

### Discretionary Community Grants Policy

East Herts Council will grant aid eligible voluntary and community groups, town/parish councils, and not-for-profit organisations that deliver projects or activities that improve health and wellbeing outcomes for residents in East Herts. It will work with Councillors to identify and agree potential themes for grants spending on an annual basis.

Eligibility: Every organisation that meets these basic eligibility criteria will be able to apply for a grant:

- Situated or delivered in the East Herts district area which includes Bishop's Stortford, Sawbridgeworth, Buntingford, Hertford, Ware and the surrounding villages. If you are unsure if your project is in our area, please contact us.
- Financially viable with its own bank account that requires two unrelated people to authorise cheques and make withdrawals. This must be in the name of the organisation applying.
- Have an open-door membership policy and provide services that are accessible to people from all backgrounds. This does not preclude single-gender organisations from applying as long as they can demonstrate - if asked - that they comply with the Equality Act 2010.
- Be volunteer led or operated on a not-for-profit basis.
- Have good governance in place including a management committee/board of directors that includes at least three unrelated individuals
- Can demonstrate financial need and that other sources and options for funding have been considered.
- Have endorsement from an East Herts Councillor representing the area from which most of the residents who benefit from the project/activity come. In cases where an East Herts Councillor is a member of the bidding organisation and there is no other ward member, then the East Herts Executive Member for Housing and Health may endorse the application.

#### **If a project involves work on a building or outdoor space the applicant must:**

- Own the freehold of the land or building or a lease that cannot be brought to an end by the landlord for at least five years after the work has been completed
- Have the relevant permissions in place (for example planning consent, permission from owner).

**Priorities eligibility:** Applications must evidence that the money will directly (in the case of revenue bids), or indirectly (in the case of capital) support at least one outcome identified and publicised each year (Appendix 1). Priorities and special themes will be identified annually.

#### **Grants may be made for:**

- Building works or green space improvements – we will count this as capital funding.
- Large items of sports or play equipment – we will count this as capital funding.

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- Operational costs of a specific project or activity including purchase of small items of equipment, stationary and the like – we will count this as revenue funding.

The maximum grant for capital funding (principally improvements to buildings/open space or equipment) is £8,000. We will not fund projects that have already started though we may fund a later stage of a building project which is not dependent on an earlier stage.

The maximum grant for revenue funding (operational costs) is £3,000. The council will have discretion to consider larger revenue grants on a case-by-case basis. The presumption, however, is that such grants would only be awarded for long-term interventions (over a minimum six weeks' duration) that will clearly result in health behaviour change.

The council will look for innovative projects.

### **East Herts Council will not provide grants for:**

- purchase of medical equipment
- promotion of a particular religion or political belief
- a service that the state is obligated to provide
- land or building where ownership (freehold or eligible lease) is not yet established.
- purchase of items on behalf of another
- VAT that can be recovered

### **Allocation process**

All requests for funding must be submitted on the council's application form and contain all the required documentation (Appendix 2). There will be two bidding windows each year. The first application deadline will be the end of September and the second will be the end of December. Each application tranche will relate to half of the total pot of grants funding which will be allocated in that tranche. All applications will be judged together, relative to all other bids received during that bidding window.

The council will advertise and run an annual workshop with all eligible bidders making themselves known to the council.

### **Assessment and scoring**

All applications for grant funding will be carefully assessed to ensure that funding is allocated to projects or activities and areas that will have the most impact on the council's priority areas.

The assessment process will use three main criteria:

- practical assessment at which time the following considerations, though not limited to these, will be addressed - will the funding be spent in East

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Herts, will it be spent in the financial year, is the applicant already in receipt of a grant, has the applicant consulted the wider community?

- priority assessment at which time the following considerations, though not limited to these, will be addressed - would making the grant help the council deliver the key priorities identified for that year?
- Financial assessment at which time the following considerations, though not limited to these, will be addressed - has a clear and convincing argument been made for the funding?

Scoring will be based on answers to the following application questions:

1. amount of match funding voluntarily committed or already raised (not a requirement, but those bids that have match funding will score more highly)
2. whether the project is being delivered in a disadvantaged areas of East Herts (Appendix 3)
3. number of people that will benefit
4. evidence that project/activity will realistically help the council deliver on at least one of its priorities/outcomes
5. evidence of financial need
6. evidence that consultation has taken place and the results support the application.

All applications will be scored in a fair and consistent manner against the same assessment criteria. The assessment will take place from a set date over an agreed period of time and all applications will be assessed during this period to ensure that they are judged on merit, in relation to each other. Applications will not be considered outside of the assessment window.

