



# Westmorland and Furness Grant Giving Policy

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## Foreword

The Council’s vision is for Westmorland and Furness to be a great place to live, work and thrive. The Council will support people to have healthy lives and will work to reduce inequality, drive delivery of carbon net zero, support our communities and enable sustainable economic growth.

Grant giving supports the delivery of the Council Plan and empowers local people and communities, enabling them to take action in their neighbourhoods or come together around common interests. It facilitates the delivery of services and invests locally in business and culture. Grant giving builds mutual trust and collaboration between Council and community, strengthens resilience, builds cohesion and develops opportunities for the future. The Council has in place 3 Locality Boards which are bringing decision making closer to the communities. This Grants Policy is an enabler to directly support community mobilisation and to invest in Westmorland and Furness’ neighbourhoods.

The Westmorland and Furness Grants Policy has been developed and shaped using a co-production approach with involvement and input from colleagues across the organisation and stakeholders from the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) sector, Non-Profit Organisation’s (NPO’s) and Town and Parish Councils. It is a policy which is an enabler to the Compacts the Council has agreed with the VCFSE sector [[The Cumbria Compact](#)] and the Cumbria Association of Local Councils.

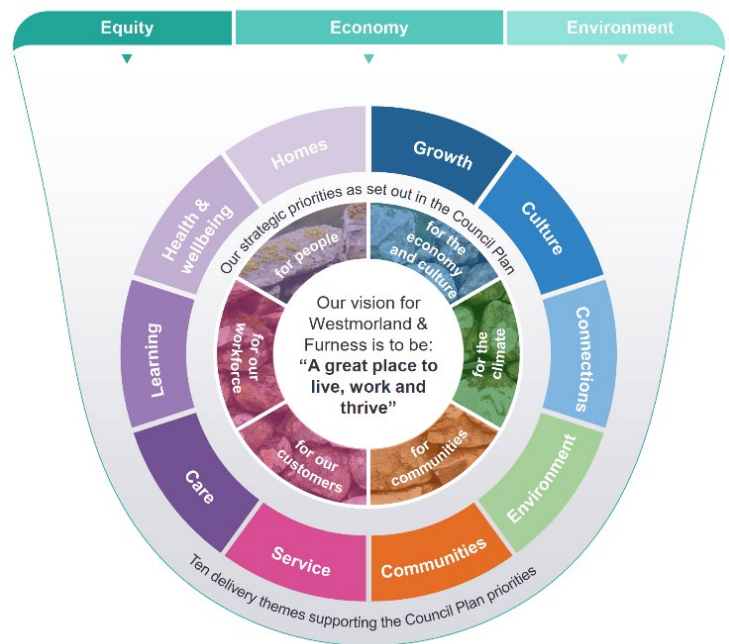
This Grant Giving Policy sets out how we will fulfil these aspirations – we welcome your feedback and comments and you can contact us through the website [Welcome to Westmorland and Furness | Westmorland and Furness Council](#) or by telephone 0300 373 3300.

**This policy covers grants only. Contracts for services fall under procurement and commissioning, and have separate arrangements detailed in the [Council constitution | Westmorland and Furness Council](#)**

## Westmorland and Furness Council Policy Context

This Grant Giving Policy will support the delivery of the Council’s priorities and strategic delivery themes as detailed in the Council Plan Delivery Framework ([Council plan delivery framework | Westmorland and Furness Council](#))

The Framework provides information about what the Council plans to deliver and how it will work with communities and partners to ensure Westmorland and Furness is a great place to live, work and thrive.



Our operating model helps us plan and deliver activities, projects and programmes that will support the Council’s priorities.

One of the key components of the Council’s Target Operating Model is ‘Community Focus’. Council grant schemes act as a vehicle to support the delivery of this key aspiration of the Council.

The Westmorland and Furness operating model has been designed with a focus on early intervention, health and wellbeing and improving the customer experience.



