

**Exeter City Council**  
**Review of Community and Arts Grants**  
**Results of formal consultation**



Report from RedQuadrant

**May 2019**

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## 1. Background to the review

In April 2018, Exeter City Council agreed to undertake a review of the current grants programme to help them develop future policy that would:

- Ensure best use is made of council funding;
- Implement a consistent approach to match funding;
- Encourage and embed sustainable ABCD (Asset Based Community Development) approaches supporting people and communities to create community solutions to local issues; and
- Better link grant funds to deliver city council priorities of:
  - Addressing Inequalities;
  - Improving Health and Wellbeing and getting people active;
  - Finding creative community-based solutions to locally defined problems; and
  - Developing of community buildings, assets and green spaces to enhance our city.

There are also financial elements to the changes. In the last decade the Council has seen a 60% reduction in its formula grant from central government. During this time the Council has continued to offer community and arts grants from its General Fund sources. The Council is now facing further reductions, including a £3.9 million revenue budget reduction for 2019/20

To protect essential front-line services, there is a need to reduce the General Fund budget for community and arts grants of £500,000 by end of 20/21. It is clear that the council need a long-term sustainable funding solution that makes better use of other funding streams such as the New Homes Bonus and Neighbourhood portion of the Community Infrastructure Levy.

RedQuadrant were contracted by the council to undertake the initial engagement and consultation exercises with elected members, community groups and organisations as well as other key stakeholders to find out about what works well now and what could improve in future. The review started in July 2018 with an engagement and listening exercise.

The report that followed the listening exercise recommended a new, more transparent model, with a clear link to council priorities and making the money go as far as possible with matched and crowd funding. A digital approach to application was suggested, with support for those who needed it. We proposed a close alignment with the ABCD approach to community development, as so successfully delivered by Wellbeing Exeter and its Community Builders.

In April 2019, the council produced a draft new grants programme that proposes to change the way that grants are administered and funded in Exeter. This report sets out the results of the consultation on the new policy.

## **2. Summary of the draft Exeter Grants Programme**

The council is proposing a new model within a transparent and purposeful strategic framework aligned to the council's objectives and priorities. The framework will:

- Enable a balance of awarding grants with a model around commissioning through contracts for more strategic service requirements;
- Support a clear 'bottom up' approach to community development;
- Establish a grant funding approach that will maximise the value of the council's spending and ensure the sustainability of community groups; and
- Ensure that the Council and community decide on priorities together but with recognition of the specific accountability of elected members.

### **2.1 Proposals for modernising the Council's approach to community and arts grant giving.**

#### **Establish a Strategic City Fund**

Create the Exeter City Fund, where all grant funding is held in a single fund, against clear priorities. Priorities being proposed for 2019-2022 are:

- Address inequalities
- Improve health and wellbeing and get people active
- Support communities working together to address local needs
- Encourage volunteering
- Improve where we live

#### **Use a digital approach**

Use a digital approach alongside a simplified grants process and provide support to ensure that everybody has a fair chance, enabling a wider audience to engage.

#### **Use a crowdfunding platform**

Use a crowdfunding platform to simplify the grants process and make the money go further by attracting match funding and by reaching new audiences.

#### **Build capacity for a sustainable community and voluntary sector**

In addition to Community Building, commission support and capacity building in the city to support community groups to manage areas such as finance, governance, funding applications, using digital platforms, marketing and building support networks.

We intend to:

- Commission a City-wide Independent Information Service;
- Commission an Exeter Infrastructure Support Service;
- Continue to support communities through the Wellbeing Exeter Community Builders;
- Continue to support Exeter Culture and encourage community cultural and art activities that underpin community engagement and celebration.

#### Adopt a commissioning approach

Where funding allows, formal contractual agreements for priority service delivery areas can be agreed. Organisations can be commissioned by the council to deliver services in line with council priorities.

#### Separate out the Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs)

These grants will be separated from the grants process, funding ring-fenced and converted to contractual agreements.

#### Improve communication

Improve accessibility and enable better communication and feedback through the creation of a strategic grant fund, with a digital emphasis.

#### Improve evaluation

Simple evaluation frameworks to be built in the beginning of a project, so that communities can easily evidence the impact of their work.

#### Strengthen asset transfer

We lease a range of land and properties to voluntary and community organisations, ranging from short-term licences to long leases and this process is known as 'Community Asset Transfer' (CAT).

## 2.2 How the grants system will be funded

The Exeter City Fund (ECF) will initially consist of:

- ECF Ward Grants of up to £300, funded by New Home Bonus Funding;
- ECF Large grants of up to £30,000, funded by the Community Infrastructure Levy;
- ECF Small Grants of up to £3,000, funded by the Community Infrastructure Levy;
- ECF Community Buildings grants, a 3 year grant towards the annual running costs of up to £5,000 per year, will be funded by the Community Infrastructure Levy; and
- ECF Move More Community Chest grants of up to £300 will be funded by the Sport England Delivery pilot

All grants except the Ward Grants and the Move More grants will require a level of matched funding.

## 2.3 How decisions will be made

All grant applications will be on-line through the *Exeter City Fund* website which will link directly to the *CrowdfundExeter* website for grants requiring match/crowd funding.

A Community Grants Panel will be set up. The aim is that the panel represents 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. The purpose of the panel will be to make recommendations on grant applications. An annual report will be provided to Council in October each year that will include:

- Impacts from previous year's grants programmes
- Recommended priorities for the forthcoming years programme.
- Proposed budgets for the forthcoming years programme.
- Membership of Community Grants Panel for the forthcoming year.

### 3. The consultation and a summary of findings

To consult on the draft grants programme, we:

- Held four focus groups with a range of existing grant holders, community groups and other stakeholders.
- Ran an online survey (questions are attached at Appendix 1)
- Had follow up conversations with a number of stakeholders

#### 3.1 Focus groups – Summary of findings

Four focus groups were held over two days on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> April 2019: two sessions with representatives from all community groups, one with representatives from organisations who were in receipt of Core and Rent grants from the council; and one session with Community Builders.

Copies of the draft new grants policy were distributed in advance of the sessions and were also available in paper copy at the sessions. We explained that this was formal consultation following the listening exercise last summer.

The aims for these sessions were:

- To obtain consensus on the proposed new overall approach
- To identify issues and barriers to the success of the new approach
- To establish the type and levels of support needed to make the new policy work

The conversations were wide-ranging across four broad themes:

- Creating the Exeter City Fund
- Crowdfunding
- Support
- How decisions are made

Below is a summary of the comments put forward by the focus group participants. It must be noted that these are verbatim and may be the perceptions of individuals and not necessarily factually accurate.

<b>Creating the Exeter City Fund</b>
<p>There was a <b>strong consensus</b> across all four groups on the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One pot for all grants across the city is a good idea</li><li>• The priorities and principles are relevant and broadly fit for purpose</li><li>• The application process should include a template, guidelines and examples</li></ul>

- Community Asset Transfers are of crucial strategic and operational importance: it is essential to have a clear policy on
- Longer leases for Community Asset Transfers would work better for some organisations than actual transfer of ownership
- The Council needs to work in partnership with charities/community groups to agree a long-term plan for premises e.g. to include longer leases with possibility of buying further along the line
- Working more closely with local businesses would strengthen the process
- The Council needs to use its influence to raise funding from local businesses for community projects (Corporate Social Responsibility)
- Forecasts for how long CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) money will continue to come in to Exeter need to be taken into account
- Plans need to be put in place for the withdrawal of European Social Fund funding post Brexit
- All the grants made, including ward grants need to be listed on the council website

A **number** of participants agreed on the following points:

- *Health and wellbeing* and *getting people active* should be two separate priorities
- Some would prefer electronic applications (a form which is emailed/uploaded) than an online form.
- The grants system is still too complex
- The digital approach will cause problems at least in the short term

The following points were made by **one or two** individuals:

- Arts and culture should be included as a separate priority
- Arts may lose out under the new system and priorities. Is there a place for 'art for art's sake?'
- Talk to Exeter Culture about the priorities for grants with a view to making sure they are aligned
- Merge the third and first priorities: address inequalities and support communities
- Strengthening the Community Asset Transfer process is too zippy a term; be realistic and transparent
- Separating off National Portfolio Organisations seems unfair. Others are bringing in large funds too but not in the same category
- Will National Portfolio Organisations be brought into the new system when they lose their NPO status?
- It is important to learn the lessons of the past so that they are not replicated in the new programme

- The way things are set up is important. A lot of people don't want to go to meetings - especially not in the evenings
- Consideration should be given to limiting the number of applications by one group within a fixed time period

### Crowdfunding

There was a **strong consensus** across all four groups on the following points:

- Crowdfunding is a beauty contest. The most attractive causes always win
- It presents huge difficulties for small groups and organisations
- It is loaded against less affluent and articulate places
- It would be a false economy and create a whole new problem
- A set up pack including a step by step guide needs to be available online and in paper copy

A **number** of participants agreed on the following points

- The more you do crowdfunding the less you can do a bottom-up approach
- It is an inequitable and unattractive process
- Pilot schemes (and experience in other regions) show that it is not working.
- It cannot deliver the ABCD approach
- Imposing crowdfunding on the less able is unfair
- It is difficult for small groups
- It puts a huge overhead on time and expertise: this is a risk
- Community groups may need to start charging membership fees if crowdfunding is introduced

The following points were made by **one or two** individuals:

- It feels immoral to apply for crowdfunding as a middle-class group because we believe others will be disadvantaged
- For crowdfunding, residents need time, energy and expertise. People need these skills: marketing, create materials including design and video making
- Ensure gift aid is captured
- 'I have run a crowdfunding campaign. It took over my life. You have to be on it 24 hours a day'
- Some people are already using crowdfunding and are concerned that they will lose it when there others are encouraged into the pool of people applying
- A proportion of any funds raised through crowdfunding goes to the platform – so part of the money raised is lost
- If we could mirror the lottery process, we could save time and energy



- Could some weighting be put on commissioning for local established groups? (Building in a history of grant compliance)
- There is a risk of winning capital funding and not having enough money to run the charity

