

Community Fund

Criteria for Funding, Terms and Conditions and Application Process

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Grants are available for groups who are involved in community projects and initiatives that benefit the residents of a community within Westmorland and Furness.
- 1.2 The Community Fund is coordinated by the Community Development Teams. Applicants are advised to contact their local Area Office for advice and guidance in advance of making an application for funding as soon as possible.
- 1.3 In awarding funds we aim to ensure that the application process is easy to understand and made clear to all applicants, while at the same time ensuring sufficient information is gathered to promote value for money, fairness in decision making, public accountability and avoidance of fraud or misuse of funds, reflecting the highest standards of public sector financial management.

2. The community fund – criteria for funding

- 2.1 Grants from this fund are awarded to groups who are involved in community-based projects and initiatives that will benefit the local area.
- 2.2 The Community Grants Fund is intended to invest in communities to bring about a positive and lasting change for the benefit of the whole community.

Projects and/or initiatives will be assessed on their ability to contribute to the achievement of the Locality Board Priorities.

Each of the three Locality Boards across Westmorland and Furness have identified local priorities. Before you make an application for funding, you can [view our webpage for Area Locality Boards and Community Development Teams](#).

The following criteria must be met to be eligible for funding under this community grants scheme:

- (a) grants will be given only to voluntary and non-profit making groups and organisations to support community initiatives that benefit residents of Westmorland and Furness
- (b) grants should support the achievement of local priorities in their area. In addition, projects and initiatives should fit with other plans e.g. ward profiles, community plans, parish plans, etc.
- (c) grants will be awarded for one-off project costs e.g. purchase of equipment, building work, refurbishment costs, etc.
- (d) grant applications will be considered for non-recurring expenditure only, therefore operational running costs, general maintenance costs (energy bills, insurance), or ongoing staffing costs will not be funded unless the application is for start-up costs

- (e) applications will be considered from constituted groups only; we do not accept applications from individuals
- (f) applications for less than 100% of costs are preferred and groups are advised to try other avenues for funding in addition to this fund
- (g) we will not normally accept more than one application for funding per organisation or group in any one financial year. We may accept more than one application from the same group for clearly identifiable different projects in the same financial year
- (h) projects from schools and churches or other religious groups cannot be funded unless they have a clear wider non-religious community benefit e.g. a church hall that is used by local community groups, a play area also open for public use, etc.
- (i) organisations or groups that operate a policy of exclusivity or have a closed membership and is thereby not open to any member of the public will not be considered for funding
- (j) we cannot fund community events if they are intended to pass on any surplus income to other organisations, e.g. concerts with benefits to “local charities”
- (k) grant applications will not be considered from political organisations
- (l) grants will not be awarded retrospectively i.e. grants will only be awarded for work or resources still to be purchased at the time the application is made
- (m) organisations or groups with outstanding Project Completion Reports (PCR's) will not be considered for funding

3. The application process

- 3.1 Applications for funding should be made on our application form and include all requested supporting documentation.
- 3.2 Application forms are available on our website or can be posted on request.
- 3.3 Applications must be submitted with two ‘wet ink’ signatures. We cannot accept typed or other electronic signatures
- 3.4 We require the following documents to progress your application:
 - (a) a detailed breakdown of all costs associated with your application for funding
 - (b) for items under £10,000 one verbal quote confirmed in writing is required, for items over £10,000 two written quotations are required
 - (c) a copy of a recent (within 3 months) Bank Statement for all accounts held in the name of your group
 - (d) a copy of your most recent Annual Accounts or Audited Accounts.
 - (e) your Equal Opportunities Policy or Statement (where not explicit in Constitution)
 - (f) your Constitution or other governing documents
 - (g) a copy of your last Annual Report and/or AGM minutes

- (h) your in-date Child Protection Policy, where appropriate
- (i) your in-date Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy, where appropriate

- 3.4 Incomplete applications or applications that do not include all the above documentation cannot be considered for funding.
- 3.5 We may contact you to ask for more details about your project or arrange to visit your organisation.
- 3.6 We will be pleased to help you with any queries you may have in relation to the supporting information you are required to provide in advance of submitting your completed application.

