

Exeter City Council Grants Programme

Exeter Grants Panel

WORKING DRAFT Terms of Reference **VS4 21/10/2019**

Introduction

The **Exeter Grants Programme** will support community groups and organisations to use their passion, skills, experience and knowledge to focus efforts on working sustainably to make a difference and create change. Its purpose is to:

- Help people to help themselves and each other
- Build on the strengths of people and communities
- Connect people and organisations within and across communities

Intended long term outcomes are:

- Reducing disadvantage and inequality
- Improving health and wellbeing
- Increasing individual and community resilience (the ability to manage)

Key priorities are to:

1. Address inequalities
2. Improve health and wellbeing
3. Get people active
4. Support communities working together to address local needs
5. Encourage volunteering
6. Improve where we live

Purpose of the Grants Panel

The overall purpose of the Exeter Grants Panel (the Panel) is to provide strategic direction for the Exeter Grant Programme and to ensure that grant awards are made in line with Council priorities and requirements.

Panel Membership

The panel membership will reflect the political make-up of the Council and will include community representatives and advisers. Advisory members of the panel will be non-voting. The chair of the Panel will be the Portfolio Holder for Communities.

Composition of the Panel

The voting members of the panel are:

- Chair of Panel - Portfolio Holder for Communities
- Seven other councillors reflecting the political make-up of the Council
- Two Community Representatives

Non-voting Advisory members will be invited to support the work of the Panel are:

- Exeter City Council Director with responsibility for Communities
- Chief Executive Officer, Devon Community Foundation
- Chief Executive Officer, Exeter Voluntary and Community Sector Support Service.

Panel Roles and Responsibilities

The Panel Chair is accountable for ensuring that decisions and recommendations made by the Panel are fair and transparent and that the underpinning system and processes are proportionate to the funding required but that they also recognise the accountability of elected members.

Voting Councillor Panel members are responsible for encouraging groups and organisations to submit grant applications and ensuring that grants are awarded in line with Council priorities and procedures.

The role of Voting Community Representatives is to represent the range of community networks in the city taking into account the need to include those that may be disadvantaged or who may not have the confidence to participate in community networks.

Panel members will be encouraged to visit successful applicants to see the benefits and impacts of the projects and events supported by Council grants.

The role of advisory (non-voting) members

Advisers are appointed to provide strategic advice and guidance to the Panel, particularly in relation to the securing of strategic partners to invest in the fund and the impact measurement of the funded projects. The Exeter Voluntary and Community Sector Support Service Advisor will be required to advise on and support the selection of the Community Representatives.

Transparency and accountability

All Panel members must declare conflicts of interest when reviewing applications and attending panel meetings. (Where there is a conflict of interest the panel member will not have a vote, following guidance from the Chair).

The Panel will ensure that application processes and Panel decision making are transparent therefore:

1. Grant application guidelines will be publicly available.
2. Notes will be taken at all Panel meetings, and will include a brief statement of the reasons for any decision taken on a grant application.
3. Meeting Notes will be published on the grants website page.

Decisions of the panel will be made fairly in line with criteria set out for each specific grant.

Panel process and operating procedures

The grant process will be administered by Exeter City Council under the direction of the Director responsible for Communities. Payments of Grants awarded by the Panel will be authorised by the Director through the powers set out in the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

Officers will decide what is potentially fundable in line with the fund purpose, outcomes and eligibility criteria. All applications and officer recommendations will be presented to the Panel for decision-making.

The Panel will meet bi-monthly and will agree a rolling 12 month schedule of Panel dates at its inaugural meeting.

- All Grant Applications will need to be submitted on the Council website

- Information on where to go for help and advice in completing your application will be clearly shown on the Council website. To ensure equality of access to all groups this support will include practical help from named Council officers to complete on-line forms as well contact details for Community Builders and the Exeter Voluntary Sector Support Service.
- Grant applications will be received on a rolling basis to avoid the pressure of last minute deadlines and processing.
- Panel members will receive summary information on all applications and officer recommendations 5 working dates before a Panel. Panel members will have access to a shared folder containing full information on all applications.
- Grant Applicants will be notified of the outcomes by email within 7 working days of panel decision and this will include constructive feedback and or sign-posting to further support or other sources of funding. Applicants for large grants will have the opportunity to present their applications directly to the Panel. These grants are defined as large grants:
 - **Exeter Community Buildings Fund** (max £5,000 for 3 years with 50% match)
 - **Exeter Large Grants Fund** (max £30,000 one-off with 50% match)

Small Grants Funding Sub-Committee

So that grants can be processed quickly and that processes are proportionate to the amount awarded, decisions on smaller grant funds will be made via a **Small Grants** funding sub-committee. In the mobilisation/training phase the Small Grants sub-committee will meet face to face and be supported to ensure consistency in decision making but will eventually become a virtual, continuous on-line activity. This will ensure that grant applications are processed in a timely and proportionate way.