### Support Services

There was a **strong consensus** across all four groups on the following points:

- A community advice and support service like the previous CVS is needed, with advice from people who know how to apply for grants. Aspects of the old CVS should be replicated in any new support provided
- The alternative view was that the Council should enable communities to step up and provide the support
- Everyone needs to take responsibility for communicating the new policy and sharing knowledge about fundraising
- Regular training sessions should be available (not one-off)
- Putting things on the Council website isn't enough on its own.
- Lower literacy levels being taken into account in the process
- BME groups will need support
- People whose first language isn't English may need different support
- Support and advice team could link community groups and build capacity in communities
- Community Builders have a crucial role in communicating about the support available and how to access it

A **number** of individuals agreed on the following points:

- Clear and transparent communication is an ongoing issue
- Need to make more use of the Exeter Citizen
- Grassroots – go out to communities rather than expect communities to come in
- Get alongside people and communities
- Work 1:1 with people
- Play to community strengths
- The way they addressed communities
- Understood communities and their limitations
- Holding organisations could have bank accounts for each ward
- Elderly people may not have laptops
- Community Builders can advise on the application process

- Computers could be made available in community centres or libraries, or have laptops for local people to sit with Community Builders or other support workers
- Community builders to have a workshop about applying for grants to build their own knowledge in order to signpost available support and build community confidence
- List of grants available, including larger grants, which haven't previously been available to communities and signpost to other grants e

- The following points were made by **one or two** individuals:
- Exeter City Futures and Exeter City Velocities provide a good model for developing skills
- Council is not making the people who are currently providing much needed services as volunteers in Exeter feel valued. 'I want to hear the narrative to say 'we value you and the work you are doing/have done'

#### **How decisions are made**

There was a **strong consensus** on the following points

- A declaration of interests register for panel members will be essential
- Clear terms of reference need to be established
- An open and transparent recruitment process should be in place
- Clear evaluation criteria will need to be agreed and followed rigorously
- The panel should reflect the diversity of the community
- Panel members must understand the priorities and future needs *across* the city

A **number** of participants agreed on the following points:

- Include 'geographical parity' across the city
- A role description for each member of the panel
- Pay expenses for panel members
- Could councillors make the decisions but based on advice?

The following points were made by **one or two** individuals

- Panel members should be commissioned
- Panel members should be independent
- One panel member to represent each of the five priorities
- Have quarterly presentation from groups who were funded about what they did

- Elect chair by secret ballot for a defined term
- Rotate the chair
- A Community Builder should be on the panel
- Community Builders could be compromised by being on the panel – but they could provide references.
- Listen to Community Building team because you can't make a decision about a community if you don't really know the community
- Some decision making could be done electronically to help people with disabilities be involved
- Look at recruiting people outside of community sector
- We need a flow chart for the process – to see how, for example, crowdfunding fits with decision-making panel.

### **Transitional arrangements**

The first half of the focus group with core and rent grant stakeholders people were expressing their concerns about transitional arrangements and the formal consultation arrangements. These points are summarised as follows:

- There should be an opportunity to respond directly to councillors on the draft policy: that perhaps they should have attended the consultation meeting.
- Need clear and transparent communication and arrangements for the transition period.
- Core grant transition very difficult, anxiety about commissioning and competition
- The timetable needs to be agreed in partnership between the Council and the community groups.
- The timetable for commissioning won't work for commissioned services. If we have paid staff, we need to issue redundancy notices on 1 July 2019
- Transparency still not there, example of Exeter cycling club having already negotiated funding for the transition period.
- The only prospect we have of surviving is if the Council is able to grant us a peppercorn rent for the remainder of our lease. This would enable us to continue, keep our two employees and other casuals in work, and to do the important work which we believe the Council supports. We would argue that the Council loses little by this decision, since the hut we occupy is very old, in need of repair, and not attractive to the commercial market.

### 3.2 The survey

In April 2019, we ran an online survey to seek views on the new grants policy. The survey was open to all and promoted to the community and voluntary sector. The survey consisted of 23 questions; respondents were asked to rate their degree of agreement with aspects of the proposal, the reasoning behind these answers as well as demographic and organisational information. Respondents were also asked whether they would like to be updated on the progress of the grants review. 60 people completed the survey.

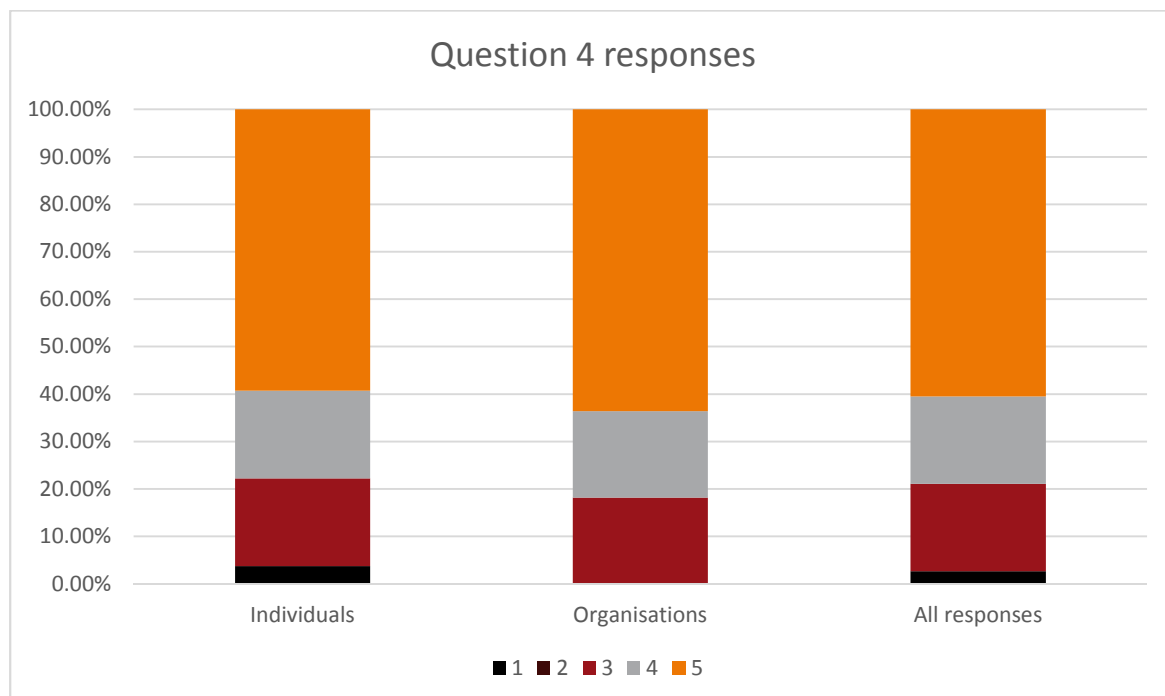
The full survey report is attached at Appendix 2, below are some highlights:

**Question 4** was: Do you agree that the grant priorities for 2019 to 2022 should be:

- Address inequalities
- Improve health and wellbeing and getting people active
- Support communities working together to address local needs
- Encourage volunteering
- Improve where we live

Respondents were asked to rate their support on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 was do not agree at all and 5 was strongly agree.

The responses received are shown in the graph below.

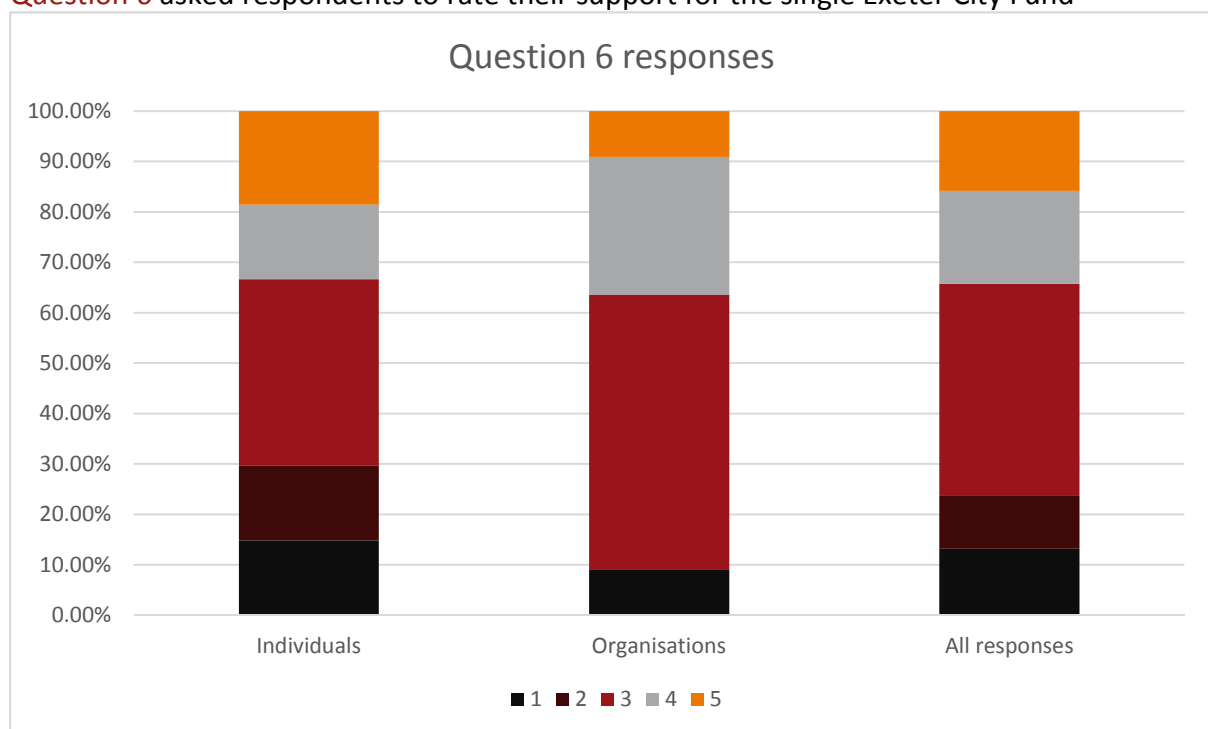


There was strong support across both individual respondents and organisations for the grant priorities, with almost 80% rating the proposal 4 or 5.

