



Community Grants Policy

October 2022

Scope

This policy covers grants made by the Council via the “Cash Grants” process. These grants are designed to support Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations that carry out work which supports the Council’s priorities.

Budget

The Council’s Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) sets out the budget allocation for cash grants to VCS organisations. This budget may be varied from time to time. For 2023/24 it is £315,000.

The Council’s minimum grant for a single organisation will be £5,000 per year; the maximum will be £95,000 for a single organisation

Term

Cash Grants will be primarily provided on a three-year basis in order to provide stability of funding to affected VCS groups as well as sufficient time to deliver against the Council’s priorities.

Criteria

VCS organisations applying for funding will need to demonstrate how they support the Council’s priorities of:

- Supporting residents during the Cost-of-Living Crisis
- Supporting vulnerable residents
- Supporting health improvement

Organisations will need to meet the minimum standards set out in the checklist at Appendix 1 and will need to demonstrate that they provide value for money.

Transitional Arrangements

The Council’s cash grant provision to 2022/23 has been under a different policy. As such transitional arrangements are needed. The Council aims for 1/3 of qualifying organisations to be awarded new three-year grants per year. This means that some organisations may be awarded one- or two-year transitional grants before they reach the appropriate year to be awarded a new 3 year agreement.

In all cases, where an organisation has previously been awarded grant funding it must have demonstrably met the objectives within its previous grant agreement. Failure to demonstrate this will mean that the organisation is unlikely to be awarded a new grant.

Where a previously funded organisation does not meet the criteria in this policy, has not demonstrated their performance, and / or does not apply for funding then the Council will seek open applications from other VCS organisations who are able to help the Council to deliver its priorities.

Signposting to alternative funding

Where a VCS organisation applies for funding and is not successful, or has funding withdrawn due to lack of delivery (or other reasons) they may be signposted to other funding streams, though there is no obligation on the Council to provide alternative funding and each will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Equality and Diversity

All applicants will need to demonstrate how they will help the Council to meet its Public Sector Equality Duty. Equality and Diversity monitoring information will also be required by the Council as part of monitoring the performance of each grant holder.

Decision making

The Council's Communities Working Group will consider applications where the Community Support Operations Manager is satisfied that applicants meet the criteria within this policy.

The Working Group will make recommendations about the award of grants to Executive which will make the final decision on whether or not to award.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Council will agree a performance monitoring framework with each grant funded organisation. Failure to meet the agreed standards over two or more monitoring periods may result in funding being withdrawn.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and any proposed changes reported to the Council's Executive for decision.

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Applicant checklist

Applicants will need to demonstrate that they meet the criteria below:

1. Be based in the borough of Ipswich or provide activities that benefit the residents of Ipswich
2. Be a local voluntary, community or not-for-profit or they recycle profits or income for the public good
3. Be formally constituted with its own bank account, either as an unincorporated association under the management of a committee made up of volunteers, or as a charity or a company with charitable aims, social enterprise or community interest company
4. Deliver activities that do not unfairly exclude individuals from participation
5. Hold the necessary policies, including a safeguarding policy for children, young people and vulnerable adults, Equality and Diversity, insurance and health and safety, as appropriate to their activities
6. Hold Board approved business plans
7. Demonstrate that value for money factors have been considered in the design and delivery of services and demonstrate a commitment to working alongside the Council to deliver efficiencies when necessary
8. Have satisfactory systems in place to provide good quality monitoring and evaluation as required by the Council including finances and expenditure
9. Committing to enabling an observer from IBC to sit on the board of the organisation

