

South Norfolk Council Member-Led Grant Rules

MEMBER WARD FUND

These ground rules set the criteria in awarding grants from the Member Ward Fund. The purpose is to be flexible and responsive to local decision-making; therefore, members are encouraged to make quick, sound decisions which support groups or initiatives that meet identified local need.

1. Role of members

- 1.1 The Council supports its members in meeting the ambitions of the community and identifying and delivering local solutions, which in turn support the Council's corporate priority areas and the way in which we work.
- 1.2 All members should take a central role in identifying and delivering improvements to the quality of life of people in their communities. Members are expected to be active in consulting with the community, identifying local needs and working with the communities to identify how best to achieve these needs.
- 1.3 This means combining and utilising all the experience, knowledge, skills and networks of the members to understand what goes on in their communities and what the important issues are for local people, and to come up with innovative and effective solutions to make the necessary improvements.
- 1.4 Each member will be allocated a budget (the Members' Ward Fund) to:
 - increase levels of community capacity at a very local level;
 - allow flexible and timely funding of very small initiatives within communities;
 - enable communities to help themselves, as early as possible; and
 - enhance the social, economic or environmental wellbeing of the community.
- 1.5 Each member is accountable for making decisions to allocate funding from their budget. The decisions must meet the following criteria:

- The payment must be over £100;
- The funding will normally go to a community group, it may be awarded to social enterprises, businesses, charitable organisations or other public agencies if the aims are being met - but **NOT** to an individual.
- The granting of the funding is for a specific activity and will not imply an ongoing commitment by the Council nor have a revenue implication;
- The activity being funded:
 - o Has not already taken place (retrospective funding is not permitted);
 - o Could not easily be funded elsewhere
 - o Does not cover costs of routine maintenance o
 - Can demonstrate support in the community
 - o The specific activity has not received member-led Council funding over the past 2 years. (Projects that have received funding in the past 2 financial years but delivering a new or addition to the activity originally funded, would be eligible for the new or additional element).
- The project or activity must promote communities working together and enhance the quality of life of people living or working in the Ward, this may be within the Ward boundary or beyond.
- The funding can be used by the community group during the 12 months following receipt.
- The funding cannot be used to support any specific activity more than once in financial years.
- As far as the member is aware, making the payment to the recipient would not result in fraudulent or illegal activity or any practices which would bring South Norfolk Council into disrepute. This would include ensuring that all recipients have any required permissions in place.
- The funding must not replace funding previously provided by other statutory agencies such as the County Council.
- Precepting authorities raise their own budgets and therefore funding must not go to another local authority such as County, Town or Parish Council for projects / services that they are required to fund through their own precept, are a service that they normally fund, or that the precept could cover. Examples of what would not be included are village signs, parish notice boards and general maintenance.
- Funds may be provided for additional services where the local authority is not required to fund or is a substantial investment that could not be normally covered by the local authority's precept. Examples of what could be funded include defibs and major refurbishments.

Member Ward Fund: allocation of funds



2. Follow Up

2.1 It is the members' responsibility to ensure that the funded projects and activities are delivered as agreed. Where that is not the case, the member, together with the Communities Manager will be responsible for resolving disputes and taking action, including withdrawal of funding where appropriate.

2.2 Members are **requested** to ensure funded projects and activities are delivered as agreed by visiting the group/activity between 6 and 12 months after funding is allocated. The Member will be provided with a 'Funded by South Norfolk Council' plaque **(where appropriate)** and very brief evaluation form by the Communities Team. The plaque can be presented with appropriate promotional material captured and the evaluation completed. The evaluation form will be returned to the Communities Team and used to compile monitoring reports for the Scrutiny Committee.

2.3 If a grant has been used for the purpose that it was not originally intended or has not been spent within the given time period then the Communities Manager will work alongside the member who awarded the funds, to follow the Corporate Debt Policy to recover the funds from the community group.

2.4 Twice a year, grants awarded will be presented to the Scrutiny Committee for review, including outcomes achieved using the evaluation forms referenced in 2.2. The Scrutiny Committee will hold members to account, and can request that members present their reasons for funding projects to the panel for scrutiny.

3. Governance

3.1 There must be a transparent audit trail in respect of decisions. In compliance with the legislation, the individual member is responsible for ensuring a record is made in writing of any decision or action she or he has taken. The online member Ward Grant Notice of Decision Form will form both the request to process a payment and also the record of that decision and reasons for it.

