



**Armagh City
Banbridge
& Craigavon**
Borough Council

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE POLICY

APPLICANT GUIDANCE MANUAL

JANUARY 2025

**FOR LARGE CAPITAL PROJECT FUND
2025-26 APPLICATIONS ONLY**

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	2
2. WHAT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE DOES COUNCIL OFFER FOR CAPITAL PROJECTS?	3
3. WHO CAN APPLY FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE?	4
4. WHAT CAN WE APPLY FOR?	6
5. ESSENTIAL DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED	7
6. COMPLETING AND SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION FORM	8
7. ASSESSMENT PROCESS	9
8. ACKNOWLEDGING A GRANT AWARD	11
9. APPENDICES	12
9.1 Large Capital Project Fund Programme Eligibility and Assessment Criteria	12
9.2 Guidance for Branches of Larger Organisations	13
9.3 Council Priorities	14
9.4 Supporting Documents Checklist	15
9.5 Application Process Diagram	16
9.6 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)	17
9.7 Completing the Application Form	17

1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance for organisations applying for financial assistance from Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council for Capital Projects through the Large Capital Project Fund 2025-26.

The purpose of the Large Capital Project Fund is to enable high quality capital projects that could bring significant benefit to the Borough to be delivered where a relatively small percentage of the overall funding is required.

It is inevitable that a guidance manual cannot cover every single aspect of funding therefore potential applicants are encouraged to discuss individual applications with a relevant Council officer if they are uncertain about their eligibility.

The guidance document sets out details of the funding programme and describes the process for making applications and details of how they will be assessed. **Groups who read this manual are likely to be in a better position to make a good application than those who do not.**

All applications for the Large Capital Project fund will open at 09:00am on Monday 13 January 2025. The application deadline will close at 12noon on 17 October 2025 or once the budget is fully committed, whichever comes first. Please note there is a series of essential/mandatory documentation which must be submitted with your application. Applicants will be permitted to submit documents up until 7 days after the closing date. No documents will be accepted after 12noon on 24 October 2025.

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 for Capital Projects?

- 2.1. Council offers two funding programmes for Capital Projects. A call for applications to the **Large Scale Capital Project Fund 2025-26** opens on Monday 13 January 2025 and closes at 12 noon on Friday 17 October 2025 – a different Applicant Guidance Manual exists for the Small Scale Capital Project Fund 2025-26

The key details of the Large Capital Project Fund 2025-26 are as follows:

Programme	2. Capital Project Grants
Sub-Programme	b. Large Capital Project Fund
Grant Range	£2,501-£20,000
Maximum Grant Rate	Up to 50%
Project Delivery Period	Project delivery should not commence before a Letter of Offer is issued and handover meeting has happened, and must commence before 31.03.2026
Call Period	The call for applications opens on 13 January 2025. The call will close for applications at noon 17 October 2025 or once the budget is fully committed, whichever comes first.

- 2.2. Applications must demonstrate how their project meets **at least one** of the following Programme Aims:
- Addressing disadvantage
 - Promoting tolerance and social inclusion
 - Contributing to the reduction of poverty at local level
 - Improving health and well being
- 2.3. Applications must also demonstrate how their project meets **at least three** of the following Programme Objectives:
- Build capacity and skills
 - Increase opportunities for volunteering
 - Improve facilities, access or services
 - Increase the utilisation of a facility or service
 - Attract a new or larger participant group
 - Contribute to community, sport or arts development
 - Reduce the running costs for a service or facility (eg improve energy efficiency of a venue)
 - Contribute to the environmental improvement of an area

- 2.4. A successful application to the Large Capital Project Fund 2025-26 will count towards a group's maximum of two successful applications to the Financial Assistance Programme allowed per financial year. Groups are allowed a maximum of 2 grants in any one financial year (with the exception of Christmas switch on awards).
- 2.5. The Large Capital Grant counts towards the maximum of 2 successful grants in any one year i.e. a group cannot hold 2 revenue grants and one capital award as this would exceed the number of grants allowed to a group in that financial year. If a group has already been awarded 2 grants in that financial year and accepted these, then a third application would automatically be rendered ineligible.
- 2.6. To note a group can hold a maximum of one Large Capital grant award per financial year. This cannot be exceeded.
- 2.7. Groups cannot apply to both '2a Small Scale Capital Project Fund 2025-26' and '2b Large Capital Project Fund 2025-26' unless their application to 2a was for technical assistance to support an application to 2b.