As the custodians of public funds, the Council will ensure value for money, fairness, probity and transparency in the design and administration of any grant programme. This Policy provides a clear commitment on the requirements of all grant programme administered by the Council. It

also sets out the Council's approach to grant making as well as legal, financial and governance requirements the Council will adhere to in its grant funding arrangements.

All grants from Westmorland and Furness Council will:

- support outcomes clearly aligned to Council priorities;
- be open and transparent; and
- endeavour to complement existing council and partner grant giving

Where contractual arrangements are more appropriate and procurement regulations must be followed, we will work with the organisation/s to support them through that process.

The Council will support and work with organisations across Westmorland & Furness to develop opportunities so they are guided through the necessary routes for best success in an appropriate and proportionate manner.

On occasion, the source of the funding for Council grants originates directly from Central Government or external organisations (eg. the UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund). These financial awards are completely within the confines and requirements of externally funded programmes. As identified in the constitution, where this is the case, the Council is bound to comply with the rules and regulations of the awarding body and in doing so may need to request additional information from grant recipients or specify set 'deliverables' that are expected in line with a grant award.

All grant funds will be publicised and procurement regulations will be followed when advertising.

### Grant Funding Principles

The Council will adhere to the following grant funding principles:

- Activities funded will be consistent with the corporate plan, strategic aims and priorities of the Council, or any terms and conditions imposed on the Council where the budget is obtained from an external body
- The Council will ensure proper, prudent and effective use of public money for the award of all grants
- Grant programmes will be developed, where possible, through engagement with the target sector, such as VCFSE, arts and culture, education, business etc.
- Clear criteria and conditions for applicants will be published for all grant programmes – successful applicants will fully comply with the criteria and conditions as set out
- The length of the bidding process for grants will be proportionate to the type and value of the grant
- The Council encourages joint/partnership applications from more than one voluntary sector organisation, which includes community groups
- Grants cannot be used for retrospective funding; that is to replace money that has already been spent, or to cover items or services that have already been bought (this includes consultancy and brokering fees)
- Grant applications will be determined on their merits. No organisation is entitled to funding because it has been awarded a grant in the past or for any other reason

- Funding will be awarded to organisations which can demonstrate that a defined impact will be achieved and detail re. outcomes / outputs will be requested in funding applications
- Applications will be evaluated and recommended to decision makers / award panels by Council officers
- Decision making will be in accordance with the Council's Constitution and Scheme of Delegation
- All grants will be subject to the grant recipient accepting the grant conditions and monitoring requirements as set out in the grant offer / agreement
- The Council will not make grants to any organisation that it deems to be a political party, has the nature of a political party, or is engaged in campaigning for a political purpose or cause
- Any grant awarded must only be spent for the approved purpose, i.e. applicants must be able to demonstrate that the funding has been spent as outlined in the grant application and appended in the grant offer letter e.g. produce receipts on request

### Equity and accessibility

The Council will endeavour to ensure that all eligible organisations have an opportunity to bid for a grant with a fair chance of success, and so will:

- Provide accessible design on the application form and provide officer support (on request)
- Promote all application based grant schemes, with eligibility criteria, on the Council's website with sufficient time for applicants to develop and submit an application
- Through proactive promotion, marketing and evaluation of the bids seek to advance equality of opportunity
- Consider applications from groups targeting protected characteristics as an opportunity to advance equality of opportunity
- Assess applications on the merit of the project and applicability to the grant fund criteria
- Include an email address (or other method) for users to feedback on their experience of the application process on the website / form
- Endeavour to have an award panel that is as representative and diverse as possible

### The Application Process

Westmorland and Furness grant funding programmes are supported with clear procedures, guidance notes and templates. This ensures a consistent approach and process across the organisation.

Some grant programmes may commence with an Expression of Interest (EOI) Process. Where this is the case, this will be clearly stipulated in the guidance. Following the EOI process, delivery organisations will be invited to complete an application form.

Typically applicants will complete an application form and provide relevant supporting information as required. This will ensure the Council can objectively and fairly assess all grant applications. The form will be accompanied by guidance notes to assist applicants in the completion of their application.