3.2 Following submission of the online decision form the Finance team will process payment of the grant. From the point that the form and all supporting evidence is received, officers in the Finance team have 5 working days to process the payment.

3.3 The fund will start on 1 April each year, and must be spent by 1 March the following year. The only exception is if an election year, when the fund will start the day after the election, and close on 1 March.

3.4 Any member ward underspend will be rolled over into the following years' Community Action Fund

South Norfolk Council Member-Led Grant Rules

COMMUNITY ACTION FUND

These ground rules set the criteria in awarding grants from the Community Action Fund. The Community Action Fund is aimed at empowering communities by providing funding to enable community organisations to help themselves.

1. Role of Members

- 1.1 The Council supports its members in meeting the ambitions of the community **plus** identifying and delivering local solutions, which in turn support the Council's corporate priority areas and the way in which we work.
- 1.2 All members should take a central role in identifying and delivering improvements to the quality of life of people in their communities. Members are expected to be active in consulting with the community, identifying local needs and working with the communities to identify how best to achieve these needs.
- 1.3 This means combining and utilising all the experience, knowledge, skills and networks of the members to understand what goes on in their communities and what the important issues are for local people **in order** to come up with innovative and effective solutions to make the necessary improvements.

2. The Community Action Fund

- 2.1 The Community Action Fund (CAF) is in place to support groups who require a larger amount of funding than the Members Ward Fund can support. District Councillors are responsible for receiving, considering and proposing applications for funding between **£1,000** and £15,000.

The application process is outlined in Appendix A

2.2 The aim of this funding is to:

- build capacity within communities so that groups are enabled to be self-sustaining without ongoing practical and financial support from the Council,
 - stimulate local economic growth, and
 - facilitate creative partnership approaches to helping people in need at the earliest opportunity.
- 2.2 Each member is responsible for receiving, considering and proposing applications for funding from the allocated budget. Funding can be used for new or existing projects.

2.3 The Panel will meet in accordance to the rules in Appendix B. The applications must meet the following criteria:

- The funding will normally go to a local community group, but may be awarded to social enterprises, businesses, charitable organisations or other public agencies if the aims are being met - but **NOT** to an individual.
- The granting of funding is for a specific activity and will not imply an ongoing commitment nor have a revenue implication for the council
- The activity being funded:
 - Has not already taken place (retrospective funding is not permitted)
 - Could not easily be funded elsewhere
 - Can demonstrate how it meets a local need and provides support to the community
 - Does not cover costs of routine maintenance
 - Supports the Council's priority areas
 - Has not received Member-Led funding from the Council funding over the past 2 **financial** years.
- Priority will be given to projects which have secured match funding **external to Council funds**
- The project or activity must promote communities working together and enhance the life of local people.
- The funding can be used by the community group during the 12 months following receipt. **Longer periods of 2-5 years are acceptable for larger projects with consent from the Panel. The Council reserves the right to request that any funding be returned in the event the project is not likely to be delivered in good time.**
- The funding cannot be used to support any activity more than once in a two-year period
- As far as the member is aware, making the payment to the recipient would not result in fraudulent or illegal activity or any practices which would bring South Norfolk Council into disrepute. This would include ensuring that all recipients have any required permissions in place
- Precepting authorities raise their own budgets and therefore funding must not go to another local authority such as County, Town or Parish Council for projects / services that they are required to fund through their own precept, are a service that they normally fund, or that the precept could cover. Examples of what would not be included are village signs, parish notice boards, general maintenance.
- Funds may be provided for additional services where the local authority is not required to fund or is a substantial investment that could not be normally covered by the local authorities precept. Examples of what could be funded include defibs, major refurbishments.
- Members should also be satisfied that the project or activity being funded would increase community capacity and enhance the quality of life for residents. They should also be clear that it will promote sustainable development in the area (that is, it balances social, economic and environmental objectives and does not cause damage in any of these areas).

2. Follow Up

2.1 It is the Members' responsibility to ensure that the funded projects and activities are delivered as agreed. Where that is not the case, the member, together with the Communities Manager will be responsible for resolving disputes and taking action, including withdrawal of funding where appropriate.

2.2 If a grant has been used for the a purpose that it was not originally intended or has not been spent within the given time period then the Communities Manager will work alongside the Member who awarded the funds, to follow the Corporate Debt Policy to recover the funds from the community group.

2.3 It is the Member's responsibility to work with those awarded funding to complete a brief evaluation of the project using the provided template in order to verify spend, assess outcomes and enable scrutiny. This will be undertaken within 12 months of the award of funding.

