. This may include:
    - o Employer's liability insurance (if staff are employed).
    - o Public liability insurance (including cover for volunteers).
    - o Specific event insurance if an event is being organised.
    - o Directors and Officers liability insurance if the organisation is a limited company.
- A Safeguarding Policy (Child Protection Policy and/or Vulnerable Adults policy). A more comprehensive policy should be expected if the organisation is working specifically with children or vulnerable adults.
- A basic volunteering policy.
- A basic equal opportunities policy.
- A basic disability and age discrimination policy.
- Simple financial procedures policy.

<u>Additional Policies required if Staff are employed</u>

The following policies must be in place if the organisation employs staff:

- Fair employment policy.
- More comprehensive health and safety policy.
- Recruitment policy.
- Staff induction policy (this may be rudimentary if there is only one member of staff).
- Staff appraisal system (ideally).

<u>Other Policies</u>

Ideally a larger organisation will have many of the following. These may be considered essential for larger organisations and would represent best practice for small organisations. In order of importance these are likely to include:

- A strategic or operational plan.
- Data protection policy (particularly if the organisation is managing and maintaining data about individuals, members, staff or the public).
- Conflict of interest register/policy.
- A financial reserves policy.
- More comprehensive financial management policies.
- Assets register or inventory.
- Fraud policy.
- Document retention policy.
- Travel policy.
- Internet policy.
- Information asset policy.
- Procurement or tendering procedure policies.

Application Process Diagram
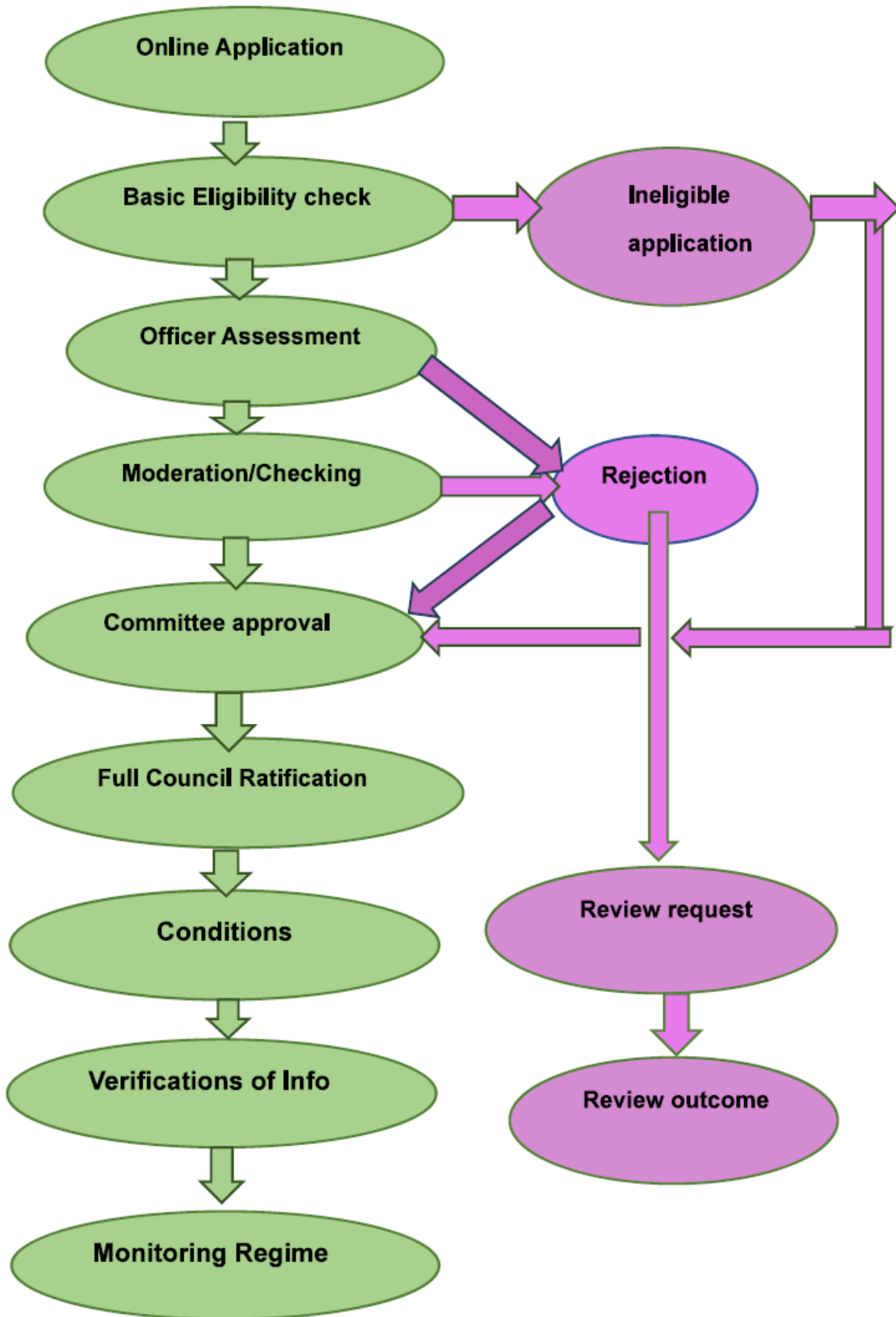
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

i. **Q: We are a branch of a larger organisation – can we apply?**

A: See the specific guidance in 9.1.

