



POLICY FOR THE ALLOCATION OF COMMUNITY GRANTS

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Cheshire East Council wishes to continue with the grants service for communities in Cheshire East. This policy addresses the governance arrangements, procedures and monitoring process to facilitate this process.
- 1.2 The intention is for this document to cover the Council's financial year during 2009/10 only, to enable the authority to continue with existing arrangements from the previous local authorities.
- 1.3 The grants system will be reviewed during 2009/10 to ensure that the Council offers a balanced portfolio of grants in the future.
- 1.4 The aim of the grants is to support small scale community projects that will improve the quality of life for local communities. Grants will be awarded to organisations/project/events which meet the priorities in the Cheshire East Sustainable Community Strategy, the Local Area Agreement and the Council's Corporate Strategy.
- 1.5 The definition of Grants refers to transfers of Council funds to organisation or bodies by way of an application process within the existing budget provisions.

2.0 LEGAL AND BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK

- 2.1 In awarding grants, the Council must ensure that in each case it has the legal power to fund the proposed scheme. In certain cases above £100 it will be necessary to impose a condition requiring a report back to the Council on the expenditure of the grant. Consideration should also be given in each case to the imposition of other appropriate conditions.
- 2.2 The Cheshire East Borough Council Constitution states that the Cabinet Member will on a periodical basis, agree a policy setting down the approach to be taken to the allocation of grants, donations and other contributions to outside bodies. This should specify the scale, nature and terms of such support, criteria for prioritisation and the process for allocation.
- 2.3 Grants, donations and contributions will be paid by the Council in accordance with the policies determined under Finance Procedure Rule above, subject to there being adequate provision in service budgets.
- 2.4 Heads of Service will report on the outcomes achieved through the provision of support to outside bodies on an annual basis to the appropriate Member Group and Cabinet Member, with interim reporting on an exception basis or where the sums involved are significant.

- 2.5 The portfolio holder and member of the Cabinet has delegated authority to approve applications for grants from local organisations, town and parish councils, to assist in developing community based activities and projects.
- 2.6 In order to assist the portfolio holder with the decision making process, the relevant Manager and Officer will offer administrative and professional support to ensure that all grants are made in accordance with the criteria set for grant applications set out below (3.5).
- 2.7 All grant decisions will be made quarterly based on affordability criteria and within the Council agreed budget approved by Council in February 2009.

3.0 APPLICATION PROCESS

- 3.1 The Cheshire East Community Grants Scheme will operate within set criteria, agreed by the portfolio holder and relevant officers of the council in line with that the Council's corporate priorities.

3.2 WHAT CAN BE FUNDED?

Grants are available to support community, environmental, sports, arts, heritage and play projects/activities. See examples below.

Facilities:

- a) Renovations/improvements etc., to buildings, play areas, conservation areas.
- b) Grant towards third party funding (e.g. WREN).
- c) Equipment for facilities (e.g. kitchen furniture, tables, chairs etc).

Activities:

- a) Equipment/materials to help the Club/Group/Organisation develop.
- b) Training courses.
- c) Specialist coaching/teaching sessions.
- d) Contribution towards facility hire.

Events:

- a) Hire of facilities for rehearsals/workshops/events.
- b) Hire of equipment.
- c) Performers.
- d) Publicity.

3.3 WHAT CAN NOT BE FUNDED?

- Work fully funded from elsewhere or other grants.
- Funding for a specific individual.
- General appeals or sponsorship; fundraising for national or local charities (including local branches).

- Activities of a mainly political or religious nature.
- Assistance with providing transport.
- Refreshments.
- Projects, activities or events organised for the sole benefit of students of a school or college.
- Events which do not involve members of the local community participating.
- Repair costs where deterioration is due to neglect.
- Churches, where the project is related only to religious services or activity.
- Loan against loss or debt.
- Administration expenses (e.g. postage, telephone, utilities etc).
- Running costs (e.g. gas/electricity/water).
- Land purchase.

3.4 WHO CAN APPLY?

To qualify for a grant the group or organisation must:

- Meet one or more of the criteria listed below.
- Operate within Cheshire East Council's Geographical area.
- Provide value for money.
- Be a voluntary or community group or registered charity.
- Have their own bank or building society account with 2 signatories.
- Have a set of accounts or as a minimum an organisation bank statement/building society book.
- Have a properly constituted management committee or set of rules.
- Have Safeguarding Children Policy specific to their Club or organisation where children and young people are involved.
- Not have received Council funding in the current financial year.

3.5 CRITERIA FOR FUNDING

Priority will be given to applications for voluntary and community sector projects and activities which:

- Enhance the quality of life of Cheshire East residents.
- Support the priorities identified in the Cheshire East Sustainable Community Strategy, the Local Area Agreement and the Council's Corporate Strategy.
- Increase involvement in the community.
- Attract more participants/volunteers.
- Demonstrate the potential to be sustained in the future.
- Show innovation and creativity.
- Have funding contributions from organisation's own funds and/or funding support from other bodies is in place or promised.
- Provide direct participation by members of the local community via workshops, dance, music etc.

4.0 MONITORING AND RECORD KEEPING

- 4.1 Following a successful application and in order to ensure that monies are used in an appropriate manner as set out in the conditions for funding, a monitoring process will take place throughout the financial year.
- 4.2 The Council reserves the right to monitor the use of the grant and ask for evidence to support an application, the organisation will allow reasonable access to premises/accounts upon request from the Council.
- 4.3 Organisations need to retain records relating to the grant for an appropriate period (to be advised depending on the grant).
- 4.4 Organisations and groups will be required to return the appropriate monitoring and evaluation form along with details of expenditure against the activity or project.
- 4.5 The community grant applications will be considered at quarterly intervals with notification sent to groups following the Portfolio holder's decision.

POLICY APPROVED:

Portfolio Holder Signature _____

Date _____