The Small Grants Panel will consist of a sub-committee agreed by the Panel on an annual basis made up of 4 voting members:

- 2 Controlling Group Councillor members
- 1 Opposition group Councillor member
- 1 Community Representative

The Small Grants sub-committee will be supported by 1 non-voting advisory member who will be an officer nominated by the Director. If the Small Grants panel are unable to reach a consensus on a decision to award a grant this will be referred to the Exeter Grants Panel Chair who will have a casting vote.

These grants are defined as small grants:

- **Exeter Small Grants Fund** (max £3,000 one off with 20% match) Volunteering hours may count as the match funding
- **Exeter Ward Grants** (max £500 one -off)

Ward Grants

Ward Grants are also designated as Small Grants however decisions on the awarding of Ward Grants will remain with the 3 local Ward Councillors. All applications for **Ward Grants** will need to apply on-line and complete an application check list as well as an Impact Evaluation Framework Form. All 3 Ward Councillors will need to agree to the awarding of a

ward grant as they do now. Maximum grant available is £500 and each ward will have an annual £5,000 fund to draw from.

The Panel will receive a bi-monthly report on Ward Grants.

The Strategic Grant Fund

The Grants programme allows for an ad-hoc **Strategic Grant Fund** to be offered when funding allows. The decision to open such a fund is delegated to the Director for Communities in consultation with the Council Leader and the Portfolio-holder for Communities. When such a fund is agreed, eligibility criteria and details will be placed on the Council website and promoted through social media and community networks. Applications will be on-line and the Exeter Fund conditions will apply and final decisions will be made by the Panel. Depending on the amount of awards possible under this Strategic Fund additional conditions may apply. These will be set out alongside the eligibility criteria.

There is no right of appeal against Panel decisions.

Move More Small Grants (Max £300 one-off)

The funding for this grant comes from the Sport England Local Delivery Pilot and is subject to the conditions of the National Lottery contract with Sport England. Therefore decisions on the awarding of grants under this fund will be made by the Active and Healthy People Programme Lead and formally report to the Delivery Pilot Executive. However to ensure consistency in approach and alignment with the Council's Grant Programme all applications will be made and processed through the Council website. Reports of the activity within this fund will be included in the routine reporting to the Panel to ensure that the Panel is able to have an overview of all grant giving.

Exeter Fund Conditions

All grant applications will:

- Be made online through the Council's new Exeter Fund webpage: the application process will be easy to access.
- Only be accepted from groups with bank accounts in the name of the organisation/group. (Applicants from groups without bank accounts will be directed to their Community Builder and/or the Exeter Voluntary Sector Support Service who can assist in managing funds on their behalf.)
- Be supported by copies of appropriate policies if required for example Safeguarding Policy.
- Show that the project ties in with one or more of the City council priorities and how it meets the demands of development across the City.
- Show that at least 75% of people benefiting from the project live in Exeter
- Show that there is community support for the project: this can be established by asking local people to vote on-line in support of the project or to contribute to a crowdfund when there is a requirement for a grant to be joint or match funded.
- Be required to provide feedback about how the grant has helped by supplying proof of how fund monies have been spent in the form of invoices, photos and a simple project summary and impact template within 2 months of project completion. Follow on reports may be requested for projects in receipt of large grants.

- Acknowledge Exeter City Council support in project publicity material by using the logo provided.
- Give Exeter City Council the right to share information you have provided in public reports and publicity material.
- Complete a checklist and provide examples of what the project has achieved in contributing to one or more of the key priorities

All grant applicants will need to confirm that they understand:

- Funds must only be spent as detailed in the project application.
- Funds cannot be allocated to individuals or private/for profit enterprises.
- Funds cannot be allocated retrospectively.
- Funds not spent must be returned to Exeter City Council.
- Repayment of the fund can be required at the sole discretion of Exeter City Fund if you supply false information or you do not spend funds within 12 months.
- Repeat funding will not be awarded if there are outstanding evaluation/impact reports

Working Draft 4th October

Appendix 1

Application Framework (electronic on line form)

What needs to change and why: how does this change reduce the impacts of development?	Who does this affect? What issues are they/you facing? What opportunities do you see? Which of the 6 Council priorities would this change address?
What will you do to make this change?	What will you do? Who will you work with? When and at what point/how many people will you work with?
How do you know this will create the change you want?	What evidence do you have that this will work? Or what evidence makes you think this will work?
What will you look at and measure to see if your change has worked?	What 3 outcomes will you see if your change is successful? How would you measure them?
How will the outcomes of your project contribute to the Council's long term impacts?	What are the links between your outcomes and the Council's long term impacts?

Notes

1. Funding applications should be led by community organisations. Collaboration might see groups working with statutory bodies but the application should be community led
2. An Impact Evaluation Framework will be provided with the application guidance and form

Appendix 2

Impact Evaluation Framework (Electronic Form)

Project Purpose: What we set out to achieve (drop down list linked to Council priorities and free text)	
Outcomes: What happened as a result of our project what we achieved (drop down list linked to Council outcomes and free text)	
How we spent the money: What we spent the money on (facility to upload receipts)	
What went well	
What we would do differently next time	
Top tips for other groups thinking about doing a similar project	