3. Who Can Apply for Financial Assistance?

- 3.1. 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:
 1. Membership is inclusive of the identified community and open to its full range of opinion;
 2. Each year the organisation holds an Annual General Meeting (AGM) at which each member has an equal vote;
 3. 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;
 4. The committee/board presents the report for the year at the AGM; and
 5. An annual statement of accounts is presented at the AGM

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.

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.

The management committee or board must be accountable to their membership for the work done and money spent during the year. The committee must present a report and financial accounts which are formally adopted by the membership at the Annual General Meeting.

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.

3.2. Council will not consider applications from:

- Organisations that
 - discriminate against any particular racial group, political grouping or religious body.
 - 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).
 - We cannot support commercial projects or projects that could be carried out commercially. If, in the reasonable opinion of the Council, the Organisation applying for funding is a de facto commercial Organisation, whatever the legal make-up of the Organisation, then the Council shall not fund that Organisation. The decision of the Council shall be final in this regard.
- Statutory organisations (except through a partnership arrangement with Council where key priority outcomes are delivered)

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

3.3. Basic Eligibility Criteria

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. The basic eligibility criteria are that projects must:

- Have a clearly identified need.
- Be able to 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 programme aims and objectives

An application that falls outside these eligibility criteria will not be considered further.

3.4. Council will not consider applications for projects which:

- have no significant benefit to the 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.

4. What Can We Apply For?

- 4.1. This programme is to fund Capital Works projects only, where the project value is greater than £5,000.

It is **not** for funding:

- Capital works projects valued at £5,000 or below
- Equipment
- Technical assistance up to and including design stage

(these projects are eligible for funding under the Small Scale Capital Project Fund 2025-26 which is also open for applications from 13 January 2025 until 12 noon on 7 February 2025 – Small Capital 1st call)

- 4.2. Eligible costs

- New facilities (eg community venues, pitches)
- Professional & legal fees associated with capital spend on the planned project
- Land purchase
- Renovation works (e.g. extension, refurbishment, modernisation, conversion, flooring, ground improvement works, lighting, electrical rewiring, plumbing and heating works) required for the delivery of the project
- Non recoverable VAT
- Purchase of fixtures related to the project (see FAQs 9.6 for a definition)
- Renovations or provision to promote enhanced Child Protection and/or Disability Access to enable greater participation in community life
- Capital expenditure to facilitate the provision of mobile services in rural areas
- Measures to reduce maintenance costs (e.g. bore well)

- 4.3. Ineligible Costs (General)

- Any costs or projects which are clearly another statutory agency's responsibility. 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.
- Projects outside the ABC Council area
- Costs incurred prior to a funding offer from Council (retrospective funding).
- 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.

- 4.4. Ineligible Costs (Specific)

- Ongoing maintenance costs (eg painting) where it is a standalone project
- Equipment and fittings (see FAQs 9.6 for a definition)
- Murals
- Sculptures
- Commemorative projects e.g. gardens, gates, memorials
- Flag poles and flags
- Entrance features to housing estates

- 4.5. Multiple applications are not eligible for projects relating to the same venue even if submitted by different groups. Applications for projects on the same land may be considered where separate and distinct in nature.

5. Essential/Mandatory Documentation Required

Please note until all your Essential/Mandatory Documentation is submitted to FAP your application will not go to assessment. No documents will be accepted after 12noon on 24 October 2025

- 5.1. Applications can be submitted at any stage while the call is open, however a submitted application will not be assessed until **all** the following is provided:

a. Evidence of security of tenure which must be one of the following:

- i. Proof of ownership of the property which should be one of the following:
 1. A copy of the title deeds in the name of the applicant organisation
 2. a letter from a solicitor on headed paper which sets out the Land Registry folio number of the property, date registered, ownership (which should be name of applicant organisation)
- ii. A lease of at least 10 years duration remaining with written permission from the landlord for the project to proceed
- iii. Where the proposed project is to take place on Council property, the only requirement is that written permission from Council for the project must be provided.

