

2023/24 Member Ward Budget Grant Scheme Terms and Conditions

Overview

1. The Folkestone & Hythe District Council Member Ward Budget Grant Scheme provides each Ward Member with a delegated budget of up to £3,000 per year to spend on community projects that help deliver the Council's strategic objectives.
2. Ward Budgets are intended to support projects or activities that benefit the community, preferably within a Ward Member's own ward.
3. The closing date is 5pm on Friday 1st March 2024 to enable sufficient time for the payments to be made by financial year end.

Eligible Projects

4. Funding may be provided for projects or one-off items, which:
 - Support community projects (including art, youth and sports projects);
 - Improve health and wellbeing;
 - Address community safety issues;
 - Improve community services or facilities in a local area;
 - Promote better community relations and cohesion;
 - Maintain local open spaces and leisure facilities;
 - Improve the local environment or appearance of an area;
 - Provide support to a particular group in line with the council's public sector equality duties
 - Projects must be delivered within 12 months of the date of receipt of funding
5. Funding will not be provided to:
 - Reinstate a cut in service or activity arising from an earlier policy decision of Folkestone & Hythe District Council or other public body;
 - **Finance ongoing yearly spending commitments;**
 - Benefit individuals or privately owned businesses;
 - **Support the mainstream activities of a community or voluntary organisation;**
 - Submit **retrospective** applications (i.e. it is not permitted to purchase an item and then submit an application for funding).
 - Projects that do not support the Council's Corporate Objectives or Policy
6. The decision whether or not to provide funding rests with the Ward Member, provided that the bid meets the terms and conditions set out in this document.

Eligible Applicants

7. Funding applications can be made by organisations located within the District or which can demonstrate that they have a strong connection with the local area. Eligible organisations are:
 - Town and Parish Councils, with a precept of less than £21,000 a year;
 - Community Interest Companies;
 - Charitable Incorporated Organisations;
 - Registered Charities;
 - community and voluntary groups with an appropriate governing document (see guidance here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-write-your-charitys-governing-document>);
 - Schools and other organisations working for the benefit of the local community.

8. Applications for funding cannot be accepted from:
 - Local authorities
 - Individuals
 - Privately owned businesses (unless the grant is for a community project)
 - Political parties
 - F&HDC Members or persons associated² with them (to avoid any potential conflicts of interest)
9. Applications will be considered from religious groups (but not for the purpose of worship) and these bodies must be able to demonstrate how their proposal will bring wider community benefit.
10. All payments made under the Ward Budget Grant Scheme are allocated on a one-off basis, at times and on grounds which shall be at the exclusive discretion of the Council. No ongoing financial support is provided and the Council will not be liable for any ongoing costs that the project may incur for revenue and/or capital expenditure.
11. Applicants must include **an accurate and thorough description** of what the funding is to be used for in Part A of the Application Form in order to allow members and officers to assess the merits of the bid against the criteria and conditions of the scheme, as set out in these Terms and Conditions.
12. Applications must include details of a nominated bank account so that an electronic transfer can be made. **The bank account must be in the name of the group or organisation applying for funding.** Funds cannot be paid to a bank account in the name of an individual.
13. The nominated bank account must require two unrelated people to authorise cheques and make withdrawals
14. **Applications must show a breakdown of the proposed spend and attach evidence** (e.g. quotes) when they submit the application form. Due to audit requirements, applications without supporting evidence cannot be accepted. Please refer to our **Guide to Supporting Evidence** for Ward Grant applications for information about what is acceptable evidence.
15. By submitting an application, applicants undertake that they have obtained the necessary permissions, licences, permits, insurance and other consents required to implement the project.

The application process

16. The Ward Budget Grant Scheme operates a two stage process:
 - **Part A:** is completed by the applicant.
 - **Part B:** is completed by the Ward Member.

¹ Associated Person” means (either in the singular or in the plural):

- A family member or any other person or body with whom you have a close association, including your spouse, civil partner, or somebody with whom you are living as a husband or wife, or as if you are civil partners; or
- Any person or body who employs or has appointed you or such persons, any firm in which you or they are a partner, or any company of which you or they are directors; or
- Any person or body in whom you or such persons have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £25,000; or
- Any body of which you are in a position of general control or management and to which you are appointed or nominated by the Authority; or
- Any body in respect of which you are in a position of general control or management: exercising functions of a public nature; or directed to charitable purposes; or one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union).”