### **Allocating funding – stage one**

All applications will be ranked in order of highest to lowest score. Funding will then be allocated to those applications receiving the highest scores. Each year, the council will determine what percentage of the available budget will be distributed in this way. Up to 20% of the budget can be held back for events of national or local importance (as agreed with councillors) which are in accordance with agreed priorities and criteria or for applications with lower scores

### **Allocating funding – stage two**

Where there are a number of lower scoring applications with similar scores and there is still funding to allocate, the council may decide to enter into a dialogue with applicants to seek further in return for mutually agreed amendments to the project or activity. The council may seek one or more of the following amendments to a lower scoring proposal as a condition of grant funding (note, this is not an exhaustive list):

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- the applicant agrees to mentor volunteers in other groups so as to strengthen that group's capacity, resilience and/or ability to apply for a grant in their own right
- the applicant agrees to expand their activities/project to a nearby wards or area that is known to have a high level of income deprivation
- the applicant agrees to ensure that the activity/project will reach a minimum number of vulnerable residents or 'new' residents who would not been assumed to be involved or benefit given the terms of the application as submitted.

The council reserves the right to apply any of these conditions to any of the grants awarded under either stage one or stage two of funding allocation process.

### **Member involvement in implementation**

All applicants will be asked to invite their ward member to the activity / event being funded or to view the project that has been funded.

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**APPENDIX 1: PRIORITIES FOR 2017/18**

The agreed priorities for discretionary grant funding for 2017/18 are listed below.

**Health** - physical activity and healthy nutrition, preventing and delaying the onset of illness, reducing obesity and keeping people healthy and active through:

- tackling social isolation – supporting those suffering from loneliness or social exclusion or those who find it difficult to interact the community
- supporting people who are tackling addictions
- enabling healthier lifestyles

**Income deprivation** (but not at the exclusion of supporting work that meets the other priorities in areas that do not suffer from deprivation):

- galvanising activities in areas with high levels of deprivation (capacity building)
- encouraging existing community groups and activities to deliver in disadvantaged areas of East Herts (Appendix 3)

**Infrastructure** – Improving or maintaining community buildings and assets to ensure that communities have the infrastructure to support their residents, to galvanise community activities and to drive community cohesion

- creating safer and resilient neighbourhoods

**Special theme for 17/18 Excellence in Sports** – the Performance to Excellence programme for young people aged 11 to 18 will continue as a theme for 17/18 but the aim is for it to become part of the main grant giving programme in 18/19 onwards.

**APPENDIX 2: REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION**

- Councillor endorsement
- Bank statement showing current balance
- Copy of constitution / set of rules or charity commission number
- Copy of child protection policy (if your organisation works with children)
- Evidence of planning permission (if required)
- Name and contact details of main contacts, including chair, treasurer and secretary, in your organisation
- Two quotes for capital projects

**APPENDIX 3: LIST OF TOP 10 MOST DEPRIVED WARDS IN EAST HERTS**

Whilst East Hertfordshire as a whole ranks above the national average on the scale on Income Deprivation (IMD<sup>1</sup>), there are still certain wards that fall below the average IMD<sup>2</sup> ranking for both Hertfordshire and nationally.

| Ward                 | Average IMD score for the ward | Ranking for IMD against all Hertfordshire wards (out of 690) |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| Much Hadham          | 16.3                           | 46   |
| Hertford Sele        | 14.7975                        | 47   |
| Mundens and Cottered | 13.91                          | 58   |
| Hunsdon              | 11.635                         | 78   |
| Ware Trinity         | 10.98                          | 80   |
| BS Central           | 10.93166667                    | 87   |
| Braughing            | 10.295                         | 88   |
| Hertford Rural North | 9.78                           | 94   |
| Hertford Rural South | 9.67                           | 95   |
| Great Amwell         | 9.35                           | 96   |

<sup>1</sup> The Indices of Deprivation 2015 provide a set of relative measures of deprivation for small areas (Lower-layer Super Output Areas) across England, based on seven domains of deprivation. The domains were combined using the following weights to produce the overall Index of Multiple Deprivation:

- Income Deprivation (22.5%)
- Employment Deprivation (22.5%)
- Education, Skills and Training Deprivation (13.5%)
- Health Deprivation and Disability (13.5%)
- Crime (9.3%)
- Barriers to Housing and Services (9.3%)
- Living Environment Deprivation (9.3%)

In addition to the Index of Multiple Deprivation and the seven domain indices, there are two supplementary indices: the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index and the Income Deprivation Affecting Older People Index.

<sup>2</sup> IMD data is measured according to individual Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs), however by taking the average IMD scores across the LOSA's within each ward we have calculated an average IMD score for each of the wards in East Herts.