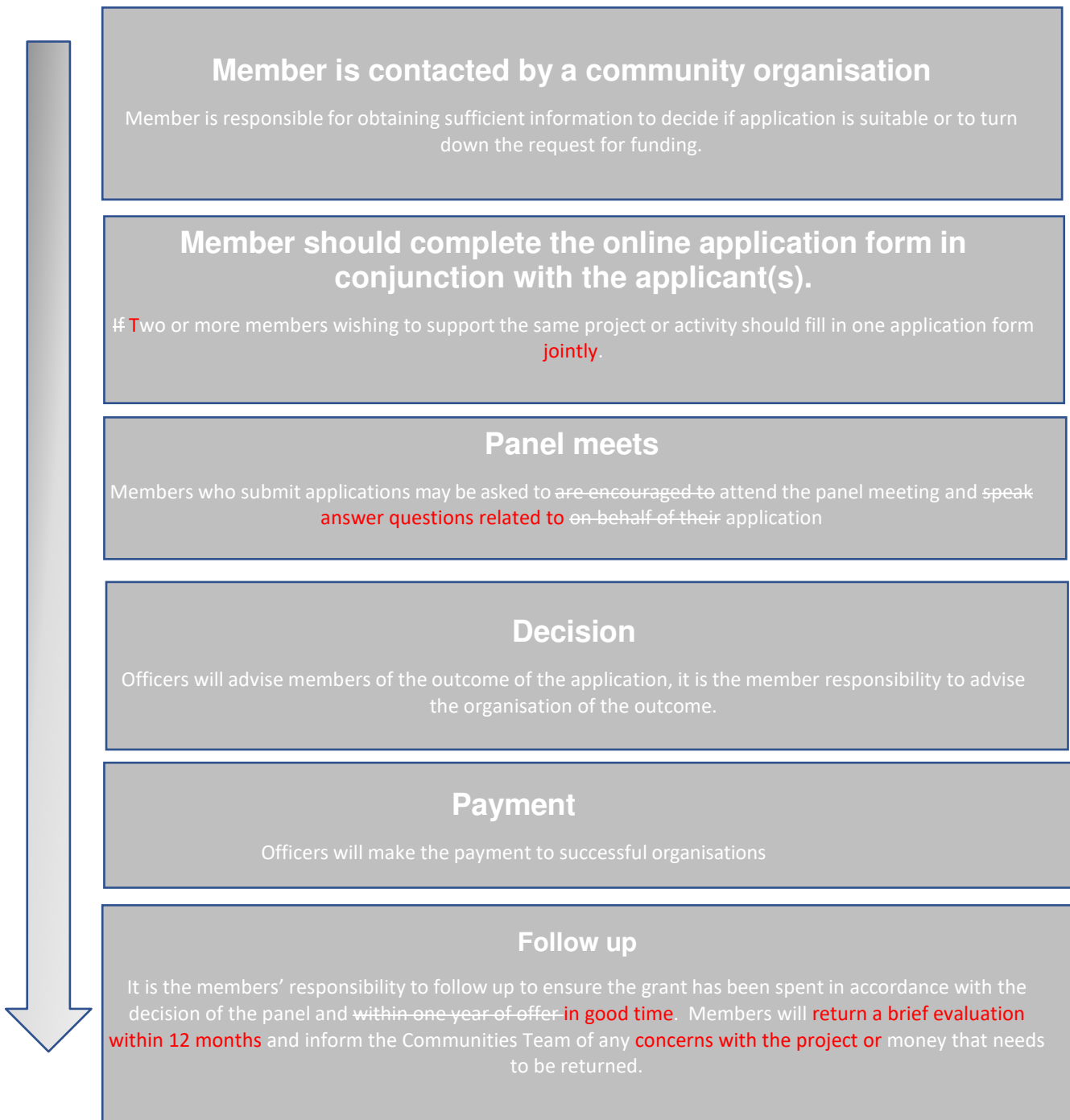
3. Governance

3.1 There must be a transparent audit trail in respect of decisions. In compliance with the legislation, the CAF Panel is responsible for ensuring a record is made in writing of any decision or action it has taken.

3.2 Following the CAF Panel and written confirmation of decisions made the Finance team will process payment of the grant, officers in the Finance team have 5 working days to process the payment.

3.3 The fund will be renewed each financial year, and all applications will be considered at the Community Action Fund Panel which meets up to twice a year. The initial panel date will be confirmed prior to May 1st of the respective year.

Appendix: The Application Process



Rules of the Panel.