ii. **Q: We will struggle to complete an application online – can we get any help?**

A: Council will offer support to groups to use the online system. Groups looking support should contact Council using the details on page 3 of this Guidance Manual. Support will also be available from Network Support Organisations operating in the Borough. When seeking support groups must bear in mind the following:

- It is essential to request support at an early stage as it cannot be guaranteed that support will be available at the last minute.

- To make the most of everyone's time and get the most out of the support being offered, groups should attend the support sessions with the answers to the questions described in this Guidance Manual.

iii. **Q: Can youth groups apply for funding?**

A: Council generally will not fund activities for which another organisation has a statutory responsibility. The Education Authority has a statutory responsibility for youth work. Council will not fund the core costs of a youth organisation. However, consideration may be given to funding a time-bound project where either:

a) there are clear good relations, or health and wellbeing benefits for children and young people (e.g. drug awareness project or anti-bullying project), or

b) The direct beneficiaries may be more than just young people e.g. an intergenerational project, or a project that works with parents and children.

In certain exceptional cases, where need can be clearly identified and there are compelling reasons why the statutory body concerned cannot fund an important project, Council may take a more flexible approach and fund in partnership with other statutory bodies.

iv. **Q: Can a church apply for funding?**

A: Council can accept applications from churches or other faith organisations as long as the project being applied for does not include the promotion of faith or religion.

9.7 Completing the Application Form

This section offers help regarding the type of information we are looking for when answering specific questions. It is designed to help you - so reading it and referring to it when completing the application form is likely to improve your chances of getting funding.

In general, please note the following:

- You should answer each question as fully as possible and do not be afraid to repeat part of an answer to another question if it is relevant to the question you

are working on. Officers will not be able to go looking for the answers to questions in other parts of the application.

- You must also assume the person assessing your application knows nothing about your project.

SECTION 1 – ORGANISATION

Organisation Details

Please ensure the accuracy of the contact details for the Contact Person as this will be the only person we will contact regarding your application. If your Contact Person changes during the application process or you know the Contact Person will not be contactable during that period, you must provide us with an alternative Contact Person. In the event we need to seek clarification on your application but cannot make contact with the Contact Person, your application will be rejected.

The organisation name on the application form **must** be exactly the same as the name on the constitution you will provide (see exceptions for branches in 9.1).

1.3 Structure

When you click on this you will be offered a choice of options. Most organisations applying will be Unincorporated Associations but if you are not sure, select 'Other' and then describe what type of organisation you would call yourself.

SECTION 2 – FUNDING DETAIL

Grant Select

2.1 What level of grant are you applying for?

Depending on which grant programme you are applying to you may have a choice of level of grant. It is important you choose the grant programme and level that best meets your project.

Description

2.2 Title of Project

This title will be used in any correspondence with you so should be something short that you will recognise.

Brief Description of the project or activity for which funding is being sought.

This box should provide sufficient detail to enable Council Officers to understand what your project is about and what you will do. It should specifically note how the project or activity will address the need identified in Question 2.5. You should provide as much specific detail as possible including the type of project (e.g. Core Costs, Community Festival, Training Course).

How many people will benefit directly from your project?

Please tell us how many people will take part in your activity or attend your event. For example, if twelve young people attend a six-week programme aimed at reducing anti-social behaviour there will be twelve direct beneficiaries.

How many people will benefit indirectly from your project?

This question is asking about the other people who benefit indirectly as a result of those taking part in your project or activity. Using the example above, as a result of the twelve young people taking part in the programme, 50 local residents might benefit as a result of reduced anti-social behaviour in the community. Not all projects may have indirect beneficiaries.

Where will your project be delivered?

Please tell us the name of the venue or site and address where you will deliver your project.

What is the duration of your project?

You will have already told us the start and end date but here we need to know the duration. For example, if running a course, you might state that it is running three hours per session, one session per week for six weeks. For an event this might be one afternoon for three hours.

Finance

2.3 Detail all the costs of your project/activity and how much funding you are applying to us for.

a) Indicate the amount of funding you require from this grant programme (this must not exceed the maximum and should be the minimum amount necessary to make your project/activity happen). It should be noted that Council may choose to fund less than you request.

b) Be as specific as possible and detail all costs associated with the project even if you are not asking us to fund all costs

c) Ensure your costings are realistic – get quotes and do not guess amounts

d) Detail each specific cost on a separate line. Rather than writing in one line 'Family fun day' you must detail the specific costs of your family fun day each on a separate line (e.g. bouncy castles [line 1], toilet hire [line 2], first aid cover [line 3], advertising [line 4]) giving a cost for each separate item.

e) Multiple items listed on the same line may result in the whole line being disallowed.