b. Evidence of potential project costs (for all applications) as follows:

For capital works, **one** of the following:

- i. copy of three quotations for the work being applied for (each quotation must compare like with like ie same specification) or
- ii. one detailed cost estimate if produced by a Quantity Surveyor

For land purchase, **one** of the following:

- i. a valuation carried out by a valuer appointed by the Funding Body who are match-funding your project
- ii. if the above does not exist, Council will require a valuation to be carried out by the Council's independent valuer – however, this will only happen if an offer of funding is to be made. In this case the value indicated by the Council's independent valuer will be used when calculating any final grant award. The Council's independent valuer cost is the responsibility of the applicant.

c. Evidence in writing that all required statutory approvals are in place

This means you must provide **both** of the following:

- i. Evidence of planning permission granted **or** evidence in writing from the Planning Department of Council that planning permission is not required for the works being proposed in the application.
- ii. Evidence of Building Control approval granted **or** evidence in writing from the Building Control Department of Council that Building Control approval is not required for the works being proposed in the application.

Please note: it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that **all** the works for which funding is being applied for have statutory approvals. For example, where an applicant provides evidence of planning permission and it later transpires at any stage following the closing of the call that some elements of the project are not covered by the approval provided, the application will be deemed unsuccessful.

- d. **Evidence that the funding shortfall is in place** (ie the finance is secured to pay the balance of project costs). This may take the form of a grant from another funder, a loan, a donation etc. Please note the following:
- i. groups must be able to demonstrate and evidence a cash commitment from their own funds at a minimum rate of 5% of total project costs up to a value of £5,000. Such cash commitment can include a loan to the applicant.
 - ii. contribution in kind will only be considered in the form of the donation by a third party of land or buildings. The donation must be freehold or, if leasehold, must be of a minimum duration of 99 years. In this case the value will have to be independently evaluated as described above for land purchase.
 - iii. Where an applicant is seeking funding from another funder you must submit that Letter of Offer evidencing that you have been successful in your application to cover the shortfall of the groups total cost of project
- e. **A copy of the applicant's most recent annual accounts**
The accounts must be signed as audited or independently verified. They cannot just be signed off by a member of the Committee.

6. Completing and Submitting the Application Form

- 6.1. Guidance on how to complete specific questions is included at Appendix 9.7. **It is highly recommended that you take the time to read the guidance offered.**
- 6.2. The following are the important matters in relation to submitting your application:
- All applications **must** be submitted online.
 - The call will remain open until noon on Friday 17 October 2025 or until the budget is committed, whichever comes first. Once that point is reached the call will close to any new applications.
 - If there is budget uncommitted at 17 October 2025 and there are applications submitted on the system without all the necessary documents supplied, groups will be given 1 week for which to supply any outstanding documentation. When the one week deadline has passed, applications will be assessed in the order in which all outstanding documentation has been provided and successful application(s) will be awarded funding up to the value of the uncommitted budget in the same order. Applications not achieving the pass score will not be given an opportunity to resubmit as the call will be closed. Those that still have outstanding documentation after one week will not be assessed and will be deemed ineligible for assessment. Failure to provide evidence of security of tenure or evidence of potential costs at time of submission will result in the application being deemed ineligible.
 - If the budget is committed before 17 October 2025, the call will close and any draft applications will be suspended and deleted at the end of the Financial year in order to comply with GDPR requirements.

7. Assessment Process

7.1. The assessment process will produce one of two outcomes:

- An application may be rejected as it fails to meet the criteria, has failed to reach the pass score, or the programme budget has been committed. 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 funding – a successful application would be given an offer of funding by email setting out the amount awarded, 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.

7.2. Assessment will be carried out by officers using a standard assessment process. The assessment will include:

- A basic eligibility check
- A programme eligibility check ie.:
 - Groups must be community based/not for personal profit
 - Projects must be located in ABC Council area
 - Projects must contribute to the requisite number of programme aims and objectives.
 - Projects must demonstrate sustainability

7.3. Applications which pass the eligibility checks will be scored against the assessment criteria:

Criteria	Score Range
Level of need demonstrated	0-5
Ability of group to deliver	0-5
Value for money (cost per significant beneficiary impact)	0-5
Fit with Council objectives and wider strategies	0-10
Potential long term impact	0-5
Specific programme aims and objectives	0-30

7.4. Applications scoring 70%+ will be recommended an award equivalent to a maximum of 50% of the total eligible project costs.

