



Chard Town Council

GRANT FUNDING POLICY

1. Background

Each year Chard Town Council allocates a specific sum of money, as part of its budget, to be made available as grants to organisations, clubs, societies and groups who help to build a sustainable community and economy for the residents of Chard. The Town Council is committed to supporting and strengthening community participation, activities and events and helping to develop a welcoming community. However, in awarding grants, the Town Council is aware of its responsibility for ensuring that public funds are properly managed.

This document sets out the requirements for Community Development Fund Grants, essentially awarded on a one-off basis to cover projects and Core Funding Grants which are to provide a contribution to core costs or overall activities of an organisation.

2. Basic Requirements

All grants are restricted to voluntary or not-for-profit organisations that can demonstrate that funding will:

- Meet an identified need;
- Deliver a viable project or service;
- Mainly benefit the residents of Chard.

Applications must be made on the appropriate form, which can be downloaded from the Council's website or obtained from the Council Office and submitted to the Grants Officer with the requisite supporting documents.

3. Community Development Fund (CDF) Grants

3.1 Background

Applications will be considered for 75% of the total cost of the project/activity up to a maximum value of £1000. The grant may be used to match other funders' contributions.

Funding will cover projects or activities which can be completed within 12 months and will directly benefit residents of Chard. Examples of types of projects or activities that can be supported include purchase of equipment, training of volunteers, marketing activities or subsidising a trip or visit. Priority will be given to projects or activities which support the Town Council's objectives and aspirations for the community. The aims and objectives of the project should be clear and well defined, with specific realistic and deliverable outcomes.

Application will be accepted from voluntary organisations, community groups or social enterprises operating on a not-for-profit basis for the benefit of the community of Chard. Organisations must have some form of management committee or steering group and a bank account with at least 2 signatories. Whilst schools may not apply, PTAs/school associations may apply for a grant to cover extra-curricular activities providing the funds are ring-fenced and applicants have a separate bank account and constitution.

If your organisation has previously received a grant from the Town Council, a report on grant expenditure must have been provided before a new application can be considered. Only one grant may be received within each financial year, as we wish to be able to distribute funds to a many people as possible. It should be noted that consideration will not be given to providing funding in consecutive years until all applications for grants have been awarded in a financial year. If, at that stage, monies remain within the budget then

consideration will be given to applications from those organisations awarded a grant in the previous financial year.

If your organisation is a branch of a larger organisation, it should have a separate committee, constitution and bank account and a specific brief for activities benefitting the community of Chard.

3.2 When to apply

All grant applications will be considered by the Grants Sub-Committee, which applicants will be required to attend to present their case to the members. The Sub-Committee will then make its recommendation to the Finance & Audit Committee for a decision on awarding the grant.

There will be 3 meetings of the Finance & Audit Committee at which Community Development Fund grant applications will be considered during the financial year. Applications should be submitted by the deadline shown below in advance of the relevant meeting. Applications will be checked upon receipt to ensure all required information has been provided, and if incomplete or additional information is required it must be supplied before the application will be presented to the relevant meeting.

Date of Meeting	Application Receipt Deadline
23 July 2024	20 June 2024
TBC October 2024	19 September 2024
TBC January 2025	19 December 2024

Written confirmation of decisions taken will be provided within 10 days of the meeting at which the application is considered. Payment will be issued to successful applicants by direct payment to the bank account identified in the application form after acceptance of the grant award by the applicant.

3.3 What will not be funded

- Contributions towards large, general appeals
- General running costs
- Any element of VAT that is recoverable by the organisation
- Retrospective funding for costs that have already occurred.

3.4 Who may not apply for grant funding

- Individuals
- Organisations with projects which operate outside Chard and do not clearly evidence how they will directly benefit the Chard community
- Commercial ventures
- Statutory organisations or groups controlled by public sector organisations such as Local Authorities or Primary care Trusts
- Schools
- Projects/activities that promote one particular faith or religious belief, although the fund could support a faith group delivering something that is open to all
- Organisations involved in party political activities or other self interest groups

- Any organisation or group that discriminates on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation

3.5 Terms and Conditions

If there is a serious breach of terms and conditions, if the group ceases to operate before funds have been spent or if the project does not proceed as planned, the grant will have to be repaid in full. Also, if the Council becomes aware of evidence of dishonesty or negligence which could bring Chard Town Council into disrepute, action will be taken to terminate the grant

A grant may only be used for the purpose set out in the application form and it cannot be given to any other group.

Recognition of any grant made by the Town Council must be made in any publicity and in the organisation's accounts. For our own publicity material, the Council may require photos with agreement from the participants and may use the name of the organisation and project.

4. Regular Core Funding Grants (previously known as Annual or Support Grants)

4.1 Background

Chard Town Council awards a limited number of grants to voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations in order to help meet its priorities and benefit the residents of Chard. These grants are awarded as a general contribution to the core costs or overall activities of an organisation. The overarching organisational outcomes of the applicant will generally align with the council's aims, outcomes and key priorities shown below.