Information provided to grant applicants will include:

- The amount of money available

- Information on the purpose of the funding
- Details of the eligibility criteria
- Details of the terms and conditions attached to the grant funding
- Deadline for applications

Once a grant application has been received the responsible Council officer will aim to acknowledge this within 14 working days.

The contact details for the relevant council officer will be available with the full details of the grant.

### Assessment and Assurance

Application forms will be assessed in line with the grant programme assessment form. As part of this process applicants may be required to:

- Address any incomplete section of the application form
- Provide mandatory information that may be missing
- Address any queries relating to the information provided in the application form; and
- Provide additional information as required.

The council will undertake necessary due diligence on its grant schemes to ensure grants are awarded in a legally and financially compliant manner. This will be done in accordance with the following:

- Safeguarding policy or statement
- Copy of a recent bank statement and bank details, demonstrating that a UK bank account is held in the organisation's name
- Copy of Constitution, terms of reference or proof of formalised structure
- Copy of latest annual accounts
- Details of previous applications for Council grants
- Details of any Accountable Body status
- Declaration of interests
- Anti-Fraud, Health and Safety and data protection compliance
- Public/ employee liability or professional indemnity insurance
- Equality policy or statement
- Delivery Partners
- Procurement
- VAT status
- Compliance with Subsidy Control

Unless a specific term and condition of a Grant Scheme, grants are not paid to individuals or into third party bank accounts. Grants will only be paid to individuals under the terms and conditions of a specific grant scheme and where the individual is applying as an individual and not representing a voluntary or community organisation.

### Decision Making

Decision making on grant applications will be set out in each grant programme's governance structure which will be in accordance with the Council's Constitution and Scheme of Delegation

<https://www.westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk/your-council/council-documents/council-constitution>. Grants over £500k will be published on the Council's Forward Plan <https://westmorlandandfurness.moderngov.co.uk/mgPlansHome.aspx?bcr=1>.

The Council will not make an award to an organisation whose application has not been assessed or undergone the necessary due diligence. If a grant application is refused, the reasons for the refusal will be contained within a notification letter and where possible followed up through a conversation.

- There is no right of appeal against the decision
- Applicants cannot reapply for a grant for the same project / service if the initial grant application has been refused and they are not asked to resubmit by the Council in writing.

### The Grant Agreement, Payment, Reporting and Accountability

A grant agreement will be prepared to ensure complete transparency of what is expected and is to protect the Council's interests regarding the distribution of public funds, which is in line with the Council constitution and will include provisions for monitoring and clawback. It will detail the terms and conditions of the grant, the grant payment method, and the reporting arrangements for evidencing the grant activity.

All grants will be subject to monitoring and evaluation. Applicants are required to submit details of the project outcomes and spend. The Council will retain the right to withhold future payments and reject further applications if we are not wholly satisfied with how the grant funds have been used.

### Compliance and Auditing

The Council, where required through the grant agreement, may audit grant recipients to ensure compliance with grant agreements. It will hold grant information, in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations, or in compliance with Legacy Councils, or external funders' retention policies, whichever is longer.

The Council will also carry out periodic internal audits of its grants programmes across the organisation to ensure compliance with this policy and continual good practice.

### Risk

The Council has a duty to ensure that best use is made of its resources. There is a certain amount of risk to grant giving in relation to failure to achieve best use of Council resources. However, this policy and the associated procedures, will mitigate against this risk. This policy and the work undertaken with grant applicants will ensure a robust process in the determination of grants to achieve the intended outcomes.

The Council uses the general principle of requiring a lower level of risk the higher the amount of funding provided. Maximum levels of funding will only be provided where the risk of non-delivery is very low.

### Publicity and Recognition

Grant recipients are required to acknowledge the Council's support in all publicity such as publicising the receipt of the grant, delivery of the activity / service or outcomes for beneficiaries.

## Evaluation and Review

The Council will regularly evaluate the effectiveness of its various grants programmes, learning from the experience of grant recipients and Council staff, to make improvements to this Policy and associated procedures.