7.5. Where an existing arrangement exists to contribute in any way to a project undertaken by groups on Council property, the maximum amount available from the Large Capital Project Fund will be reduced by the amount available through that existing arrangement. This restriction does not apply to projects under Health and Recreation Department's Collaborative Working Policy.

7.6. Applications scoring below 70% will be deemed unsuccessful and a grant award will not be recommended.

7.7. Grant recommendations will be considered and ratified by elected members through the Council's Development, Community & Wellbeing Committee and/or Full Council.

7.8. 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.

7.9 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:

Option 1 - 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 made in writing by the group **within 28 days** of the date of the letter notifying you of the outcome of your application for financial assistance.

7.9. Groups being offered a grant will have to agree to Council's Terms and Conditions of Grant Award. These are numerous but include an undertaking that:

- All works will be carried out and supervised by suitably qualified professionals ie must be members of respective professional bodies
- Council's procurement processes will be followed when delivering the project ie:

<i>Estimated Value</i>	<i>Process To Be Used</i>
Where estimated cost is up to £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
Where estimated cost exceeds £30,000	Public advertisement required

The award will be appropriately acknowledged (see below)

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

Failure to adhere to the Terms and Conditions of an award will result in the Letter of Offer being withdrawn.

7.10. A period of 12 months from the date of their Letter of Offer must elapse before a group can submit an application for either the same project or another project. Unsuccessful applicants can re-apply immediately.

8. Acknowledging a Grant Award

- 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) and on any plaques erected. 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. If running an event (eg official opening) you must invite the Lord Mayor to attend. Occasionally you may be asked to attend a photo call/launch event.
- 8.3. Failure to acknowledge funding in this way may result in your organisation's award being withdrawn, which in turn may affect future applications.

9. Appendices

9.1 Large Capital Project Fund Programme Eligibility and Assessment Criteria

Grant Programme: 2b – Large Capital Project Fund		
Summary	For large capital works projects where a relatively small percentage of match funding from Council is required. Projects must commence before 31 March 2026.	
Award	£2,501-£20,000 (max rate 50%)	
Programme Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups must be community based/not for personal profit • Projects must be located in ABC Council area • Projects must contribute to the requisite number of programme aims and objectives • Projects must demonstrate sustainability 	
Programme Aims	Your project should contribute to at least one of the following aims: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing disadvantage • Promoting tolerance and social inclusion • Contributing to the reduction of poverty at local level • Improving health and well being 	
Programme Objectives	Your project should deliver at least three of the following objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build capacity and skills • Increase opportunities for volunteering • Improve facilities, access or services • Increase the utilisation of a facility or service • Attract a new or larger participant group • Contribute to community, sport or arts development • Reduce the running costs for a service or facility (eg improve energy efficiency of a venue) • Contribute to the environmental improvement of an area 	
How will applications be assessed?		
Programme Eligibility (see also Basic Eligibility Criteria, see 3.3)	Group is community based/not for personal profit	Y/N
	Project located in Council area	Y/N
	Project contributes to the requisite number of programme aims and objectives	Y/N
	Project demonstrates sustainability	Y/N
Assessment Criteria	Level of need demonstrated	0-5
	Ability of group to deliver	0-5
	Value for money (cost per significant beneficiary impact)	0-5
	Fit with Council objectives and wider strategies	0-10
	Potential long term impact	0-5
	Specific programme aims and objectives	0-30

Notes:

1. Projects must not have commenced before a Letter of Offer is issued. If a project has started before a Letter of Offer is issued it will be ineligible for funding.
2. By 'project' we mean the work you are proposing to do and which you are applying to us for funding for.
3. We will use the 'Project Description' and 'Finance' sections of the application form primarily (but not necessarily exclusively) to determine what your project is for the benefit of assessment.
4. We may seek clarification from the applicant to define the project.
5. Where it becomes clear that any element of the work included in the Finance table has commenced before the issuing of a Letter of Offer, no matter what the reason, the whole application becomes ineligible.