Question 5 asked respondents to comment on the proposed grant priorities. Responses included the following points:

- Culture was not referred to in the priorities and there should be a more specific commitment
- There should be more inclusive growth included in the addressing inequalities priority
- Health and wellbeing is more than encouraging activity; eating well and having good mental health also important
- The council’s priority should be supporting those services which provide help to people who cannot get support through the usual channels and not helping people ‘have a good time’
- Protecting our environment, encouraging greater biodiversity and improving air quality should also be included
- The model is likely to result in funding focussed on project work rather than long term funding for organisations which provide ongoing services
- Supporting community working together could move responsibility from the council to provide services
- There should be more emphasis on projects that engage with communities who are not usual consumers of art, theatre etc. to promote inclusivity

Question 6 asked respondents to rate their support for the single Exeter City Fund

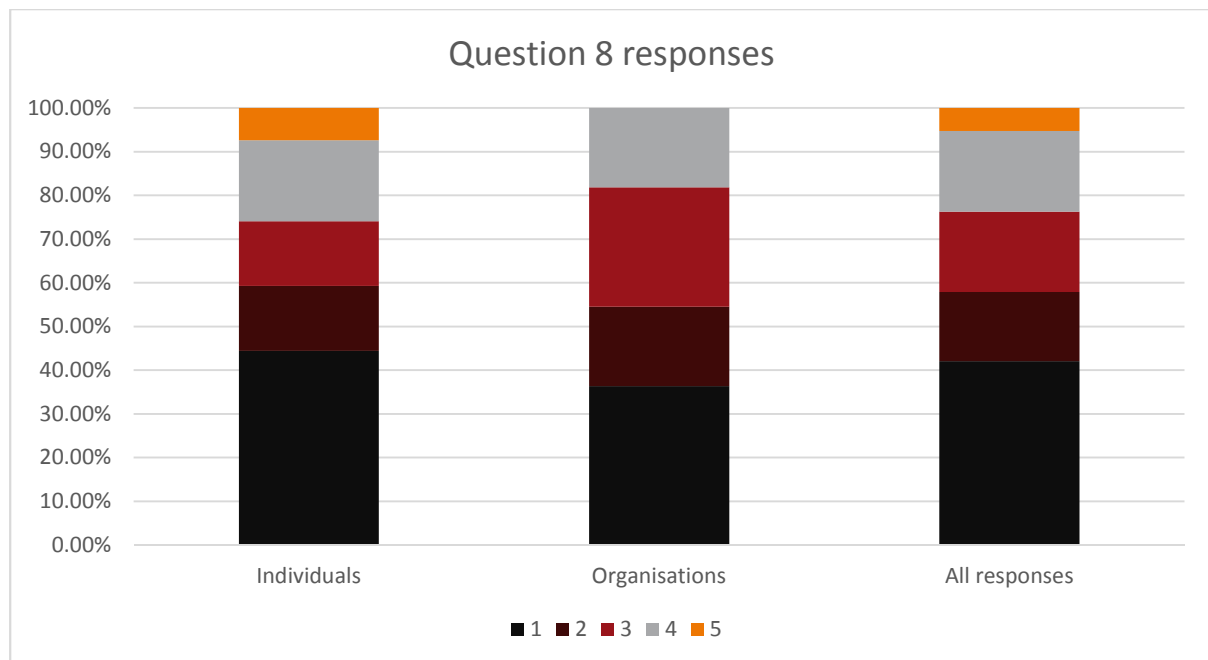


The range of responses was much greater than in question 4. Overall, 76% of respondents rated the proposal as 3 or above, but 13% gave a rating of 1. 90% of organisations gave a rating of 3 or above but were less likely than individuals to score the proposal 5.

**Question 7** asked respondents to comment on the Exeter City Fund. Responses included the following points:

- Whilst project based or capital funding is welcomed, there is a need for core (revenue) funding in order to make the capital investments sustainable, and more generally to enable organisations to carry on day to day work, especially in supporting the disadvantaged. This point was made by a number of respondents
- There is a risk that funding will be allocated to high profile projects to the detriment of more mundane but equally vital schemes
- Concern that there has been an assumption about the previous grant funding. Applications used to be published on the website along with Major Grants Panel papers. Also, grant holders were required to submit a mid-year report. There does not seem to be any mention of this in these proposals
- Concern that Arts Council grants have been excluded and whether newly designated NPOs after 2022 will be included in the policy
- Concern about transitional arrangements for organisations
- Concern that single fund might not support some current recipients of funding
- Need to be clear about funding process and decisions
- The £30,000 large grant ceiling is low for large organisations with multiple functions
- It is probably more transparent, but only if the council make ALL decisions available to the public. It does not mean it's necessarily fairer.
- Lack of clarity about arts funding

**Question 8** asked if respondents agreed that matched funding is a fair way of making the money go further.



Respondents were on generally unhappy about this proposal, with 58% giving a rating of 1 or 2. 36% of organisations, which tended to give ratings outside the extremes on other questions, rated the question 8 proposals as 1.

**Question 9** asked respondents to comment on matched funding

- Organisations which provide services for the most disadvantaged may find it harder to secure match funding than those catering for the more affluent
- Similarly, organisations which provide ongoing work rather than specific projects could find it more difficult to secure match funding
- Whilst having match funding could be an appropriate scoring criterion in the assessment of grant applications, excluding bids without match funding could be too high a bar
- Larger, better resourced organisations may find it easier to create the publicity and infrastructure to attract match funding than small organisations
- Other grant conferring bodies might concentrate on providing seed funding to attract council grants, thus removing resources from the small projects that they might otherwise have funded independently of the council
- Attempting to secure match funding could tie up a lot of volunteer time, especially if the attempt were unsuccessful
- Some organisations, such as those working with children and animals, already find it easier to attract funding. This would be the case in respect of match funding
- In a climate of reducing resources, securing match funding may be more difficult for all
- Funding should be based on need rather than the ability to secure match funding

**Question 10** asked if individuals or organisations would need support with online applications

19% of individuals and 9% of organisations indicated that they would require help. This did not demonstrate a clear need for support.

**Question 11** asked if individuals or organisations would need support with navigating the CrowdfundExeter website.

31% of individuals and 73% of organisations indicated that they would require help, indicating a clear need for support.

**Question 12** asked about other support:

*The Council currently invests in the Wellbeing Exeter Programme, which provides Community Builders and Community Connectors. In addition to this existing resource, the Council is proposing to commission:*

*A City-wide Independent Information Service; and an Exeter Infrastructure Support Service;*

*These services will support residents and community groups to manage areas such as: finance; governance; funding applications; using digital platforms; marketing; and building support networks.*

*Is there any other support you or your organisation will need?*

Two organisations and one individual listed further requirements:

- Finance
- Funding applications
- Marketing
- Support networks
- Business planning
- Volunteer management
- Data management
- Buildings
- Meeting locations
- More face to face advice through these means rather than online
- Assistance with implementing savings to previously funded bodies which experience reduced grant funding under the new proposals

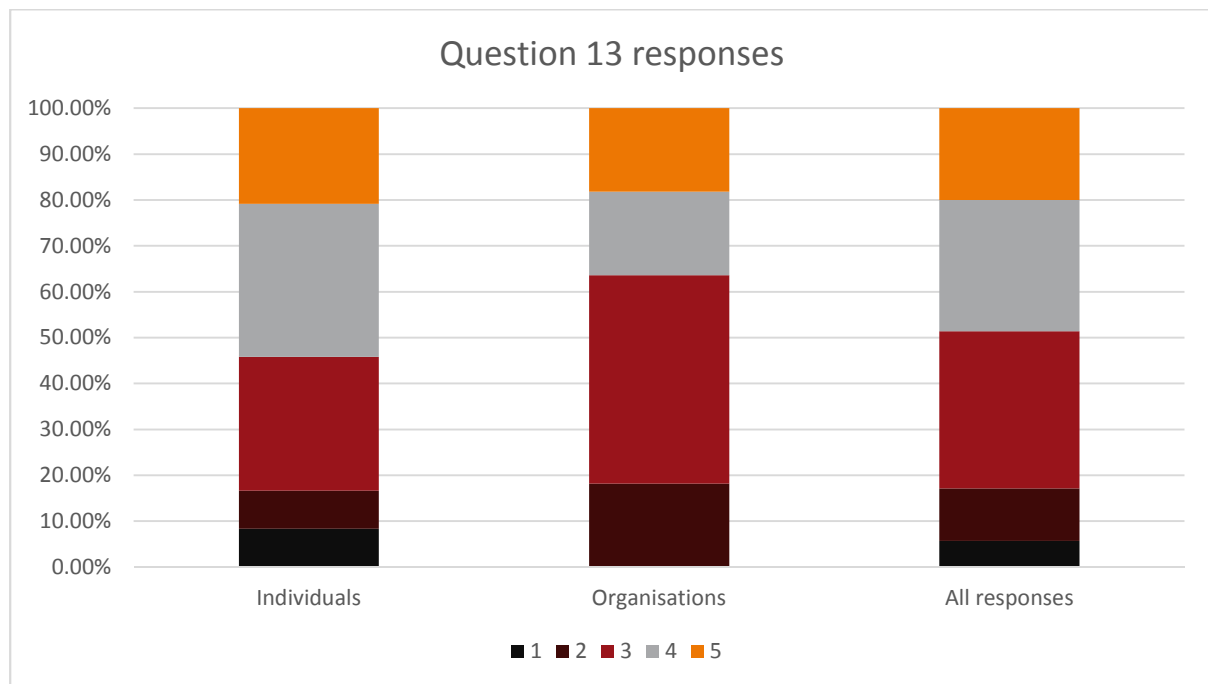
Some respondents felt that the method of delivery proposed could be improved:

- The items listed above appear to relate to the Exeter Infrastructure Support Service rather than the City-wide Independent Information Service. We strongly believe that the Independent Information Service should provide for a combined information, advice and advocacy service. It should include the need to use the assets of local communities through volunteering; the need for a social policy remit so that providers are resourced to work with the City Council on developing areas of need or difficulty; the need for quality practices and registration with the key authorities, such as the Financial Conduct Authority, is included in any tender, and an holistic approach to advice provision is essential if providers are to truly resolve the underlying issues
- Community builders and community associations could provide this function

There was also a concern that the establishment of these bodies would detract from funding of other third sector information and advice bodies.



