

**POLICY FOR THE
ALLOCATION OF
COMMUNITY GRANTS**

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Cheshire East Council wishes to operate a community grants scheme within Cheshire East. This policy addresses the governance arrangements, procedures and monitoring process to facilitate this process.
- 1.2 The aim of the grants scheme 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 and the Council's Corporate Plan.
- 1.3 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 The Cheshire East Borough Council Constitution states that each Cabinet Member is responsible for:
 - 2.1.1 Ensuring that budget control and financial monitoring within the scope of their portfolio.
 - 2.1.2 Approving the use of specific grants/and or funding for non-government sources and any annual delivery plans and agreements in relation to such funding.
- 2.2 The Performance & Capacity portfolio holder will be responsible for the Community Grants Scheme and has delegated authority to approve applications for grants from local organisations to assist in developing community based activities and projects, subject to the maximum amounts set out in paragraph 3.2 of this scheme.
- 2.3 In order to assist the portfolio holder with the decision making process, the relevant Officers 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).
- 2.4 All grant decisions will be made based on affordability criteria and within the agreed budget approved by Council each year.

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 the Council's corporate priorities.

3.2 WHAT CAN BE FUNDED?

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

Facilities – subject to a maximum award of £3,000:

- 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).
- d) Feasibility Studies/Architects Fees (maximum 5% of the costs)

Activities subject to a maximum award of £500:

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

Events – subject to a maximum award of £250:

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

3.3 WHAT CAN NOT BE FUNDED?

- Organisations which hold substantial free reserves, including local branches of national or regional organisations which hold free reserves that could be utilised.
- Applications from Town and Parish Councils
- Work which has already taken place before receipt of offer letter
- Individuals
- General appeals or sponsorship; fundraising for national, local charities (including local branches) or other local organisations
- Activities of a mainly political or religious nature
- assistance with providing transport
- refreshments and/or accommodation
- travel expenses
- 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/salaries)
- land purchase

- vehicle purchase
- Disabled facilities where there is no proven need for the work to be carried out.

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.
- 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 and the Council's Corporate Plan.
- 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 _____