9.2 Guidance for Branches of Larger Organisations

We expect groups who wish to apply for financial assistance to have a constitution 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 (or a set of rules/bye-laws) 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:

9.3 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.

9.4 Supporting Documents Checklist

The following documents should be supplied at the application stage. They can be supplied in one of the following two ways:

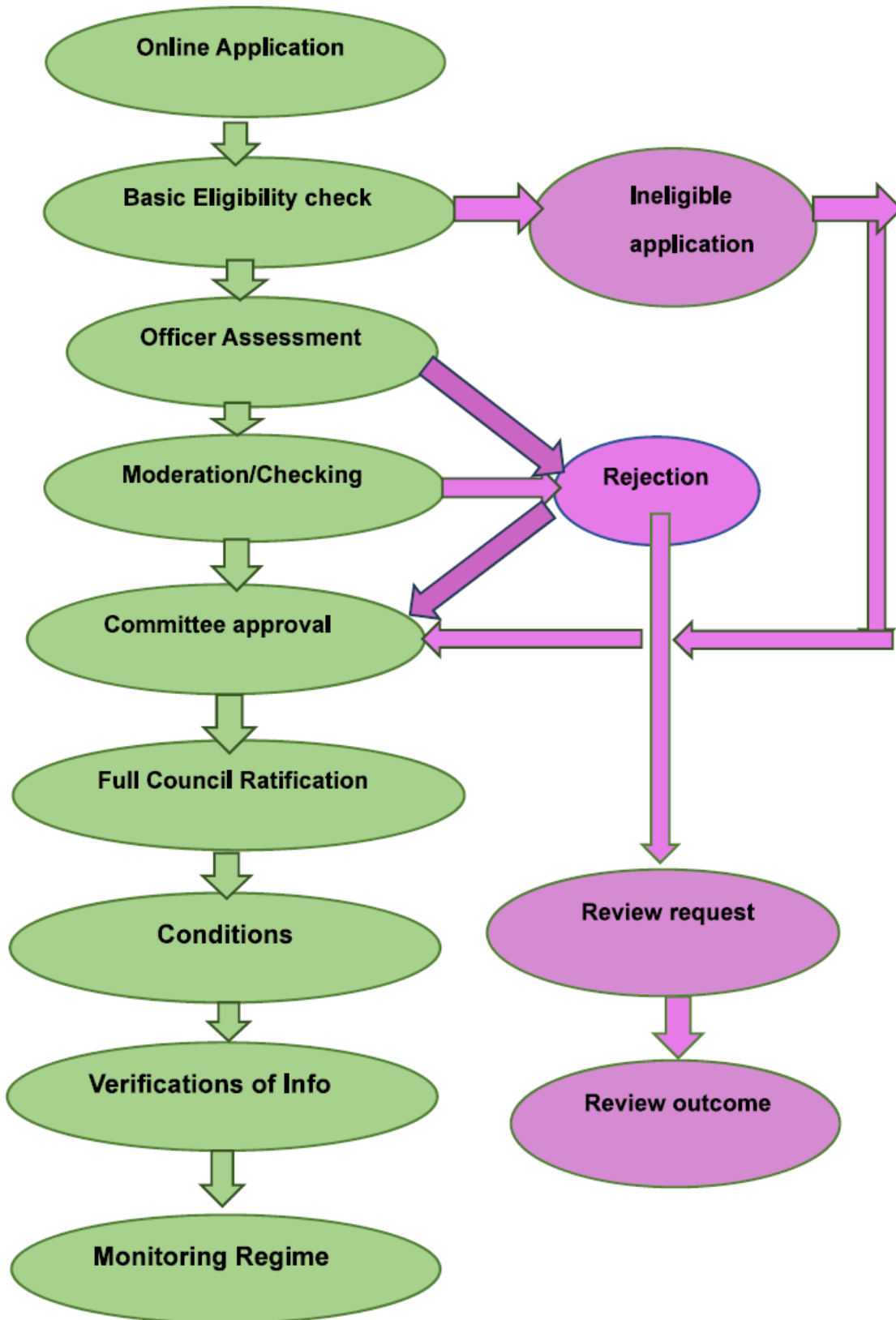
- a) By uploading directly as part of the submission of your application form. This is done by clicking the 'Upload' button on the Documents page of the application website
- b) Alternatively you may provide electronic copies of the required documents by emailing to fap@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk

Essential/Mandatory Policies and Documents

As stated elsewhere in this Manual, you can apply at any stage however your application will not be assessed until all the essential/mandatory documentation is provided. The following checklist will help you to determine what you need to submit.