Question 13 asked if respondents supported the idea of a grants panel that makes recommendations on grant applications.



There was broad agreement with the proposal. 82% of respondents rating this proposal as 3 or higher.

Question 14 asked respondents to comment on grants panel'

- The panel should be representative of the community
- The panel should include subject experts and people with experience of assessing grant applications
- A need to ensure a proper balance of interests and knowledge
- There is value in the contribution of local councillors with knowledge of their localities
- Councillors should not have voting rights but attend as advisors. This was mentioned in the responses from a number of individual respondents.
- This function was carried out well by the Exeter Community Forum, so why change?
- There is a risk of the panel being dominated by special interest groups or cliques
- All panel members would have equal voting rights
- There should be some form of remuneration for panel members and panels should take place outside working hours
- Limited terms of service for people serving on the panel to ensure rotation

There was a general concern that an unbalanced group would lead to disproportionate influence by some sectors.

Question 15 asked how the grants panel should select the community representatives.

Responses included:

- Community representatives should be recruited through open advert and then be selected using defined criteria
- Selection by providing a candidate statement and interview and selection
- Recruitment could be through contacting those who have received a grant in the last five years
- Selection should not be made by councillors
- The Exeter Community Forum network could ask for applications
- Groups which might find raising funds more difficult should be well represented on the panel
- There could be a public vote to decide between applicants
- The Infrastructure Support Service or another independent body could appoint the panel
- Community builders could appoint the panel
- The panel should not just consist of potential beneficiaries
- All community organisations should have the right to be on the panel
- Each community should nominate its own representative from within existing community association

### 3.3 Stakeholder conversations

In July 2018 we held telephone interviews were held with representatives from:

- Community Safety Partnership, Devon and Cornwall Police
- Health and Social Care, Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust
- Exeter Culture
- New Devon Clinical Commissioning Group,
- Arts Council England
- University of Exeter
- Devon Community Foundation
- Devon County Council, Communities directorate
- Big Lottery Fund (local office)
- Exeter City Community Trust
- Exeter Community Forum

This time we spoke to representatives from

- Devon County Council Communities Directorate
- Exeter Community Forum
- CoLab
- Exeter Citizens Advice Bureau

The conversations centred on the practicalities of the new approach and are summarised below. Again, these are the comments of individuals.

### **Crowdfunding**

- Crowdfunding can be a useful tool for specific, time-limited appeals and can be a great way of galvanising community efforts around a cause.
- However, groups have to be realistic about its place, and what prospect of total resource they have from it. The average UK crowdfunded total is just over £3000. We have encountered a lot of confusion and cynicism from organisations who – having been told about cuts to their grants by local authorities, have been signposted to us for support around crowdfunding. Crowdfunding cannot replace grant funding for salaries and other running costs.
- We have worked with 7 organisations on their approach to crowdfunding this year – some that went ahead and were successful (in terms of meeting their target); some that went ahead and were unsuccessful (did not meet their target, or pulled the campaign); and some who decided crowdfunding was not right for their requirements.
- Concerned that we are all “fishing in the same pool” for potential donors – that too many campaigns in one place at one time would create a competition between projects and charities – and that after an initial surge of interest, people would develop “giving fatigue” as their Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn feeds carry appeal after appeal.
- Crowdfunding is not the panacea for everything. It might be better to have it as an option rather than a given.
- Exeter, being a city, is in an advantageous position for crowdfunding than county and rural areas.
- There should be a range of gateways to grant funding that suit different people

### **Support Services**

- Is there evidence of demand for this? Surely if we give money to community groups, they can source their own support or use their own expertise.
- A CVS can often be a monopoly in competition with other charities. The model is blurred; money needs to get to communities and have clearer outcomes.
- There may be a need for a temporary, transitional support service but it could be reviewed after a year or two.
- Another option would be to commission CAB to deliver the support service. Not sure there is a marketplace for a procurement exercise. Devon CC had a procurement exemption for this.

### **Decision making**

- There must be transparency. All applications and decisions should be available online for all to see
- Grant application decisions should be made using a triple bottom line of sustainability: social, environmental (or ecological) and financial.
- There must be emphasis on grass roots priorities from the community associations
- Whoever is on the panel, there should be representation from all ages and backgrounds
- Grants using CIL money should be prioritised for those areas of the city affected by development

### **General**

- For what it's worth, my position is that we all know (and indeed knew in advance) what was happening to local authority finances, and that expecting grant-making to continue at previous levels was unrealistic. I think so long as the council remains clear and transparent in how it reviews and restructures its grant processes few can complain – the harsh reality up and down the country is that local authorities are being cut to the bone, and of course that has a knock-on effect to communities.
- In the digital age you need one, generic application form that can then direct you to specific grants.
- A strategic city fund approach is sensible but there are political considerations to be borne in mind if ECC want other bodies in Devon to invest. Exeter is a red island in a blue sea.
- Grants of up to £30,000 are not sufficient for anything major, for example building a community hall.
- Matched funding needs to recognise volunteer hours

## 6. Conclusions and recommendations

The draft Exeter grants programme reflects the outcomes of last year's listening exercise and our recommendations for a streamlined and more transparent process. Community stakeholders are broadly in agreement with the strategic aims and principles. However, we feel there are details that need to be clarified in the final policy document.

There is agreement that the principles and priorities in the draft programme are broadly fit for purpose. One strategic fund was also seen by most as a logical way forward for the administration of grants.

There is a concern about the loss of specific arts grants and whether these would be subsumed and lost.

The conversations were different this time; they largely centred on the practicalities of implementing the new approach. There was still a lot of confusion, so the final version of the policy needs to be clearer, with detail on the application process and the crowdfunding and matched funding will actually work. Below are our recommendations:

### Communications

Communications generally and website content will need to be improved. The new streamlined approach presents an opportunity for a review of information available; a joined up online presence that makes the grants process more accessible to a wider audience.

There is a clear wish that information on grants awarded and the subsequent success or failure of the funded projects are made public online. This approach would go a long way in rebuilding trust between the council and the community sector.

Feedback when grant applications are unsuccessful seems to be patchy and this was raised a number of times in the listening exercise. It is vital for organisations and individuals to be able to learn and improve and this must be addressed.

### Going digital

The digital application process will need to be addressed carefully. A simple and easily navigable online form is favoured, alongside an informative website.

### Matched and Crowdfunding

This was by far the most contentious element of the new policy. However, we believe that this anxiety can be overcome with clarification and some flexibility. There was genuine concern that, if not managed carefully, this could exclude smaller groups and people with less fundraising experience, thus defeating the purpose of the review.

A theme which emerged in many responses was a fear that some organisations which met the priorities for grant funding would nevertheless be excluded from the funding process

because of an inability or lack of capacity to attract match funding. This does identify a risk that, despite the intentions of the proposal, the requirement for match funding could result in a concentration of funding in fewer better resourced and higher profile organisations to the detriment of smaller or less glamorous organisations.

There is much confusion around crowdfunding and matched funding. The common points made were:

- The Crowdfunding, funding platforms and matched funding need to be defined more clearly
- Crowdfunding is seen by many as highly competitive and people believe that this has serious equality implications
- Crowdfunding is time consuming and raises sustainability and capacity issues

We recommend a review of the Crowdfunding pilot project that council has undertaken in the past year, to understand lessons learnt. Furthermore, if crowdfunding is to become the default for every applicant (bar the £300 grants), there needs to be an evaluation and review built in to measure its success. Additionally, we think there should be some flexibility built in, at least during the first year of the new policy, coupled with some training and support in this specific area.

Transitional arrangements for core and rent grant holders still seem to be unclear and needs clarification.

### Support services

It is clear that some organisations and groups will need support through the change process. What that support should be was unclear. Some favoured a traditional CVS model or simply commissioning the CAB. Others preferred a community led approach, with 1-1 support when needed and capacity building, similar to the work of the community builders.

### How decisions are made

There is a clear message that decision making on the award of grants needs to be a transparent and easy to understand. However, there was much discussion and a variety of opinions on how the grants panel should be constructed, as shown in the focus groups and survey comments above. We believe that the chief anxiety surrounding the makeup of the panel is about fairness and openness. A simple process of nomination of community representatives to serve alongside councillors will suffice as long as the decisions are there for all to see.

Welcome to Our Survey

**Following the review of community and arts grants in the summer of 2018, including engagement and consultation, the Council has now developed a new draft policy: the Exeter Grants Programme.**

**The draft policy brings together proposals for the council's future grant investment in Exeter to ensure we focus our resource on what matters most - working together on the key challenges faced by our city. It represents an exciting and bold step forward in how the Council works with our voluntary and community sector colleagues to co-design and co-create a shared view of how to address the needs of development in our city.**

**We want to know what you think about the new policy and our plans for one city-wide grants programme. Please help us to do this by completing this short survey. The survey is open to everyone but we are particularly keen to hear from individuals and organisations that deliver community and arts projects in Exeter. The full draft policy and a shorter summary are available on our website [here](#)**

**All returns will be treated confidentially and we will share anonymised results. Your views will help us to improve the way we issue grants and ensure that they meet local needs. Thank you for participating in our survey. Your feedback is important.**

1. Are you responding as:

- An individual
- An organisation

About your organisation

2. What is the name of your organisation?

3. Please tick the boxes that best describe your organisations work

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Allotment holder association   | <input type="checkbox"/> Education or training  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts organisation or group     | <input type="checkbox"/> Religious group        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Charity                        | <input type="checkbox"/> School                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children's centre              | <input type="checkbox"/> Social group           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community association or group | <input type="checkbox"/> Special interest group |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental project          | <input type="checkbox"/> Sports club            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth organisation or group    | <input type="checkbox"/> Service provider       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)         |   |

Exeter City Council: Exeter Grants Programme

The new structure

4. Do you agree that the grant priorities for 2019 to 2022 should be:

- Address inequalities
- Improve health and wellbeing and getting people active
- Support communities working together to address local needs
- Encourage volunteering
- Improve where we live

Please rate from 1 star (Not at all) to 5 stars (Strongly agree)

A horizontal bar with a light grey background containing five white star icons spaced evenly across it.

