



Leicestershire County Council

SHIRE Community Grants 2018-19

Guidance Notes for Applicants

Introduction

Leicestershire County Council's revised [Communities Strategy](#) (2017-21) 'Working Together to Build Great Communities' is based around the following four priorities:

Priority 1: Communities support themselves, individuals and families

Priority 2: Communities, in collaboration with public services, are supported to design and deliver better outcomes for the people of Leicestershire

Priority 3: Voluntary and community sector organisations, social enterprises and Town and Parish Councils are supported and empowered to provide a range of effective services and activities for individuals and communities

Priority 4: The council continues to be outward focussed, transparent, and open to new ways of working

The Communities Strategy is further underpinned by the principles of social action. The Council is committed to promoting and enabling social action because it encourages people to come together to provide local solutions which improve the lives of people in communities.

Building on the strengths of local communities is also fundamental to the Strategy. Rather than starting from the perspective of the problems in a community (a 'deficit-based' approach), the 'asset-based' approach aims to recognise the strengths that exist within communities, which can help to mobilise social action.

SHIRE Community Grants are therefore an essential component of the Council's aspirations around empowering and enabling communities to support themselves and rely less on Council and other public services, particularly in terms of delivering preventive services which focus on supporting those most in need.

To help deliver the priorities of the Communities Strategy, £350,000 is available for the SHIRE Community Grants programme in 2018-19.

Eligible organisations will be able to apply for **grants of up to £10,000** and/or **smaller grants of up to £3,000** for new community based projects and activities that improve the lives of vulnerable/disadvantaged people and communities. **Grants of up to £1,000** will also be available for existing, ongoing or repeat activities, at the discretion of the Council.

Objectives of the SHIRE Community Grants Programme 2018-19

The SHIRE Community Grants programme will enable voluntary and community sector organisations, social enterprises and Town and Parish Councils to deliver community-based projects, services and activities which improve the lives of vulnerable and disadvantaged people in Leicestershire, based on the outcomes described on Page 3 of this document.

The Council is also keen to support initiatives that provide innovative solutions to local issues, including new models or ways of working. In line with the Council's Communities Strategy, we are particularly interested in supporting projects which involve and empower communities, including projects which are developed jointly in partnership with residents, service users, carers, families and other relevant local stakeholders.

Broadly, we are seeking to fund projects which fulfil all or most of the following criteria:

- Projects that improve the lives of vulnerable and disadvantaged people, based on identified need/demand
- Projects that provide community-based early intervention and prevention solutions
- Projects that will help to reduce demand on Council and other public services
- Projects which complement existing services which are already being delivered
- New, innovative ways of working and/or models of service delivery
- Projects which empower communities to 'take charge' and to help themselves
- Projects which recognise the strengths and assets within a community
- Projects which show the potential of being replicated/duplicated on a larger scale
- Projects that will develop the capacity to be sustained independently, beyond the period of funding
- Projects which demonstrate evidence of partnership working and/or engagement with other relevant services, projects and stakeholders
- Capital works which will enable delivery of essential services and projects specifically for vulnerable and disadvantaged people/groups. This could include new buildings; building alterations; equipment; tools; materials or vehicles.

Potential beneficiaries/target client groups we expect to be supported through the grant funded projects will include (but will not necessarily be limited to) the following:

- Vulnerable and disadvantaged young people
- Older people, particularly those who are frail and/or socially isolated
- People with long-term health conditions, or those at risk of developing health conditions, including people living unhealthy or inactive lifestyles
- Carers/people with caring responsibilities
- People who are experiencing financial hardship or are economically disadvantaged due to socio-economic or welfare status
- People who are physically disabled
- People with learning disabilities and/or other special educational needs
- People who currently or have previously experienced mental health difficulties
- People who have a history of misusing drugs/alcohol
- People experiencing homelessness or other adverse housing related issues
- People from the Gypsy and Traveller community
- People with refugee or asylum seeker status

- People who have been the victim of crime or abuse
- Vulnerable people from the above groups who are NEET (not in employment, education or training) and/or face significant challenges accessing employment, education or training
- People who are socially isolated (including rurally isolated) who experience challenges or a lack of opportunities with regards to accessing services or support
- Residents of communities in areas of (multiple) deprivation

Examples of Outcomes to be achieved for SHIRE Grant-Funded Projects

The following are examples of outcomes which grant-funded projects are expected to achieve:

