

Local Projects Fund Guidance for Councillors

Introduction

- The District Council's Local Projects Fund enables Derbyshire Dales District Councillors to support community led initiatives, in the area they represent.
- Each year £900 is allocated to each Councillor to grant aid to projects or initiatives in their Ward that will benefit the local communities and be valuable to the area.
- The Fund provides for a wide degree of flexibility and can be used to support one off projects, ongoing activities and the development of sustainable longer term projects.
- **Who can apply?**
- Applications can be made by local groups that are based within the Derbyshire Dales area providing they can demonstrate community benefit. For example:-
- Parish/Town Councils (for specific projects only)
- Young people's groups
- Locally based charities
- Benevolent societies

Exclusions

Organisations that are **not** eligible to apply include:

- Political parties and organisations with political aims
- Any organisation that raises funds for national distribution
- Single issue pressure groups
- Any group formed to oppose any proposed or likely District Council policy
- Other public sector bodies that deliver core services
- Individuals

What types of projects / initiatives are covered by the Fund?

- Groups and organisations can apply for funding for both revenue (one-off) and minor capital projects.
- Revenue grants should generally be used to support short term project related costs such as equipment, transport, advertising, goods and materials.
- It is expected that the grants will benefit a wide range of groups/activities.
- Bids should be focussed on outcomes that benefit the wider community where possible, rather than just small sections of communities.
- The Fund may be used to facilitate match funding from other organisations although match funding is not a requirement.
- Examples of previous grant aid has included funding towards village hall improvements, sports equipment & kit, staging events, activities for the elderly & isolated, arts projects, environmental & heritage projects and youth based activities.

Terms and Conditions

Derbyshire Dales District Council retains the right to reclaim, at any time, all or part of the awarded money which was not spent for the purpose it was awarded. Any grant awarded is subject to:

- The availability of funds within the respective Councillor's Local Projects Fund allocation

- It being used for the benefit of residents of the Derbyshire Dales and particularly the residents of the Councillor's electoral Ward;
- It being used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and granted;
- It being spent within the financial year the grant was awarded. Any request to vary this condition will need to be submitted in writing and agreed by the Director of Resources
- Derbyshire Dales District Council being publicly recognised in any and all publicity regarding the Local Projects project organised by the District Council or applicant
- It being recorded in any records or accounts which will be made available for inspection by the Council if required
- An acknowledgement that the grant award is a one off and does not imply a commitment to any future funding. It should be possible for the same organisation to receive a grant each year, but not guaranteed. Repeat requests within the same financial year will not be considered.
- The applicant providing an End of Grant report to the District Council on how the money has been spent and what outcomes were achieved
- Applicants are also asked to note that the District Council is not able to undertake feasibility work to assess the merits of an initiative/project, nor to assist applicants in making their bid beyond advising on the application process.
- Please note that there are no rights of appeal against decisions.

The process

- The Community Development Officer administers the Fund including providing advice, processing the applications and monitoring budgets.
- As a guide, the process from receipt of the grant application to a payment being processed will normally take 2 weeks.

Application stage

- Application forms are available on line on the District Council's website <http://www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk/community-a-living/funding-and-grants/local-projects-fund>, from the Community & Environmental Services Department, email localprojects.fund@derbyshiredales.gov.uk or telephone 01629 761392
- Completed application forms should be returned on line, via the localprojects.fund@derbyshiredales.gov.uk email address or by hand or mail to Local Projects Fund, Community & Environmental Services Department, Derbyshire Dales District Council, Town Hall, Matlock DE4 3NN.

Receipt of applications

- The Community Development Officer will acknowledge and register each application and check that there is evidence of community benefit and that other terms and conditions are met, prior to forwarding to the relevant Councillor(s) for consideration along with details of remaining funds.

Decision-making

- The Councillor must be satisfied that they have sufficient information to endorse an application– either individually or collectively (depending on if a multi seat Ward) on whether to grant aid and to what level.
- It is for each Councillor to endorse applications and the amount they consider appropriate to allocate, providing that the application meets the Fund's Terms and Conditions and that they have sufficient funds.

- The minimum grant payable is £100 and the maximum grant payable is £1,000, which can only be achieved for multi seat Wards or where an application spans across more than one Ward.
- Councillors should respond to the Community Development Officer at localprojects.fund@derbyshiredales.gov.uk advising of the level of grant aid or reason for refusal and copy in other Councillors where applicable. Responses must be sent via email to ensure an audit trail of the decision making process.
- To co-ordinate responses and make timely decisions, Councillors should aim to respond to the Community Development Officer within 5 working days.
- Where a Councillor fails to respond to an officer or organisation to confirm their endorsement of an application, the responsible officer will approach other Ward Member(s) to endorse the request for funding. In the case of a single Member ward, and the absence of any alternative Member to provide endorsement, the applications will be referred to the Community and Environment Committee for determination.

Interests and suspension of Fund

- When deciding whether or not to recommend a grant for approval, Councillors must give due regard to the public sector equality duty and adhere to the principles of the Derbyshire Dales District Council's Code of Conduct. Councillors are specifically excluded from recommending a grant award if s/he has a Pecuniary Interest in the matter. In such circumstances an applicant may be referred to another Councillor for consideration. If the application is approved, the expenditure will be drawn from the budget of the Councillor to whom the application was first directed, subject to a maximum limit specified by that Councillor.
- Determination of applications will be suspended during the election period before the District Council and UK Parliamentary elections. This is to ensure impartiality. Councillors will be informed when these restrictions apply.

Sense Check

- Once the Community Development Officer is in receipt of all responses, the application and Councillor response(s) will be forwarded to the Director of Resources to sense check.

Decision

- An email with the decision will be sent to the applicant and copied in to the relevant Councillor(s) and the Communications & Marketing Team.

Payment

- The grant award will be paid by BACS directly to the organisation. A remittance advice will be sent to the organisation.

Impact & Feedback

- Applicants will be sent an End of Grant form with the decision with a request to compete and return within 2 months or as such time as is timely within the project timescales.

Promotion and Reporting

- The District Council must be acknowledged as the grant giver in all circumstances and individual Councillors must not use the Fund to promote themselves or to increase their personal profile.
- Beneficiaries of the Fund will be required to report to the District Council on how their Local Project has benefitted from the grant aid. An Annual Report will be submitted to Council, listing beneficiaries and citing examples of impact.

Audit

- The Fund will be subject to scrutiny in the same way as any other District Council budget would be. All application forms and correspondence must be retained for a period of 6 years.

It is therefore important that all Councillors pass on to the Community Development Officer any correspondence they made hold in relation to the Fund for proper retention and reference by either internal or external audit.

- Details of grants awarded will be recorded and published in accordance with Access to Information requirements.

For further information email localprojects.fund@derbyshiredales.gov.uk, telephone 01629 761392, Community Development Officer, Community & Environmental Services, Derbyshire Dales District Council, Town Hall, Matlock, DE4 3NN

Printed and published by Derbyshire Dales District Council, Town Hall, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 3NN
Tel: 01629 761100 derbyshiredales.gov.uk

Revised 19 April 2022