5. Please explain your rating if you want to



6. Presently, there are nine different funding streams available. Our research last year showed a lack of clarity and transparency that needed to be addressed. The proposal is to set up a single Exeter City Fund (ECF), which will consist of five elements:

ECF Ward Grants of up to £300, funded by New Home Bonus Funding;

ECF Large grants of up to £30,000, funded by the Community Infrastructure Levy;

ECF Small Grants of up to £3,000, funded by the Community Infrastructure Levy;

ECF Community Buildings grants: a 3 year grant towards the annual running costs of up to £5,000 per year, funded by the Community Infrastructure Levy; and

ECF Move More Community Chest grants of up to £300, funded by the Sport England Delivery pilot

Do you agree that a single Exeter City Fund is a fairer and more transparent way of administering grants?

Please rate from 1 star (Not at all) to 5 stars (Strongly agree)



7. Please explain your rating if you want to

8. With the exception of Ward Grants and Move More Grants, The new funding streams will require a level of matched funding. Do you agree that this is a fair way to ensure that the money available goes as far as possible?

Please rate from 1 star (Not at all) to 5 stars (Strongly agree)



9. Please explain your rating if you want to

10. All grant applications will be on-line through the Exeter City Fund website.

Do you think you or your organisation will need support with online applications?

Yes

No

11. Where matched funding is required, online applications will link directly to the CrowdfundExeter website.

Do you think you or your organisation will need support with navigating the CrowdfundExeter website?

Yes

No

12. The Council currently invests in the Wellbeing Exeter Programme, which provides Community Builders and Community Connectors. [link here](#)

In addition to this existing resource, the Council is proposing to commission:

- A City-wide Independent Information Service; and
- An Exeter Infrastructure Support Service;

These services will support residents and community groups to manage areas such as:

- finance;
- governance;
- funding applications;
- using digital platforms;
- marketing; and
- building support networks.

Is there any other support you or your organisation will need?

13. As part of the new structure, a grants panel will be set up. The aim is that the panel represents the range of arts and 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 networks. The purpose of the panel will be to make recommendations on grant applications.

How much do you agree with this approach?

Please rate from 1 star (Not at all) to 5 stars (Strongly agree)



14. Please explain your rating if you want to

15. The panel will consist of Exeter City Councillors and representatives of community organisations across the city. Do you have any suggestions on how the community representatives should be selected?'

## Exeter City Council: Exeter Grants Programme

### About you

**It helps us to know a bit more about you so that we can plan for the future. However, if you feel uncomfortable about giving any of the information requested, then please leave the question blank**

16. What is your age?

0-15

46-55

16-25

56-65

26-35

Over 65

36-45

17. What is your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Other/non binary
- Prefer not to say

18. What is your ethnicity?

- White
- Asian or Asian British
- Black or Black British
- Mixed ethnic background
- Other ethnic background
- Prefer not to say

19. Do you have a disability?

- No
- Yes - mobility
- Yes - eyesight
- Yes - hearing
- Yes - mental
- Yes - learning difficulty
- Yes - multiple disability
- Yes - other
- Prefer not to say

20. What is your employment status?

- Student
- Full time employed
- Part time employed
- Self employed
- On a government scheme for employment training
- Other (please specify)
- Looking after family/home
- Unable to work
- Retired
- Prefer not to say

21. What is your postcode?

22. Would like us to keep in touch with you about the results of the grants review?

- Yes
- No

23. Please leave your email address

Thank you for completing the survey

## Exeter Grants Programme survey analysis

Between 20 March 2019 and 1 May 2019 RedQuadrant ran an online survey to seek views on Exeter City Council's proposal on the future of arts and community grant funding. The survey was open to community & arts groups, organisations as well as other key stakeholders. The survey consisted of 23 questions; these asked respondents to rate their degree of agreement with aspects of the proposal, the reasoning behind these answers as well as demographic and organisational information. Respondents were also asked whether they would like to be updated on the progress of the grants review.

60 responses were received in total. Of these, 21 did not have answers to any of the questions. Of the 39 that did have some answers, 12 (31%) were from community organisations and 27 (69%) were from individuals. One community organisation did not provide any responses other than the name of the organisation, and not every respondent answered every applicable question. There were fewer responses to the questions seeking to understand the reasons by the respondents' rating of the proposal but some of these were detailed in their reasoning.

In this report we have differentiated the responses from organisations and individuals so that any different perceptions between the two groups can be observed. However, it appears likely from some of the text answers submitted, that some individual respondents were closely affiliated with organisations that had also made a return to the survey.

### Questions applicable only to organisations

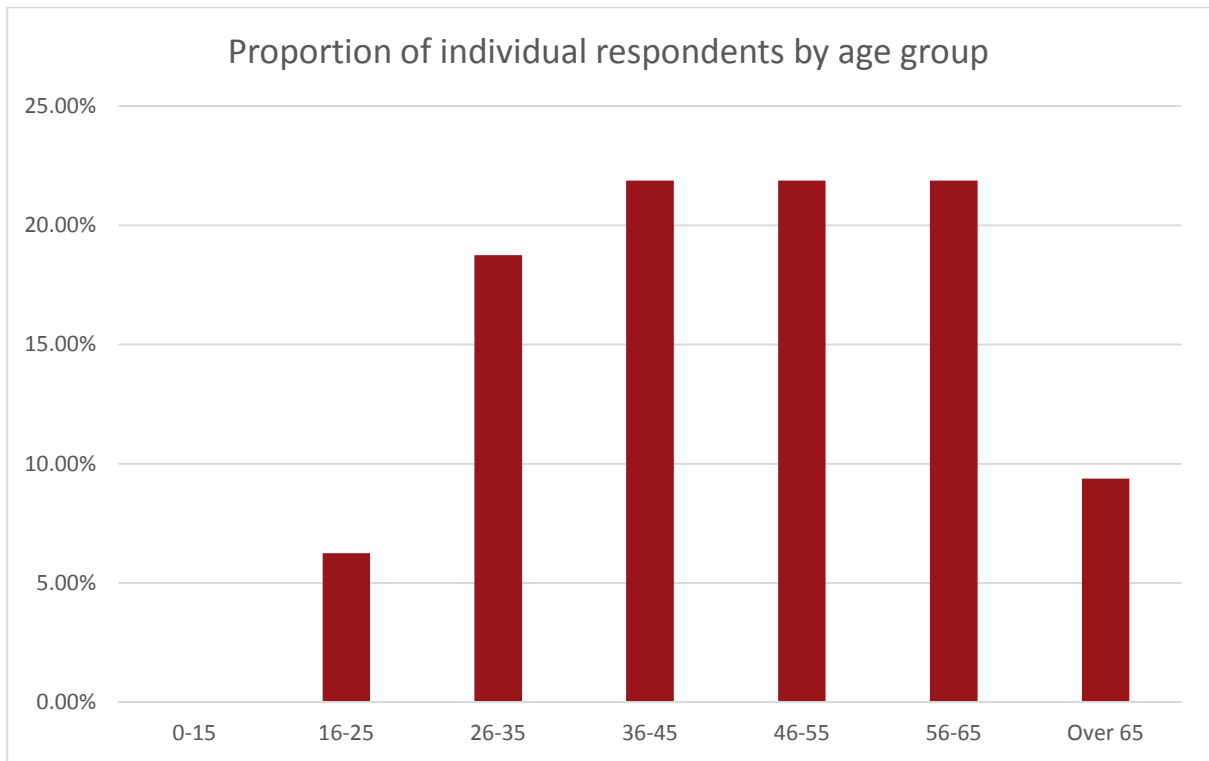
Twelve organisations provided their name, although one – an allotment holder association – did not answer any other question.

Organisations were asked to select one or more category that best described their work. Each respondent could choose more than one category. Seven organisations were charities, including one of each that said they were also in the following categories: - arts, community, education, environment and health. One respondent selected the arts and education categories, three were community associations, one a social group and one a special interest group. There were no responses from children's centres, youth organisations, schools, sports clubs or service providers.

### Questions applicable only to individuals

Individual respondents were asked about their age group, gender, ethnicity, disability status, employment status and postcode. 34 respondents gave an answer to at least one of these questions.

The distribution by age of respondents is shown in the graph below:

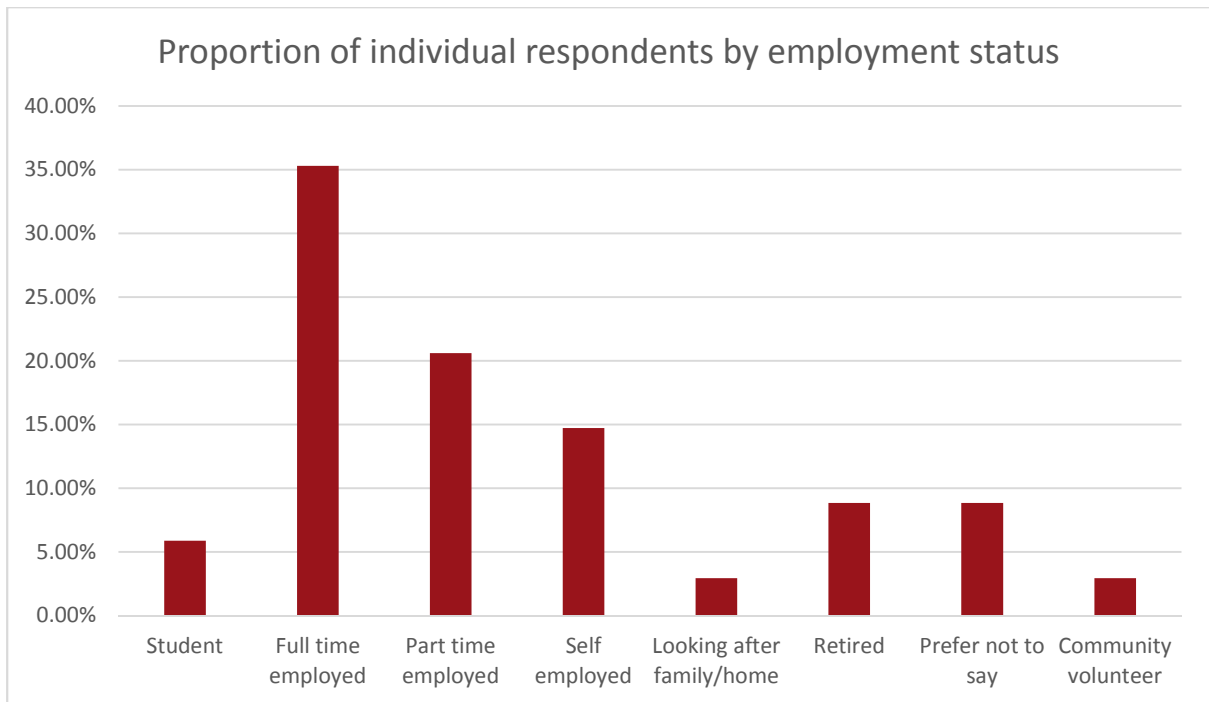


60.6% of respondents were female, 33.33% male, 3% other/non-binary and 3% preferred not to say.