- Community projects and activities provide solutions and responses to local issues, based on identified need/demand
- Communities are empowered to 'take charge' to help themselves
- Vulnerable groups of people are enabled to develop strong networks of support in their communities and are less isolated, healthier, safer and have access to appropriate information and services
- Vulnerable and disadvantaged people are empowered to participate fully in society; become more independent and resilient; and are enabled to manage their lives more effectively
- The importance of the social inclusion of vulnerable people is actively promoted in communities
- New, innovative and previously untested models of working/service delivery are piloted, including those which demonstrate potential opportunities for community-led delivery
- Community projects which complement existing services (included those currently delivered or commissioned by the Council and its partners) are delivered effectively, in order to improve the health, wellbeing and quality of life for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of people
- There is a reduction in the numbers of vulnerable/disadvantaged people who need high cost, specialist public sector support
- There is less reliance on statutory/public services with communities able to address local issues, particularly to support other, more vulnerable, members of the community more actively
- There is a reduction in crime, offending and anti-social behaviour in communities
- There are more opportunities for vulnerable/disadvantaged people and communities to develop positive lifestyle choices, to equip them with skills, confidence and self-esteem, to enable them to improve their opportunities in life
- The voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector in Leicestershire is strengthened
- Community organisations (including Town and Parish Councils) are able to develop their future sustainability, by providing essential local services
- Community organisations work together in partnership to achieve common goals

What activities can't be supported?

The Grant **cannot** be used for any of the following:

- activities which are existing and ongoing* – the grant is designed to support development of new activities/initiatives. (However we can consider funding a wider expansion of existing activities, e.g. to new geographical areas or to new or different client groups)
- staff salaries which are not related specifically to the project for which funding is being requested
- applications from individuals requesting funding for their own salary/project delivery costs (including directors of social enterprises/CICs) will not be accepted
- general running costs – other than those directly associated with the project activity which is the main focus of the grant funding*
- projects or activities which are led by or benefit only an individual person
- funds to build up reserves or a surplus
- costs for any activities which have already taken place, before acceptance of any offer (i.e. no retrospective funding will be allowed)
- projects/services which are already/currently being commissioned/funded by other Leicestershire County Council departments will not be eligible for 'top up' funding (for the same project/activities) from the SHIRE Community Grant Fund
- repairs, new buildings or extensions to community buildings which are **not** focussed/targeted towards directly delivering services for vulnerable/disadvantaged groups, and where planning or building regulations approval have not been obtained
- creation of or upgrades to toilets/disabled toilet facilities, for community buildings, **unless** these are part of a wider capital project which is focussed on providing (or increasing) access to services for vulnerable/disadvantaged groups
- creation or resurfacing of car parking areas, or costs associated with roof repairs
- costs related to delivering sports activities which are for general community benefit, i.e. not specifically targeted at vulnerable/disadvantaged groups
- feasibility studies, research/consultation activity or development of business plans

*Although the SHIRE Community Grant is focussed on supporting **new** initiatives, the Council will consider offering small amounts of funding, up to a maximum of £1,000, for repeat, existing, or ongoing activities, including project running costs, for applications for projects otherwise considered eligible. Such decisions will be made at the Council's discretion and it is expected that the intended outcomes of these projects will be clearly defined and closely aligned to the grant criteria.

Who can apply for a SHIRE Community Grant?

- Grants are available for any constituted 'not-for-profit' community groups, registered charities, Town/Parish Councils, and social businesses/enterprises or Community Interest Companies, who operate a 'not for private profit' business model, i.e. where any income generated is re-invested back into the social aims of the group/community.
- Grants cannot be awarded to non-constituted groups
- Grants will only be available for projects where the main beneficiaries are residents of Leicestershire County
- Organisations who apply for funding will need to demonstrate why the funding is essential to enable them to deliver the project (i.e. demonstrate that they are unable to undertake the project activity with existing resources)

- Applications from a partnership of two or more organisations (i.e. joint applications) are welcomed and encouraged. In such cases, one of the organisations will need to act as a 'lead applicant', to which any grant monies would be paid. Again, the partnership will need to demonstrate why the funding is required to enable them to deliver the project (i.e. demonstrate that they are unable to undertake the project activity with existing resources)
- Schools, academies, colleges, universities or other academic institutions are also eligible to apply for relevant and appropriate projects which benefit the wider community. Applications from PTA's will also be considered. Applications for National Curriculum or general academic-based projects which the educational facility is ultimately responsible for providing are not eligible
- Applicants need to have a bank account, with at least two unrelated signatories
- Applications will not be accepted from:
 - Private, profit making businesses/companies/commercial enterprises
 - Individuals (unless it can be clearly evidenced that the individual is running a social enterprise where any income generated is re-invested into achieving social aims)
 - Local Authorities or other statutory/public sector agencies, e.g. District Councils, NHS, Police, etc.