<u>Essential Documentation</u>	√
<u>State of Readiness</u>	
Evidence of security of tenure	
Evidence of potential project costs	
Evidence in writing that all statutory approvals are in place or are not required	
Evidence that all match-funding is in place (see Section 5.1 (d) (iii) for the only exception to this)	
<u>Governance</u>	
Most recent annual independently verified or audited accounts	
Constitution (which must be signed)	

9.5 Application Process Diagram



9.6 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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

A: See the specific guidance in 9.2.

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
- 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 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, will not result in, or does not contribute to, the promotion of faith or religion.

In practice this means work to church halls which are open for use by the wider community may be considered. However, work to the church building itself where the act of worship takes place will not be considered.

iv. Q: What is the difference between fixtures, fittings and equipment?

A: Fixtures are items that are fixed to the structure of the building and tend not to be easily removeable. Examples include: electric sockets; light fixtures; central-heating boilers and radiators; plumbing installations; kitchen units.

Fittings and equipment are items that could be relatively easily removed from the premises. Examples include: Carpets, blinds, curtains and curtain rails; ovens; refrigerators; IT and AV equipment.

If you are not sure, please contact us for guidance.

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 assessment will be delayed.

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 9.2).

1.3 Structure

When you click on this you will be offered a choice of 4 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

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 will address the need identified in Question 2.5. You should provide as much specific detail as possible including the type of project (eg refurbishment of hall, installation of pitch).

How many people will benefit directly from your project?

Please tell us how many people will use the facility or project once the work is complete. This figure should represent the number of different people over the course of a year. For example if the same 30 people use your facility weekly for 40 weeks a year, the number of beneficiaries is 30 (rather than 1200).

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 using your facility. If the 30 people above are young people who frequently engage in anti-social behaviour, 50 local residents might benefit as a result of reduced anti-social behaviour in the community. Not all projects may have indirect beneficiaries.

How have you calculated the figures for beneficiaries?

Please explain here where the figures given in the previous two questions come from.

Finance

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

- a) Indicate the amount of funding you require from this 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) Detail each specific cost on a separate line. Rather than writing in one line 'Project costs' you must detail the costs of your project each on a separate line (eg construction costs, architect's fees, quantity surveyor's fees) giving a cost for each separate item.
- d) You can add as many rows as you want
- e) You can only apply for a maximum of 50% of any eligible specific cost and a maximum of 50% will be allowable against any invoice when it comes to vouching your expenditure. The only exception to this is where an eligible contribution in kind is to be considered. In this case, applicants can apply for a maximum of 50% of the total project cost, and any award can be apportioned towards specific individual costs at rates in excess of 50%, while not exceeding the total grant awarded.
- f) Bear in mind that including any costs for work which will have commenced before a Letter of Offer is issued will result in the application being ineligible see 9.1).

2.4 As you can only apply for 50% from Council, where will the balance of funding come from? Please provide details of source and amounts.

We need to know where you are planning to get the balance of your money from. This might be from another funder, from a loan, or your own funds. Please note: We expect at least 5% of your total project costs to come from your own funds (capped at £5,000). Loans can be included as part of this 5% contribution.

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.**

Project Details

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

We need to know how you know this project is needed. There could be two sides to the need depending on your project ie need for the specific works to be carried out (structural need), or need for the activities that will happen when the work is complete (programme need)

Evidence may include:

- Have you had a condition report produced? (structural need)
- Are there published statistics which show a need? (programme need)
- Have you carried out a community survey and what evidence did this produce? (programme need)
- Did you run a focus group of members to find out what activities they wanted? (programme need)
- Have you asked people why they are not attending your activities? (programme need or structural need)
- Are you oversubscribed and is there a waiting list? (programme need or structural need)

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

Why existing provision does not address this:

- a) Is a similar activity being offered in your community already and is oversubscribed? If there is no similar activity being offered then you must State this.
Council will not fund the same activity in the same area.