79.4% of respondents were white, 11.4% preferred not to state an ethnicity and there was one respondent (2.9%) for each of the Asian, mixed ethnic and other ethnic background categories. There were no responses by anyone stating a black background.

27 respondents (79%) stated no disability, 2 (5.9%) preferred not to say, 2 (5.9%) had multiple disabilities and there was one respondent (2.9%) for each of mobility, eyesight and mental health disability categories.

The employment status of individual respondents is shown in the graph below.



19 individual respondents provided some postcode data of which 13 were complete postcodes. This is too small a number to provide a statistically significant analysis by ward. 10 responses were received from people living in the EX4 postcode, which covers north Exeter, 3 from EX1 (Exeter central and east), 4 from EX2 (Exeter south), 1 from EX3 (Topsham area) and 1 from EX12 (Seaton area).

## Survey responses

Question 4 of the survey asked

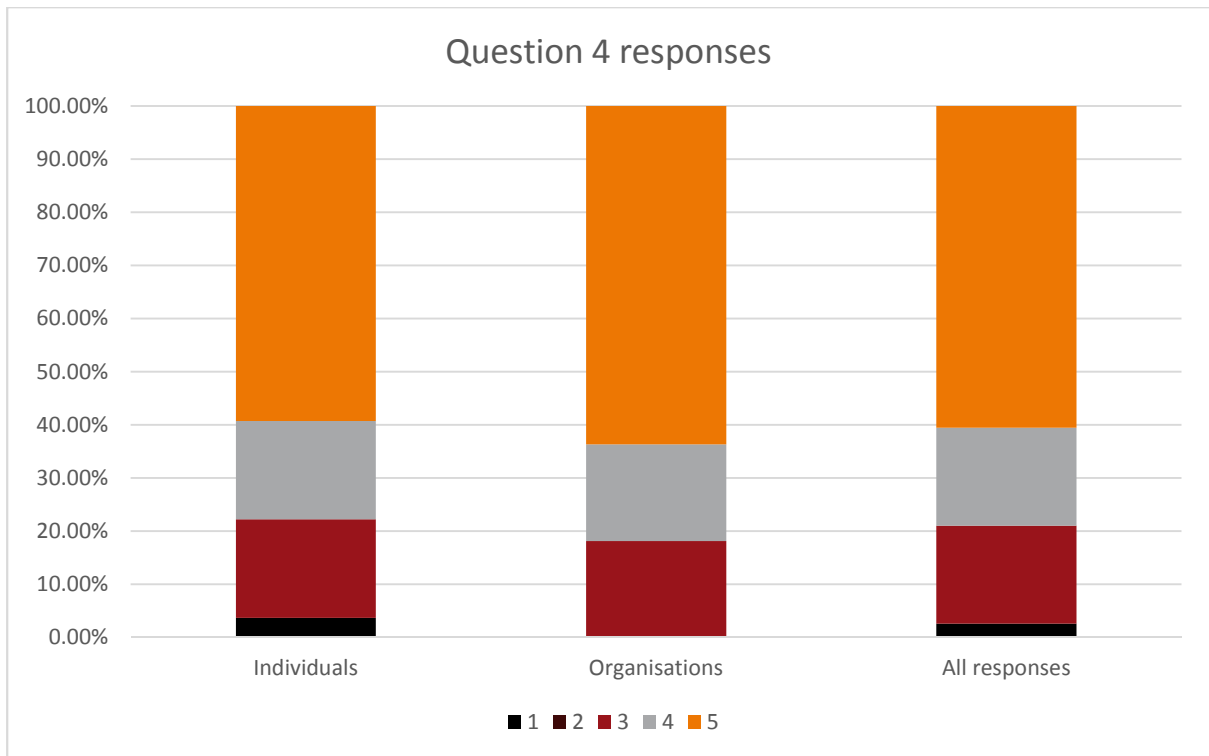
Do you agree that the grant priorities for 2019 to 2022 should be:

- Address inequalities
- Improve health and wellbeing and getting people active
- Support communities working together to address local needs
- Encourage volunteering
- Improve where we live

Respondents were asked to rate their support on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 was do not agree at all and 5 was strongly agree.

The responses received are shown in the graph below.





There was strong support across both individual respondents and organisations for the grant priorities, with almost 80% rating the proposal 4 or 5. Only 1 respondent (an individual) gave a rating of 1, and there were no ratings of 2. The average rating was 4.3, with organisations rating slightly higher (4.5) than individuals (4.3).

**Question 5** asked respondents to comment on their answer to question 4. Responses included the following points:

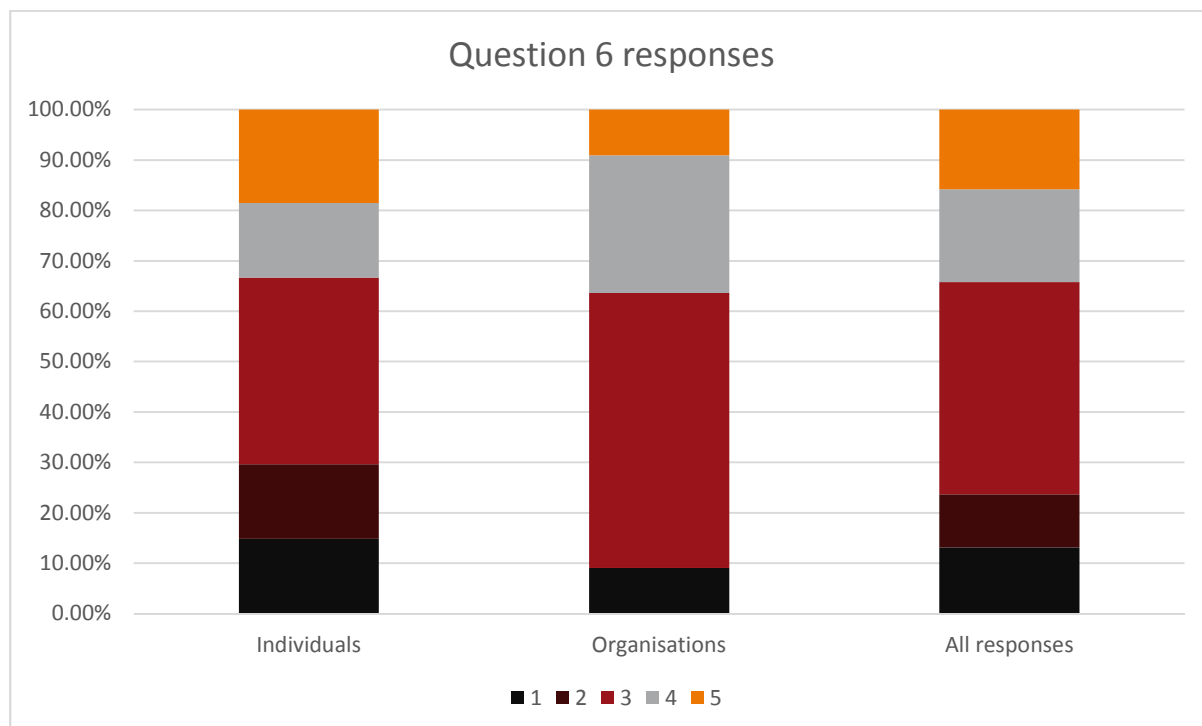
- Culture was not referred to in the priorities and there should be a more specific commitment
- There should be more inclusive growth included in the addressing inequalities priority
- Health and wellbeing is more than encouraging activity; eating well and having good mental health also important
- The council's priority should be supporting those services which provide help to people who cannot get support through the usual channels and not helping people 'have a good time'
- Protecting our environment, encouraging greater biodiversity and improving air quality should also be included
- The model is likely to result in funding focussed on project work rather than long term funding for organisations which provide ongoing services
- Supporting community working together could move responsibility from the council to provide services
- There should be more emphasis on projects that engage with communities who are not usual consumers of art, theatre etc to promote inclusivity

**Question 6** asked

Presently, there are nine different funding streams available. Our research last year showed a lack of clarity and transparency that needed to be addressed.

The proposal is to set up a single Exeter City Fund (ECF), which will consist of five elements: ECF Ward Grants of up to £300, funded by New Home Bonus Funding; ECF Large grants of up to £30,000, funded by the Community Infrastructure Levy; ECF Small Grants of up to £3,000, funded by the Community Infrastructure Levy; ECF Community Buildings grants: a 3 year grant towards the annual running costs of up to £5,000 per year, funded by the Community Infrastructure Levy; and ECF Move More Community Chest grants of up to £300, funded by the Sport England Delivery pilot.

Respondents were asked to rate their support for this proposal. The responses received are shown in the graph below.