Aims

Chard Town Council recognises that it can achieve its outcomes and make best use of its available resources through the grant award process. Supporting voluntary, community and social enterprise agencies to deliver services it wishes to see promoted in the town can achieve greater innovation and strengthen the sector overall.

Outcomes

Chard Town Council's Vision for Chard:

- Chard will be a successful, vibrant, attractive town, where people want to live, work, study and visit.
- The town will have real and accessible transport links, decent housing provision for all, excellent employment and business opportunities and a vibrant community life. It will be clean, green, safe, active and prosperous, and a place to be proud of.

Key Priorities

- 1) To enable residents to enjoy high quality social, recreational and cultural facilities within the town and to seek the continuing improvement and development of these facilities in accordance with the desires expressed by the residents
- 2) To encourage and promote the economic and commercial vitality of Chard in a way that encourages sustainable employment opportunities, housing and business facilities
- 3) To preserve the unique identity of Chard and promote its heritage and its environment
- 4) To help create a socially inclusive and caring community, which embraces all its residents equally, seeking to develop their well-being, knowledge, understanding and mutual co-operation

5) To encourage the positive development of young people and provide high quality social, recreational, health and wellbeing opportunities for them

All applications must evidence how their organisation contributes to one or more key priorities of Chard Town Council and evidence the desired outcomes.

The Council will not award grants to organisations that provide services on the basis of adherence to a religion, philosophy or political persuasion.

The Council will not provide retrospective funding that has already been spent or committed to be spent.

4.2 Who can apply

The Council requires that all organisations or consortia applying for funding demonstrate they meet the following criteria:

Management Requirements

- A formally adopted constitution
- Regular committee meetings, including an annual general meeting

Financial systems

- Compliance with all financial and accounting requirements of charity or company law
- Follow good practice in relation to internal financial controls
- Organisations with an annual turnover of above £5,000 must publish independently examined or audited annual accounts

Data protection

- Compliance with the Data Protection Act (1998) in handling any personal information about individuals

Employment practices

- Where staff will be recruited to deliver services, posts will be advertised, with open and competitive interviews
- Employees will be supplied with a contract and terms and conditions as well as job descriptions

Insurance

Adequate insurance for activities, events, staff, premises, equipment, vehicles including:

- Public liability
- Employer's liability cover if staff are employed
- Property and equipment insurance against fire, theft, loss, damage
- Vehicle or driver insurance if vehicles are owned or driven

Disclosure and barring checks

- All employees working with children and vulnerable adults must be vetted through the disclosure and barring checking service

Safeguarding Policies

- Organisations working with vulnerable adults must have a policy and procedures in place
- Organisations working with children and young people must have a child protection policy and procedures in place

Safeguarding training

- Employees working with vulnerable adults and children and young people must have relevant and up to date training

Equality

- All organisations must have a written equality policy that complies with current legislation, and arrange appropriate training for managers and staff

Health & Safety

- All organisations must have a written Health & Safety policy that complies with current legislation.

4.3 How are applications assessed

Applications will be submitted to the Grants Officer who will undertake an assessment to ensure they meet the requirement to fulfil Chard Town Council priorities and benefit the residents of Chard. Applications will be taken to the Grants Sub-Committee and then the Finance & Audit Committee meetings in April for Members to make a decision.

Applications are assessed according to how they will meet the outcomes and achieve value for money.

Once a decision is made the applicant will be notified of the outcome. If successful, the applicant will receive a letter offering the grant and be required to sign an agreement setting out the terms and conditions of offer. If unsuccessful, the applicant will be informed in writing. All successful applicants will be expected to complete Monitoring and Evaluation forms to show how they spent the funds awarded.

4.4 How to apply

The maximum amount available through the Core Grant scheme is £1,000 per organisation if the above criteria are met. However, the Council will consider larger grants on an annual basis to support organisations within the Town. For grants in excess of £1,000, in addition to the conditions in section 9. above, a business plan for the financial year covering the grant should also be provided showing how the grant monies will be used to support the funding requirement of the organisation.

Applicants need to apply to the Town Clerk on the standard application form outlining the aims of the organisation, the Council priorities that they meet and what the funds will be used for. They will also need to supply a copy of their latest accounts, their constitution and a copy of their bank statements for the previous 6 months.

The Council will not make grants to organisations which it believes are not in good financial health or whose accounts are not in good order.

The Council may consider not awarding a grant to organisations that already hold surplus funds which are not being used for the general operation of the organisation and are not earmarked reserves.

Being successful in receiving a Core Grant from Chard Town Council does not ensure that this award will be made every year and does not constitute a service level agreement with the Council. Grants are made depending on the Council's budget allocation and may be subject to constraint.

Recipients of grants of more than £1,000 will be expected to sign a Service Level Agreement providing regular updates during the year on operation of their organisation.

Applications are considered annually and will be assessed each year based on the merits of the application forms received and how they support the current priorities of Chard Town Council. Applications must be received by the end of November to be included in the budget process.