How much can you apply for?

Up to £10,000 is available for 'larger' projects, and up to £3,000 is available for smaller scale projects.

Organisations can apply for both a larger grant (of up to £10,000) and a smaller grant (of up to £3,000) in one financial year, i.e. a maximum of 2 applications per year. The maximum amount of funding a single organisation can receive from the SHIRE Community Grant in 2018-19 is therefore £13,000.

However, it is expected that where an organisation applies for a small grant and a larger grant (within the same financial year), the two applications should be for different elements of the same project (or a previously approved project/activity), or for two entirely different projects. Delivery of the same project will therefore not be funded twice, although it is possible to receive funding for a 'pilot project', and further, additional funding to implement a wider expansion of the pilot project.

SHIRE Community Grant funding can also be used to 'match fund' grants received from other organisations/funders, providing that it does not duplicate other funding (which enables the organisation to make a surplus).

Although you are not specifically required to demonstrate that you have secured other additional funding for your project (including 'match funding'), your application will be judged more favourably if you can evidence that other, additional sources of funding have been identified for the project, or are in the process of being explored.

Application Process

Applications for the SHIRE Community Grants will be completed through an online application form, via the www.leicestershirecommunities.org.uk/grants website. **Please contact the Grants Officers to discuss your project, to ensure it is eligible, before you complete an application.**

A Word version of the Application Form is also available to download from the website. This is mainly for the purpose of initially drafting your application, prior to completing the online form. Electronic or paper applications will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances. It is generally expected that applications are submitted via the online form.

You will be required to include the following details in your application:

- A description of the project
- The vulnerable/disadvantaged groups/communities your project will benefit, including the target number of beneficiaries
- An explanation of why the project is needed, including evidence of need/demand
- The outcomes, impacts and benefits your project is expected to achieve
- Estimated/proposed timescales for the project to be delivered
- The level of funding required to carry out the project and details of how additional funding is being secured

The following should also be considered and included within your application:

- It is expected that a minimum of at least 3 competitive quotes will be obtained for any element of the project/work which is of a value greater than £5,000.
- All necessary consents and approvals should have been obtained for any work proposed prior to the application being submitted (e.g. planning permission; DBS clearance, etc.)

What happens with my application?

- 1) Once we have received your application, we will acknowledge receipt and advise you of any initial clarification/additional information required.
- 2) If your application is not accepted as being eligible for funding, you will be advised of the reasons for this, how you can re-apply (if this is appropriate) and, if applicable, any other potential sources of funding.
- 3) If your application is accepted, we will share this with relevant colleagues from across the Council or from other partner agencies, to get their professional views on your proposed project/activity. We will be asking colleagues to comment on the following:
 - How your project proposal fits with strategic priorities
 - Clarification around how your project complements existing services
 - Aspects of your project considered to be particularly positive
 - How your project could be further improved or enhanced
 - Issues that would need to be resolved before funding could be awarded
 - Alternative / additional sources of funding that may be available for your project
- 4) Following consultation with colleagues, the Grant Officers will provide feedback to you, which could include requests for clarification around certain elements of your project proposal. The Grant Officers will remain in contact with you to ensure all queries are resolved before the application is referred for a final decision.

- 5) For applications requesting a grant of over £3,000, the Grant Officers will contact the relevant Leicestershire County Council Cabinet Lead Member to obtain their views and where possible, endorsement of the project.
- 6) Although applications can be received at any time, the SHIRE Grants programme will operate a series of bi-monthly deadlines and decision meetings. The deadlines for 2018-19 are outlined below:

Round	Deadlines for applications	Decisions to be communicated to applicants by:
Round 1	Monday 14 th May 2018	Mid-June 2018
Round 2	Monday 9 th July 2018	Mid-August 2018
Round 3	Monday 10 th September 2018	Mid-October 2018
Round 4	Monday 12 th November 2018	December 2018/January 2019

- 7) For grants of up to £10,000, applications will be referred to the Cabinet Lead Elected Member for Communities for consideration.

For grants of up to £3,000, applications will be referred to the Head of Service for Communities, Policy, and Resilience for consideration.