- a) All applications will be considered at the Community Action Fund Panel which meets up to twice a year. ~~(May/June and September/October).~~
- b) The Panel will consider all **eligible** applications to reach a decision as to which projects should receive funding, and how much. In some cases, the Panel may make a recommendation to assign a proportion of the total monies requested to ensure that the budget is optimised.
- c) The Community Action Panel consists of:
 - Portfolio Holder for ~~Stronger Communities~~ Better Lives **or** substituted by another Cabinet member.
 - Chairman of the People and Communities Policy Committee, **or** Deputy Chairman, if not available, another member from the Committee can be substitute.
 - Shadow Portfolio Holder, **or** substitute from their political party.

The following officers are also in attendance at panel meetings, but not voting members:

- **Assistant** Director responsible for **Individuals and Families** ~~People and Communities~~ (or substitute **Assistant** Director if necessary)
- Either the Communities Manager or the **Help Hub and Communities Senior Manager** ~~Assistant Director of Individuals and Families~~

A minimum of two members must be present at the Panel for it to be quorate.

The voting members will make recommendations for allocation of the grant monies; the final decision will be with the **Assistant** Director for **Individuals and Families** ~~People and Communities~~ (or substitute) who will consider the views of voting members of the Panel.

- d) Members who submit applications can attend the panel meeting and **answer questions** ~~speak~~ on behalf of their application **if requested**.
- e) The Panel cannot defer an application. It is either awarded or rejected at the meeting. If it's refused due to insufficient information, the application can be resubmitted at the next Panel meeting. However, an application cannot be submitted more than twice. If it is refused twice, a period of 12 months must pass before being submitted again.
- f) **The maximum** ~~There is no limit to the amount awarded at any one Panel is the total, unspent annual budget available; but the total budget must be spent within the financial year and will not be carried over. Any underspend after a maximum of two Panels will be carried forward to the next financial year's CAF and must be spent in that period.~~

- g) All funding allocations and outcomes achieved will be made public on the Council's website and will be reported back to the Scrutiny Committee through monitoring reports up to twice a year.

- h) Where appropriate, those recipients of funding towards a physical asset are encouraged to place a Council plaque or sticker on the asset to recognise the funding contribution.

Appendix D – Community Action Fund process

Suggested Procedures for processing CAF through the newly formed Grants and Awards Panel

Overview

- Details about the Community Action Fund are here;
<https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/communities/community-action-fund>
- Suggested amendments to the Ground Rules are below
- Dates for deadlines and Panel meeting will be communicated to all members and added to the website.
- There will be two deadlines; an initial submission deadline (ISD) and a final deadline.
- All applications must be submitted by the ISD. Officers will consider the application's validity and request further information where relevant. All requested amendments and supporting information must be submitted by the final deadline.
- No applications or supporting information will be accepted after the final deadline date. Members may be asked to answer questions at the panel meeting, during public speaking.
- After the deadline has passed, Democratic Services will put applications into an agenda and index the items, including any quotes and attachments. The Chair of the Panel has authority to reject ineligible submissions at this stage.
- The agenda will be sent to Panel members, and those members who have submitted applications, 5 working days before meeting. The agenda is NOT placed on the website.
- Members, who have applied for funding, are emailed to advise them that their application will be considered and if they will be required to attend and answer questions– max 5 mins . Presentations will not be permitted.

The meeting takes place.

- If a member of the Panel has submitted an application, they will need to declare that they are pre-determined and will not take part in the discussion or deliberation.
- Members who have applications may attend the meeting and answer questions on their item, if required. They will not be permitted to otherwise take part in the discussion.
- The Panel will consider the applications in turn and can ask questions of the Member, if present. The Panel will make their own notes during the discussion.
- After the Panel has considered all of the applications, they will assess them against the amount of funding available and make recommendations for each application, giving reasons for their recommendations.

The meeting will then conclude.

- The Assistant Director will, if possible, make final decisions immediately after the meeting.

- Members will be informed of outcome either in person (if present) or via an emailed decision list. Members are responsible for informing the group/project
- A decision list will be published on the website. Brief minutes of the meeting will be prepared by Democratic Services and emailed to the Panel. Minutes will not be published on the website.
- Communities Team will arrange for monies to be paid to successful applicants.
- If all CAF funds are allocated at the first meeting, then no second meeting will take place. If there are monies remaining, a further meeting will be set up, following the same process and in line with the Terms of Reference for the Panel.
- Any underspend following a maximum of two panel meetings, will be carried forward to the following year's CAF.