Example Answer: *Our group carried out an audit of older people's needs in 2019 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 luncheon club three times a week. We have asked around and are not aware of any such service being offered locally. As our hall is in constant use during the week, we asked an architect to help us identify the best options for adding additional space to our facility to allow us to offer more programme activity. The architect recommended extending the hall to the back as this would offer us the most space without compromising car parking space.*

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 a capital project before – describe what was done
- b) What relevant training your group members have undertaken 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) Your group has managed funding of the size requested before – if so please tell us amounts and the name of the funder

2.7 a) How does your project relate to Council's priorities?

Council's priorities are detailed in page 14. You need to tell us which priorities your project contributes to and how your project helps deliver these. **It is important you do not just list the priorities** – we need to know how your project will help deliver these.

2.7 b) How does your project relate to local, regional, or national strategies?

In this question we want you to think about what other strategies your project is helping to deliver. It might be a health and wellbeing strategy being implemented by the Department of Health, or the Council's Community Plan 2023-2027 for example. Again, **it is important you do not just list the strategies** – we need to know how your project will help deliver these.

Programme Objectives

Your project should meet at least three specific Programme Objectives. You should give as much detail as possible in relation to how your project will meet the programme objectives.

In answering this question you must detail:

- a) Which programme objective from the drop-down list (at least three) your project meets
- b) Describe how your project will contribute to this objective
- c) What indicator(s) you will use as a measure of whether you have achieved the programme objective(s)
- d) The target(s) you will set to measure whether you have achieved the indicator
- e) The methods you will use to ascertain whether you have reached your targets

Indicators: these are the differences you are seeking to make in the lives of the people who will benefit from your project (direct and/or indirect beneficiaries) and the community you serve. They are the change you bring about rather than the service you deliver. There should be a minimum of one indicator for each aim

Targets: these are the goals you will set which you will measure to work out if you are contributing to the programme aim(s).

See the example below (under Programme Aims) of what we mean by indicators and targets.

The scoring of the questions on Programme Objectives and Programme Aims have the most points available so particular care should be taken in your response to this question.

Programme Aims

Your project must also contribute to at least one specific Programme Aim. As above (Programme Objectives), you will need to detail:

- a) Which programme aim(s) from the drop-down list (at least one) your project meets
- b) Describe how your project will contribute to this aim
- c) What indicator(s) you will use as a measure of whether you have achieved the programme aim
- d) The target(s) you will set to measure whether you have achieved the indicator
- e) The methods you will use to ascertain whether you have reached your targets

Example Answer:

Programme Aim: *Improving health and wellbeing*

Describe how your project contributes to this Programme Aim: *By adding on an extension to our facility we will be able to offer a wide range of programmes for the older people in our community. The range of programmes will help improve their physical and mental health (much more detail is expected from applicants in the answer to this question but it gives a sense of what is required).*

Indicator(s): *Increased levels of physical activity among the over 55s
Reduced social isolation among over 55s*

Target(s): *60 over 55s attend armchair aerobics class
50% over 55s report increased levels of physical activity
70 over 55s attend luncheon club each week*

90% over 55s feel better after attending luncheon club

How will you measure achievement of target: *attendance at activities; regular questionnaires*

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 which documents you can supply immediately.

In response to consultation feedback, as a rule Council will seek limited documentary or other evidence at the application stage. You will only be asked to provide most information if your application is successful, unless it is required specifically for clarification or is essential for assessment. However, failure to provide this information when requested would result in your application being rejected. If you cannot provide these you should check with the Council Officer to determine whether these will be required and to consider how you arrange to have such evidence should your application be successful.

3.3 Confirmations

You are also asked to confirm certain statements by ticking the boxes. These statements are generic to all financial assistance programmes and groups should be in a position to confirm all the statements. If your group has any issue ticking any boxes you should contact us for advice.

Documents

Essential/Mandatory Documents.

You must upload a **signed** Constitution with your application at time of submission this should be along with all other essential documentation as listed on pages 7 & 8 of this Guidance Manual. You will have 7 days after the closing date until 12noon on 24 October to send in all essential/mandatory outstanding documents.

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 the declaration very carefully before you sign. Applicants are being asked to agree the declaration on behalf of the group.