4. How your application is dealt with

- 4.1 Upon receipt of an application for funding we will make an initial assessment to check that the application is eligible for funding against the criteria of the scheme and that all supporting documentation has been provided.
- 4.2 We aim to acknowledge receipt of all applications within 10 working days of receiving the application.
- 4.3 A community forum or grant panel made up of councillors and/or community leaders from the area will discuss the application and make a final recommendation for funding.
- 4.4 Once your application has been considered and a decision has been made we will inform you by email and if you have been successful, we will arrange for the funds to be released.

5. Unsuccessful or ineligible applications

- 5.1 Applicants whose applications are unsuccessful, or ineligible will be notified and receive feedback on the reasons for the failure of the grant application within two weeks of the decision.

6. Payment of funding

- 6.1 Groups will need to be registered with the Council's payment department and be allocated a Trade Supplier (TS) number, in order to be paid.
- 6.2 Once authorised the council's Financial Services department will arrange for funding to be paid directly into the group or organisation bank account as detailed in the application form.

7. Project Completion Reports (PCR's)

- 7.1 As part of the conditions of funding you are required to complete and return a Project Completion Report (PCR) within an agreed timescale of receiving funding or at the end of your project.
- 7.2 The PCR process is designed to assist you in evaluating the success of your project or initiative and also provides an evidence base for the council's internal audit process.
- 7.3 As part of the PCR you will be required to provide supporting documentation e.g. receipts, invoices, bank statements, before/after photos, press releases etc. to evidence the expenditure of the funding awarded.
- 7.4 Organisations or groups who do not complete and return a satisfactory Project Completion Report may be required to return their funding and will not be considered for future funding.

8. Promotion of our funding support

- 8.1 We require that groups and organisations recognise Westmorland and Furness Council's funding support by highlighting this on all promotional materials in relation to the project or initiative e.g. acknowledgement in any press releases issued by the group, posters, flyers, website, etc.

9. Terms and conditions of funding for Westmorland and Furness Council

- 9.1 You are required to maintain a bank account in the name of the group. All withdrawals from the account should require a minimum of two signatures.
- 9.2 Grants awarded must be spent only on the purpose for which is stated within your application. If for any reason your circumstances change and you wish to vary the way in which you spend your grant you are required to contact us and request written permission to do so.
- 9.3 You are required to provide access to all necessary documentation to support your application for funding.
- 9.4 Financial support provided by Westmorland and Furness Council should be acknowledged on all printed publicity and in information given to the press and media.
- 9.5 Your organisation or group should promote equality of opportunity and eliminate all forms of discrimination. Your commitment to this should be clearly identified in a

written policy or statement that takes into account current legislation and good practice.

- 9.6 In the event of your organisation ceasing to operate or failing to undertake or complete the activity for which the grant was offered, Westmorland and Furness Council reserves the right to withhold payment, reduce its award or seek recovery.
- 9.7 You will be required to submit a Project Completion Report in an agreed timescale after any grant award has been paid. Organisations or groups who do not complete and return a satisfactory Project Completion Report may be required to return their funding and will not be considered for future funding
- 9.8 Your organisation is responsible for having in place adequate insurance and permissions for the project and any associated works e.g. landowner/landlord permission/consents where applicable. The Council accepts no liability for any consequences, whether direct or indirect, that may come about from your use of the Grant or from the Council's withdrawal of the Grant in accordance with these terms and conditions.
- 9.9 If your project is based in a building or on land that is leased from someone else, you need to demonstrate that you have a reasonable amount of time left on your lease. Your current lease should be at least as long as the expected lifespan of equipment purchased. If you are applying for building work to be carried out on a leased property, you should demonstrate that the length of your lease enables your organisation to get value for money from the project.
- 9.10 Where your organisation uses the grant to procure any part of the works or services covered by the grant, the procurement process used must be broadly comparable to those contained with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules (e.g. competitive process), as set out in the Council's Constitution which is available online (Westmorland and Furness Council Constitution or copy upon request).
- 9.11 The Council is under a legal obligation to comply with the Subsidy Control Act 2022. Decisions of the Council may be challenged by judicial review if the subsidy control rules are not followed or not followed completely. Grants may be suspended, and orders for damages or recovery of any unlawful subsidy made. The Council (and the grant recipient) may suffer reputational damage if an unlawful subsidy is made. As part of the application process, the Council may request from your organisation information about the levels of subsidies, including grant funding, that your organisation has received in recent years.
- 9.12 You will cooperate with the Council so as to allow the Council to discharge its duties under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("FOIA") and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 ("EIR") and the Local Government Transparency Code ("Codes of Practice") under section 45 and 46 of the FOIA.