Part A – Application form

17. Part A must be completed by an authorised representative of the group applying for the funding.
18. Applicants then forward the Application & Approval Form to their Ward Member(s) for review and approval. Full details of district councillors, the wards they represent and how to contact them are available on the Council's website by going to the page '[Your Councillors](#)'..
19. Applicants may submit their form to more than one member but this should be stated in the Application Form in section 8, 'Other funding'. Applicants are advised to limit the number of Members they apply to, to a maximum of six.

Part B – Member decisions

20. Ward Members are encouraged to give priority to applications for funding which:
 - Help to deliver the strategic objectives of the Council (as set out in the Corporate Plan);
 - Are consistent with the Council's policies and plans;
 - Demonstrate clear local support and/or need;
 - Are consistent with town or parish community plans;
 - Provide evidence of value for money;
 - Directly benefit their electoral ward;
 - Seek match funding where possible;
 - Give priority to your ward
21. The Ward Member reviews the application and decides how much they wish to allocate to the project.
22. The Ward Member will adhere to the Councillor's Code of Conduct and the restrictions during election periods when making decisions on how to allocate their ward budget.
23. The Ward Members are advised to avoid funding the same project two years in a row.
24. Subject to these Terms and Conditions, the Ward Member is free to decide how they wish to allocate their allotted funding.
25. Any member ward budget amount that remains unallocated by the closing date, will not be carried over and will return to the general fund.
26. Completed forms should be emailed to communitydevelopment@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

Officer review

27. The Council officer checks that the application complies with the terms and conditions of the scheme (as set out in the Application Form and these Terms and Conditions).
28. Application Forms that are incomplete or do not meet the criteria as detailed in these Terms and Conditions will be returned to the Ward Member.
29. The Ward Member will be emailed a copy of the Decision Notice which they can email to the applicant as confirmation that the grant has been approved.
30. Director – Place will have the final decision on whether to award a grant if there is a compliance issue.

Compliance with the Council's financial procedures

31. The applicant must retain any relevant receipts in line with the Council's financial procedures. The Council reserves the right to request evidence of expenditure (e.g. receipts).
32. Spending under this scheme does not classify as a supply to the Council and therefore it is not possible to reclaim VAT on this expenditure.
33. Any irregularity or suspected irregularity involving Council funds, property or other assets must be reported immediately to the Council's Chief Financial Officer.
34. Any applicant who has had a criminal conviction in the last five years or is under investigation for any misdemeanour must declare this and this may, at the exclusive discretion of the Council, disqualify them from funding. If this applies please tick the relevant box in the Declaration section on page 3 of the Application Form and attach a descriptive list of such convictions and/or misdemeanours for the Council to consider.
35. If there is found to be any misrepresentation in the Application Form or any breach of these terms and conditions, it may at the exclusive discretion of the Council result in requirement on the applicant to repay to the Council all or part the grant, including all costs, losses, expenses and/or liabilities howsoever incurred by the Council.
36. Should your project not go ahead for any reason, please contact the Communities Officer/Member as soon as possible and definitely before the scheme closes so that the funding can be reallocated to another project.

Publicity

37. The Council will publish information regarding Member Ward Budget grants on the Council website (on the 'Your Councillors' page) and in the Grants Register.
38. Applicants and Ward Members are encouraged to publicise projects that are supported, in whole or in part, by the Ward Budget Grant Scheme.

Monitoring and Evaluation

39. Applicants will make available copies of all receipts and invoices relating to the grant to the Council's auditors. The Council reserves the right to inspect goods, works and/or services purchased using funding from the Ward Budget Grant Scheme.
40. Successful applicants must provide a project update to the Ward Member as soon as the project is completed or within six months of receiving the grant (whichever is earlier) and again on project completion (if this is later). Such project update will include photographs and other supporting evidence. Failure to provide evidence may make the applicant ineligible for further financial support and potentially require the applicant to repay the grant and costs incurred in accordance with clause 35 above.
41. Officers will keep appropriate records of the funding approved and expenditure incurred by the Council.

Equality and Diversity

42. The Council will adhere to its equality and diversity responsibilities in administering this scheme.