The range of responses was much greater than in question 4. Overall, 76% of respondents rated the proposal as 3 or above, but 13% gave a rating of 1. 90% of organisations gave a rating of 3 or above but were less likely than individuals to score the proposal 5. The average rating was 3.1, with organisations rating slightly higher (3.3) than individuals (3.0).

**Question 7** asked respondents to comment on their answer to question 6. Responses included the following points:

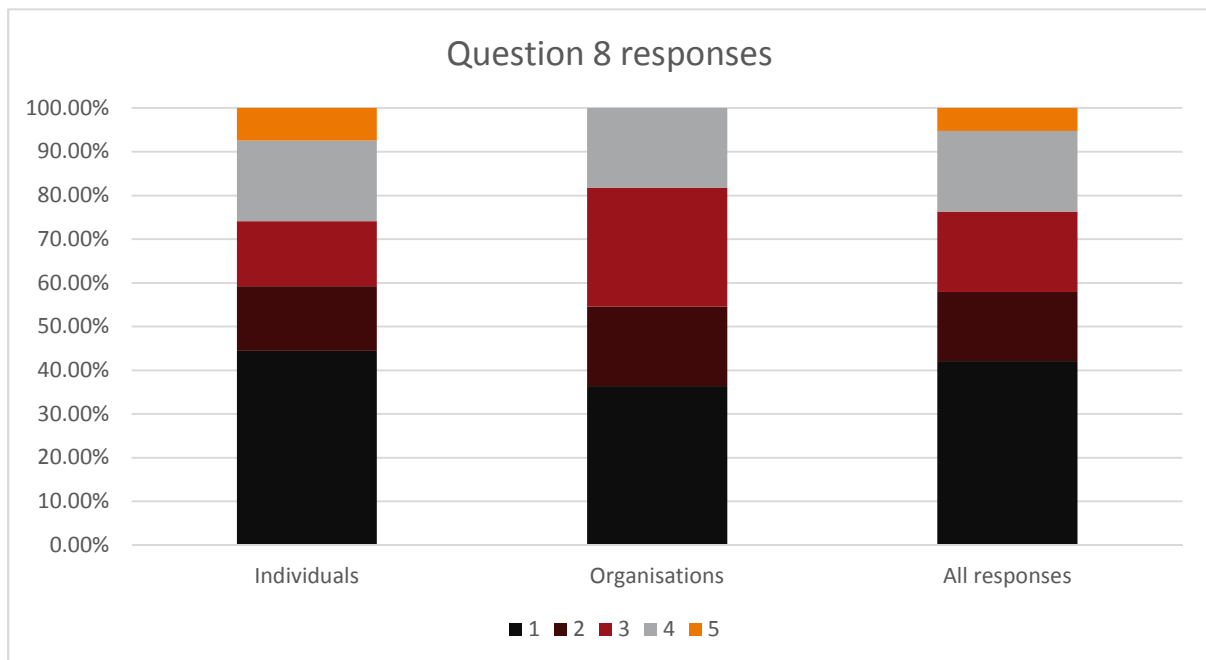
- Whilst project based or capital funding is welcomed, there is a need for core (revenue) funding in order to make the capital investments sustainable, and more generally to enable organisations to carry on day to day work, especially in supporting the disadvantaged. This point was made by a number of respondents
- There is a risk that funding will be allocated to high profile projects to the detriment of more mundane but equally vital schemes
- Concern that there has been an assumption about the previous grant funding. Applications used to be published on the website along with Major Grants Panel papers. Also, grant holders were required to submit a mid-year report. There does not seem to be any mention of this in these proposals.

- Concern that Arts Council grants have been excluded and whether newly designated NPOs after 2022 will be included in the policy
- Concern about transitional arrangements for organisations
- Concern that single fund might not support some current recipients of funding
- Need to be clear about funding process and decisions
- The £30,000 large grant ceiling is low for large organisations with multiple functions.
- It is probably more transparent, but only if the council make ALL decisions available to the public. It does not mean it's necessarily fairer.
- Lack of clarity about arts funding

#### Question 8 asked

With the exception of Ward Grants and Move More Grants, the new funding streams will require a level of matched funding. Do you agree that this is a fair way to ensure that the money available goes as far as possible?

Again, respondents were asked to rate their agreement with the results shown in the graph below.



Respondents were on generally unhappy about this proposal, with 58% giving a rating of 1 or 2. 36% of organisations, which tended to give ratings outside the extremes on other questions, rated the question 8 proposals as 1. The average rating was 2.3 for individuals and organisations.

Question 9 asked respondents to comment on their answer to question 8. Unsurprisingly, there were more comments than for questions 5, 7 or 14. Responses included the following points:

- Organisations which provide services for the most disadvantaged may find it harder to secure match funding than those catering for the more affluent
- Similarly, organisations which provide ongoing work rather than specific projects could find it more difficult to secure match funding
- Whilst having match funding could be an appropriate scoring criterion in the assessment of grant applications, excluding bids without match funding could be too high a bar

- Larger, better resourced organisations may find it easier to create the publicity and infrastructure to attract match funding than small organisations
- Other grant conferring bodies might concentrate on providing seed funding to attract council grants, thus removing resources from the small projects that they might otherwise have funded independently of the council
- Attempting to secure match funding could tie up a lot of volunteer time, especially if the attempt were unsuccessful
- Some organisations, such as those working with children and animals, already find it easier to attract funding. This would be the case in respect of match funding
- In a climate of reducing resources, securing match funding may be more difficult for all
- Funding should be based on need rather than the ability to secure match funding

A theme which emerged in many responses was a fear that some organisations which met the priorities for grant funding would nevertheless be excluded from the funding process because of an inability or lack of capacity to attract match funding. This does identify a risk that, despite the intentions of the proposal, the requirement for match funding could result in a concentration of funding in fewer better resourced and higher profile organisations to the detriment of smaller or less glamorous organisations.

#### Question 10 asked

All grant applications will be on-line through the Exeter City Fund website. Do you think you or your organisation will need support with online applications?

19% of individuals and 9% of organisations indicated that they would require help. This did not demonstrate a clear need for support.

#### Question 11 asked

Where matched funding is required, online applications will link directly to the Crowdfund Exeter website. Do you think you or your organisation will need support with navigating the Crowdfund Exeter website?

31% of individuals and 73% of organisations indicated that they would require help, indicating a clear need for support.

#### Question 12 asked

The Council currently invests in the Wellbeing Exeter Programme, which provides Community Builders and Community Connectors. In addition to this existing resource, the Council is proposing to commission:

A City-wide Independent Information Service; and An Exeter Infrastructure Support Service;

These services will support residents and community groups to manage areas such as: finance; governance; funding applications; using digital platforms; marketing; and building support networks.

Is there any other support you or your organisation will need?

Two organisations and one individual listed further requirements:

- Finance

- Funding applications
- Marketing
- Support networks
- Business planning
- Volunteer management
- Data management
- Buildings
- Meeting locations
- More face to face advice through these means rather than online
- Assistance with implementing savings to previously funded bodies which experience reduced grant funding under the new proposals

Some respondents felt that the method of delivery proposed could be improved:

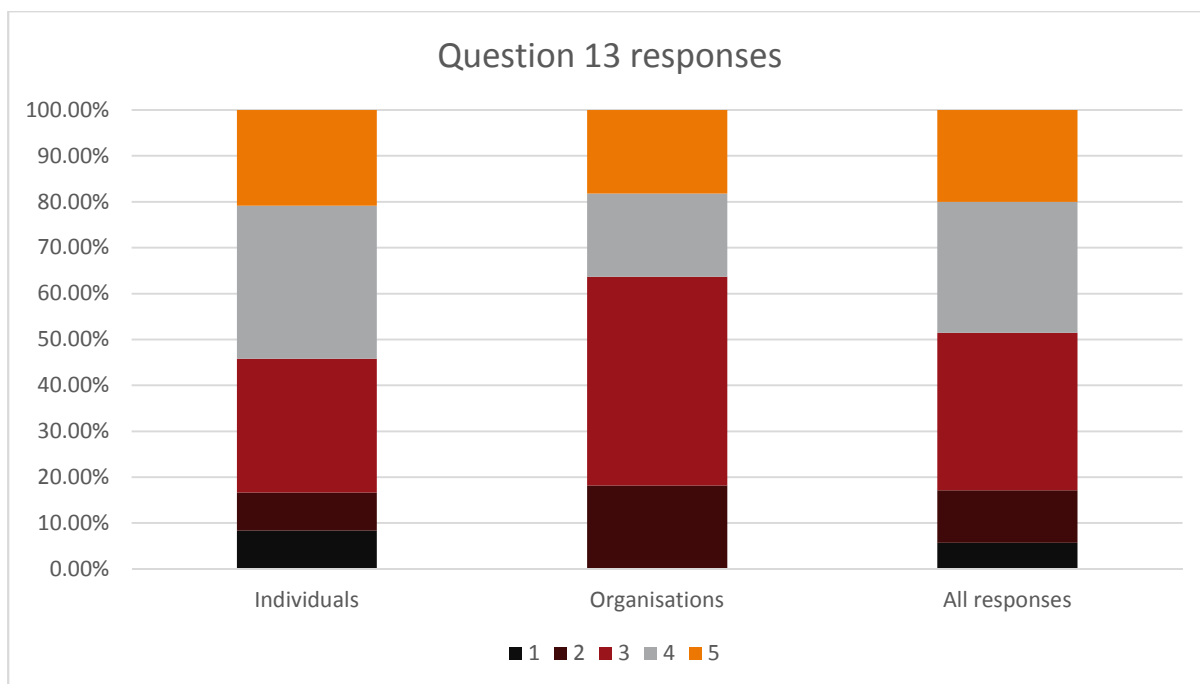
- The items listed above appear to relate to the Exeter Infrastructure Support Service rather than the City-wide Independent Information Service. We strongly believe that the Independent Information Service should provide for a combined information, advice and advocacy service. It should include the need to use the assets of local communities through volunteering; the need for a social policy remit so that providers are resourced to work with the City Council on developing areas of need or difficulty; the need for quality practices and registration with the key authorities, such as the Financial Conduct Authority, is included in any tender, and an holistic approach to advice provision is essential if providers are to truly resolve the underlying issues
- Community builders and community associations could provide this function

There was also a concern that the establishment of these bodies would detract from funding of other third sector information and advice bodies.