The final decision will be one of the following:

- a) Offer the full grant amount applied for
 - b) Offer a lower level of grant funding, i.e. a contribution towards the grant requested
 - c) Offer a grant subject to conditions (e.g. upon receipt of further information/clarification as requested by the Grant Officers)
 - d) Defer the decision pending further information/clarification being submitted, or request the application to be re-submitted with more information at a later date
 - e) Refuse to fund the application
- 8) **Successful projects will need to be completed and have claimed the grant within 12 months of the grant being awarded.** You will need to provide an 'End of Project' report and provide evidence of how you spent the funding by that date.

How will the grant be paid?

If your application is successful, you will receive a letter from Leicestershire County Council confirming the funding offer, along with a Grant Conditions and Reporting Requirements form. You will need to sign and return the Grant Conditions and Reporting Requirements form and also complete and return a form giving your organisation's bank details.

Payment will normally be made on completion of the project (i.e. not 'up front'). You will need to contact the Grants Officers when the work is complete and after you have incurred your project costs and these will be reimbursed. You will also be asked to provide an 'End of Project' report, along with details and documentary evidence of the costs you have incurred.

We appreciate that some community groups may require their grant payment in advance, to enable their project/activity to take place. Where possible, we will facilitate advance payments of up to 50% of the grant award. Please contact us if you would like to be considered for an advance payment. Please note that it will take approximately two weeks to process your offer letter and any advance payment, and we will need you to provide appropriate evidence of the costs you are requesting an advance payment for.

If your final project costs are less than originally estimated, the amount of grant paid will reflect the actual costs incurred for the project. If your final costs are more than outlined in your application, the grant will not exceed the amount agreed in the grant award offer.

Where the applicant has stated on the application form that they can reclaim VAT, the grant offer is based on the net value of the eligible scheme costs.

Other Sources of Grant Funding

In some cases, projects may be more eligible for other sources of grant funding and applicants will be directed to the most appropriate funding opportunities. Further information around grants, funding and other related support for community organisations can be accessed via:

Leicestershire Funding Toolkit: www.fundingtoolkit.org

Voluntary Action Leicestershire: www.valonline.org.uk/group-support

Access for All

Where appropriate, schemes should comply with the Equality Act 2010. Further information about the Equality Act can be found at:

www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance

Monitoring & Evaluation – Demonstrating the Outcomes of your Project

As part of the grant application process, applicants will be asked to clearly describe the intended outcomes that the project will achieve for its participants. This information will be used at the end of the project to ensure the intended project outcomes have been achieved, as planned and expected. If the outcomes have not been achieved to the satisfaction of the Grant Officers, the Council reserves the right to re-consider the final amount of funding to be awarded, based on the outcomes achieved by the project.

At the end of the funding period, successful applicants will be asked to submit an end of project report, detailing the activities which have taken place and the outcomes the project has achieved, including relevant case study examples. Grant Officers will also request evidence of spend/costs incurred (using an expenditure template), along with clarification around the next steps for the project. Additional evidence such as letters of support, testimonials and photographs may also be submitted along with the end of project report.

Successful applicants will further be expected to take up opportunities to network with other relevant organisations to share learning and may also be requested to present details of their project to relevant meetings and forums from time to time.

Publicity and Promotion

- If applicable, successful applicants will acknowledge Leicestershire County Council in any publicity material and press releases about the project
- Permission shall be deemed given for the project details to be included in appropriate publicity materials, such as press releases, websites and other communications/publications issued by Leicestershire County Council
- Where possible, successful applicants should promote and publicise their project (e.g. via press releases, an opening event etc.), and notify Leicestershire County Council of such events. A 'Supported by Leicestershire County Council' image will be made available to grant recipients upon request, for usage in any relevant publicity or promotional material.

EU State Aid

The Grant may be subject to the European Union State Aid rules and if so the Council will offer the grant on the basis that the De Minimis exemption will apply pursuant to EC Regulation (EU) No 1407/2013 18th December 2013 as published in the Official Journal of the European Union on 24th December 2013. The Council will require the applicant to disclose any financial contributions or benefits it has received in the last three fiscal years from any source which were given as De Minimis state aid and the Council will not award a sum in grant funding that would mean the applicant would exceed the De Minimis limit. The De Minimis limit is currently 200,000 euros (approx. £150,000) over a period of three fiscal years.

For further information about state aid, a Basic State Aid Guide is available on the Department for Business Innovation and Skills website, which you may find helpful:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/state-aid>

Disclaimer

Leicestershire County Council reserves the right to vary the terms of the grant programme.

For further information contact:

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