



# Community Empowerment Fund - Application Criteria

## Purpose of the Grant

Caerphilly County Borough Council is committed to supporting communities to become strong and resilient, and recognise that one of our county borough's greatest assets is the thriving network of local community groups and organisations across the area, particularly so in light of the Covid pandemic.

This grant scheme has been created to enable communities to develop and deliver projects aimed at meeting the needs of their residents. Key to this will be the involvement of local elected members as one of the key contact points in local communities, who will work with and support local community groups to develop project ideas that meet identified need on a ward basis.

The Council's budget setting for 2021/22 includes a £328,000 annual funding allocation for a 'Community Empowerment Fund' to support community-led initiatives that complement and support those provided through public services.

In calculating allocations the £328,000 has been divided by 73 (the number of elected representatives within Caerphilly county borough), meaning an allocation of £4,490 per ward councillor. In wards where there are more than one ward councillor, the allocation is multiplied according to the number of ward councillors. For example, Penyrheol ward has four elected representatives, therefore the Penyrheol ward would benefit from an allocation of £17,960 (£4,490 x 4).

It should be noted that the Community Empowerment Fund allocation of £328,000 for Caerphilly county borough during 2021/22 is allocated to wards, and not directly to local ward councillors.

Projects will aim to support communities to:

- Build community capacity
- Better understand and identify their local aspirations and priorities
- Make good use of existing assets, with the projects having the support of local communities
- Increase active inclusion and develop opportunities for enhanced engagement for groups that are more vulnerable and harder to reach
- Develop local assets, services and projects that respond to the needs of the people in their local communities
- Develop projects that are capable of becoming sustainable community projects
- Complement existing services in an area by providing additional activity

## Who can apply?

Projects must be managed by a non-profit organisation based within Caerphilly county borough, of one of the following types:

- (i) Unincorporated voluntary/community organisation or club with an adopted constitution or rules (an agreement between a group of people who come together for a reason other than to make a profit e.g. voluntary group or sports club)
- (ii) Charities or Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIOs) registered with the Charities Commission (these can be new or existing charities)
- (iii) Community organisations who are Companies Limited by Guarantee (CLG) with no share capital and are registered with Companies House (company is owned by guarantors and any profits are re-invested to help promote the non-profit objectives of the company)
- (iv) Community Interest Companies (CICs) which are not established or conducted for private gain: any surplus or assets are used exclusively for the benefit of the community (designed for social enterprises that want to use their profits and assets for the public good)

***Please note: All organisations must have their own bank account in the name of the organisation. If the organisation does not currently have a bank account, this must be addressed before a formal grant offer can be made.***

The following types of organisations will not be funded:

- (i) Any commercial/trading or profit-making organisations where the profits are shared amongst the Directors, shareholders or members
- (ii) This list is not exhaustive

## What can be funded?

The council's recent resident survey 'The Caerphilly Conversation' sought views on what the Community Empowerment Fund could be spent on, with seven priority areas emerging from the feedback, therefore forming the basis for the application criteria for projects:

- Environmental projects, including awareness of biodiversity and increasing community activity
- Projects that support greater community cohesion
- Projects that aim to tackle isolation and loneliness across the community
- Digital inclusion projects
- Projects to encourage greater physical and mental wellbeing
- Activities for young people/educational activities (non-statutory)
- Initiatives that promote and encourage community safety
- Supporting community groups to establish

Applicant organisations will be required to evidence the need for their project or activity and the lasting benefits it will provide for the local community.

## **What cannot be funded?**

- (i) Usual running costs of any organisation e.g. rent, utilities, insurance etc. The only exception to this is where organisation's have been formed in the six months prior to an application being made, where they can apply for one-off start-up costs.
- (ii) Subsequent grants for the same project or activity (by this we mean that any new application must be for activity substantially different to previous applications)
- (iii) Retrospective costs for any project i.e. costs for work already undertaken or equipment and/or materials that have been purchased or ordered prior to a formal grant offer being made and the Terms & Conditions of the grant being signed and submitted. If using a tender process, tenders cannot be awarded prior to a grant approval being made
- (iv) This list is indicative only and is not exhaustive

## **When can an application be submitted?**

The closing date for the first round of the grant scheme will be 31<sup>st</sup> October 2021. Subsequent rounds will be dependent upon there being funding remain in the relevant ward pot, i.e. if all the funding in a particular ward is allocated in the first round there will be no further grant rounds for that ward in that financial year, however, there may be further application rounds in other wards. Applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application approximately 6-8 weeks after submission, depending on the total number of grants submitted in each round overall.

Applicants cannot apply for further grants in successive years i.e. if a successful application is made in the 2021/22 financial year (i.e. between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022), the applicant cannot make a further application until 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 at the earliest.

## **How much can be applied for?**

The maximum allocation available to an organisation/community group is £4,490 (in a single member ward). Approved projects in a single member ward where the total cost is less than £4,490, can be awarded a grant of up to 100% of the project costs (depending on the number of applications received in a particular application round).

Larger projects in a single member ward costing over £4,490 can receive a grant of up to the maximum amount (depending on the number of applications received in a particular application round), with the expectation that the remainder of the funding is sourced by the organisation/community group from other sources, or their own funding.

For multi member wards the ward councillors can choose to 'pool' their allocation to fund larger projects, up to the maximum amount that the ward members have agreed to pool (i.e. up to £8,980 in a 2 member ward, up to £13,470 in a 3 member ward). Ward members are not required to pool their allocation if they do not wish to.

Organisations/community groups may be offered less than the maximum amount if there are multiple applications from organisations or groups in individual wards in a single application round.

It is suggested that all applications are for a minimum of £1,000, which can be made up of a number of different items.

## **Estimates/quotes**

Applicants must submit comparable estimates/quotes to support their application. A minimum two written estimates/quotes are required for every item listed in the 'Financial Details' section of the application form.

Estimates/quotes must be itemised, detailed and comparable (in terms of measurements, rates, quantities, specification etc.). They must also detail VAT where applicable.

Any grant offered is made on the basis of the cheapest quote provided. Applicants can choose a more expensive supplier or contractor to complete the work or provide goods/services, but this will be at the applicants' cost.

## **Payments**

50% of the grant amount will be paid when the grant is approved. The remaining 50% will be released on receipt of the necessary financial records to show that the grant released on project approval has been spent in accordance with the original application form submitted. Invoices/receipts and bank statements will be required as evidence.

## **Project timescales**

All approved projects must be completed within 18 months of the date of the formal offer letter. The funding for any projects not completed within this timescale will be automatically withdrawn.

After six months of the first tranche of funding being released, if an organisation has not made progress in undertaking the project (or is unable to offer an adequate explanation for not doing so), no further grant funding will be released and we will seek to recover the funding already paid.

## **Who to contact?**

For more information or if you have any queries, please contact XXXXX, Policy and Partnerships Team, Caerphilly County Borough Council, Penallta House, Tredomen Park, Ystrad Mynach, Hengoed, CF82 7PG. Tel: 01443 86XXX or e-mail XXXXXX