2.4 If you are not asking us for 100%, where will the balance of funding come from?

We need to know where you are planning to get the balance of your money from. This might be from another funder or from your own funds.

You should also let us know (in answer to Question 3.1) if you are applying to another funder for the same costs as you are requesting from us. **While it is not wrong to apply, it would be fraudulent to accept more than one offer of funding to cover the same costs.**

Will there be a charge to take part in your project/activity or attend your event?

You **must** tell us if you are planning to charge people to attend your event or take part in your activity. We need to know how much you plan to charge per head and how much you expect to raise from charging.

Project Details

2.5 Describe the evidence of need for the proposed activity and why existing provision does not address this.

Evidence of need: how do you know your project is needed?

a) Are there published statistics which show a need? Have you carried out a community survey and what evidence did this produce? Did you run a focus group of members to find out what activities they wanted? Have you run this event before and each time attendance has increased, or did you carry out an exit survey to see if people felt it should be run again? Were you oversubscribed and is there a waiting list? (not all of these questions are relevant to all projects)

b) You should detail as much evidence as possible and be specific. Quote numbers where possible.

c) Officers will use your answer here when assessing the need for the project. In addition, officers will also assess whether there is a financial need for funding based on information given elsewhere in the application form or supporting documents.

d) Groups applying to a revenue grant programme where the maximum available is £10k or more will have to provide accounts (independently verified or audited) which must include a balance sheet. Where the balance sheet provided indicates unrestricted funds equivalent to at least one year's annual costs of the organisation then it will be deemed there is no financial need for a grant. The exception to this case will be where the group can demonstrate a valid reason for holding such high levels of free reserves.

Why existing provision does not address this:

a) Is a similar activity being offered in your community already and is oversubscribed?

b) If there is no similar activity being offered, then you must state this

c) Council will not fund the same activity in the same areas.

Example Answer: Our group carried out an audit of older people's needs in 2024 by asking 100 people aged over 55 what they saw as the biggest issues affecting them. The top issue was social isolation (85%) and one of the activities people wished to see in their community (65%) was a weekly older people's group. We then consulted with a focus group of 12 older people in relation to a specific programme and they indicated they would like a computer class which will focus on using the internet and include the use of social media. We have asked around and are not aware of any such service being offered locally.

2.6 Describe your organisation's ability/experience in delivering such a project or activity

We need to be confident your group will be able to deliver the proposed project. Please tell us if:

a)   Your group has delivered such a project before and how often
b)   Members have undertaken relevant training to help deliver such a project
c)   You have members on your committee or in your group who have specific skills and experience of managing and delivering projects, even if your group has not delivered such a project in the past
d)   You plan to seek advice and support from outside your organisation to help deliver the project
e)   Has your group experience of managing grants before of a similar size? If so, give details of funders and amounts

2.7a Describe how your project relates to Council's priorities?

Council's priorities are detailed on page16. You need to tell us which priority (from the drop-down list) your project contributes to and describe how your project helps deliver these. If you fail to adequately describe how your project meets the specific priority, it is unlikely to be funded.

Programme Objectives

As well as overall eligibility criteria, projects must meet specific grant programme objectives. Each grant programme has a different set of objectives.

This page of the application form states the minimum number your project should be meeting. By ticking the ones your project will meet, further boxes are below this for you to complete.

Describe how your project contributes to this programme objective

You should give as much detail as possible in relation to how your project will meet this specific grant programme objective. You should assume the Officers assessing your application know nothing about your project and therefore how it will meet the grant programme objectives.

TBuc Programme Objectives

- Our children and young people
- Our shared community
- Our safe community
- Our Cultural expression

SECTION 3 – OTHER INFORMATION

Any Other Information

3.1 Please provide any additional information which you feel is relevant to your application

While Council is under no obligation to use the information provided in this section, and it is unlikely to form part of the scoring of applications, you may wish to provide additional information to explain or clarify any issue raised above. This is also an opportunity to explain anything which does not fit easily into any of the boxes in

Section 2 of the application form.

In particular, if you have applied to another funder for the same costs you are applying to us for, then you must detail this information in this section.

3.2 Document/Evidence Checklist

You must complete this checklist indicating whether you can provide the documents that will be requested if your application is successful. While it will not prevent you being awarded a grant, you will not receive any money until you provide them.

3.3 You must confirm by ticking the boxes below that your organisation is, has, or will have by the commencement of the proposed project and for its duration, the following:

Your group must confirm the list of statements detailed in this question by ticking the boxes. All boxes must be ticked to be able to submit an application. We will no longer ask you for any evidence of these by default, but Council may choose to spot check these and reserves the right to withhold grant should any declaration prove to be inaccurate or the documents are not available.

Documents

Essential Documents

You must upload a signed and dated copy of your constitution with the application.

Supporting Documents

Can be uploaded at time of application submission, however, not essential as we will request such with an offer of funding.

Submission

This is important and you should read very carefully before you sign. Online applicants will be asked to agree the declaration on behalf of the group.

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