Question 13 asked

As part of the new structure, a grants panel will be set up. The aim is that the panel represents the range of arts and 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 networks. The purpose of the panel will be to make recommendations on grant applications.

Respondents were asked to rate their support for this proposal. The responses received are shown in the graph below.



There was broad agreement with the proposal. 82% of respondents rating this proposal as 3 or higher. 8% of individuals and no organisations strongly disagreed with the proposal, and 21% of individuals and 18% of organisations gave a rating of 5. The average rating was 3.5, with organisations rating slightly lower (3.4) than individuals (3.5).

**Question 14** asked respondents to comment on their answer to question 13. Responses to question 14 included:

- The panel should be representative of the community
- The panel should include subject experts and people with experience of assessing grant applications
- A need to ensure a proper balance of interests and knowledge
- There is value in the contribution of local councillors with knowledge of their localities
- Councillors should not have voting rights but attend as advisors. This was mentioned in the responses from a number of individual respondents.
- This function was carried out well by the Exeter Community Forum, so why change?
- There is a risk of the panel being dominated by special interest groups or cliques
- All panel members would have equal voting rights
- There should be some form of remuneration for panel members and panels should take place outside working hours
- Limited terms of service for people serving on the panel to ensure rotation

Some answers to question 15 were more suited to question 14 and have been included above.

There was a general concern that an unbalanced group would lead to disproportionate influence by some sectors.

**Question 15** asked

The panel will consist of Exeter City Councillors and representatives of community organisations across the city. Do you have any suggestions on how the community representatives should be selected?

Responses to question 15 included:

- Community representatives should be recruited through open advert and then be selected using defined criteria
- Selection by providing a candidate statement and interview and selection
- Recruitment could be through contacting those who have received a grant in the last five years
- Selection should not be made by councillors
- The Exeter Community Forum network could ask for applications
- Groups which might find raising funds more difficult should be well represented on the panel
- There could be a public vote to decide between applicants
- The Infrastructure Support Service or another independent body could appoint the panel
- Community builders could appoint the panel
- The panel should not just consist of potential beneficiaries
- All community organisations should have the right to be on the panel
- Each community should nominate its own representative from within existing community association

Additional Responses to Exeter Community Programme Consultation made to the Council and not to Red Quadrant May 2019

Organisation	You said	Key points and themes	Our response
<p><b>Exeter St James Forum</b></p>	<p><b>Key points related to review of Grants Programme:</b></p> <p>Exeter St James Forum “are concerned that the grants review missed an opportunity to build on the work of Exeter Community Forum and Community Strategy and is proposing what, in effect, amounts to a centralisation of the awarding of Grants so that it is Councillor rather than Community led, particularly with regard to the Community Portion of CIL”.</p> <p>In Exeter the Community Infrastructure Levy and the New Homes Bonus have and will continue to provide significant sums and this has not been acknowledged or recognised in the introduction to the Red Quadrant report 1.10.</p> <p><b>Council Funding:</b> The Community Infrastructure Levy came into force in April 2010. Local authorities are required to work closely with neighbourhoods to decide what infrastructure they require, and balance neighbourhood funding with wider infrastructure funding that supports growth.</p> <p>“The Exeter Community Strategy will underpin community-led development in the city for ten years from 2016. It will provide a way for the community to take the lead, build its capacity to own and manage assets, work with partners, and fund and deliver initiatives and services. It is based on a</p>	<p><b>Change to councillor led rather than community led grants panel.</b></p> <p><b>Liaison with communities affected by development</b></p>	<p>The Exeter Grants Programme report July 2019 recommends that we build on our commitment to the principles in the Exeter Community Strategy with a shared aspiration to support Asset Based Community Development approaches which builds on the assets in the community and mobilises individuals, associations, and institutions to come together to realise and develop their strengths.</p> <p>The extensive listening and consultation process (2018) and follow up formal consultation (2019) facilitated by Red Quadrant has enabled the Council to seek views on spending priorities with regard to the Neighbourhood Portion of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).</p> <p>A key focus for the fund will be on addressing the demands that development places on the City. By utilising the CIL in this way we can</p>



	<p>statement of principles of community-led development to which partners are invited to sign up and will embody openness and accountability in all its activities.”</p> <p>From the above it is clear that contrary to the assertion of ECC as set out on Page 4 of the RQ Report there is a clear community grants programme that meets both the objectives set by national government and the objectives set in 2016 by the City Council. This erroneous conclusion with the RQ Report has enabled ECC to effectively propose the end of the role of ECF.</p> <p><b>Grass Roots Grants</b> This is the Neighbourhood Portion of CIL. The Grass Roots Grant panel until 2018 comprised a majority of members from the Exeter Community Forum together with local council representatives. This was varied by ECC to ensure that the Councillor Representatives were in a majority. This was unfortunate and has created the impression that the Council wish to control how the Community Portion of CIL should be spent. The views of the Council are clearly important and were considered within the original Committee Framework. The spending of the Community portion of CIL is not a generous handing out of funds by ECC. It is the right of the local community to determine how that small portion should be spent within the area affected by the development.</p> <p>It is worth noting that because of the way in which Exeter Community Forum was established that <b>Exeter St James Forum voluntarily gave up its 25% portion of CIL</b> and agreed</p>	<p><b>Future role of Exeter Community Forum and Exeter Community Strategy</b></p> <p><b>Changes to governance and representation of Exeter Community Forum members re. awards of grants from Neighbourhood CIL</b></p>	<p>provide a core and sustainable funding source for community groups. Where CIL funds have been used applicants will need to demonstrate that there is community support for their project and that it satisfies the provisions of Regulation 59F of the CIL Regulations 2010.</p> <p>Exeter Community Strategy was not under review, in fact meetings have recently taken place with the interim chairs of Exeter Community Forum to confirm that the council does value the Community Forum as a network for community associations in the city. We are still engaged in discussions on the best ways for the council to liaise with the forum in the future.</p> <p>The Exeter Grants Programme report stresses that a future grants programme will have good governance that recognises the specific accountability of elected members but enables the Council and community to decide on priorities together. The community</p>
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	<p>to accept the 15% to be on a par with everyone else. In the event that there is to be the fundamental alteration to the running of ECF then ESJF will be taking legal advice as to whether they should withdraw their voluntary consent and ensure that ESJF obtains the 25% portion of CIL to which it is entitled.</p> <p><b>Community Builders and Exeter City Futures</b>  Since the introduction of Exeter Community Strategy, Community Builders (CB) have been introduced in each area of the City. In many ways their role was envisaged in Exeter Community Strategy and it is unfortunate that the RQ Report has not considered ways in which the role and function of the Community Builders could be blended within a revised and enhanced Exeter Community Strategy in order to create the strong communities intended within that strategy.  Exeter St James Forum, with its own Neighbourhood Plan (NP) was not consulted over the appointment of a Community Builder which covered the NP area or the role of the Community Builder. That relationship has had to be built on an ad hoc basis. That again was an opportunity lost by ECC to utilise and enhance existing structures within Exeter.  In addition since the Strategy Document was agreed Exeter City Futures (ECF) has also been established. Their strategic objective is to create a vibrant, sustainable, and inclusive place for future generations by analysing and addressing the big transport and energy challenges facing our city.</p>	<p><b>ESJF Neighbourhood Forum relinquish 25% portion of CIL</b></p> <p><b>Concern opportunity for a revised and enhanced Exeter Community Strategy was not taken</b></p>	<p>members on the grants panel will need 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. The Exeter Voluntary and Community Sector Support Service (newly commissioned) will be required to advise on and support the selection of the community representatives.</p> <p>ECC are one of a range of partners on the delivery of Wellbeing Exeter. The role of Community Builders is an essential part of the approach and their remit, and their employing organisation (ECI) are required to build strong links with the communities in which the community builders are based.</p>
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	<p>Again it is not clear why at the earliest opportunity their work, where relevant, was not properly blended with Exeter Community Strategy.</p> <p>ESJF consider that it was these missed opportunities with ECF and CB to be properly integrated within Exeter Community Strategy and the Exeter Community Forum that has caused any confusion that existed within the minds of the public. It does not require wholesale change it required properly joined up thinking.</p> <p><b>Current Grant Streams</b>  The ability of Ward Councillors to make small grants of up to £300 to local community groups is a valuable way in which communities and their councillors can be seen to be working together. It is therefore of concern that part of this report indicates that Councillors want a “clear link to Council priorities” (Page 23 RQ report). The valuable work being undertaken by a local community group may not directly be in line with a council priority as set out from time to time, it may very well have a remarkably beneficial impact upon a small community group.  ESJF believe that the ability of Local Councillors to make small ward grants should be enhanced and should continue.</p> <p>This has been a missed opportunity to build on what already exists within Exeter – to improve and to modernise the existing Community Strategy.</p>	<p><b>Concern re Ward grants links to council priorities</b></p>	<p>ECC are one of the partners with Exeter City Futures, your points should be raised with the directors of Exeter City Futures.</p> <p>Feedback from the consultation with a wide range of community and art groups and key stakeholders demonstrated a strong consensus for the proposed principles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Address inequalities</li> <li>2.Improve health and wellbeing</li> <li>3.Get people active</li> <li>4.Support communities working together to address local needs</li> <li>5.Encourage volunteering</li> <li>6.Improve where we live</li> </ol> <p>The ward grants have increased to £500 (subject to agreement )</p> <p>We consider these to be wide ranging and likely to cover most initiatives and priorities identified by communities.  The proposals for the Exeter city Fund is in line with CIL Regulations 2010 (Regulation 59F) and the</p>
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	<p>The creation of Exeter City Fund as a global title for all funding streams is simply not taking into proper account from where the grants came: New Homes Bonus: Community Infrastructure Levy: Central Government; Arts Council: Devon County Council: Exeter City Council. Each funding stream needs appropriate recognition.</p> <p>Again looking at the proposed priorities with the EGP for the current year. No-one can argue that they are not laudable objectives, but again the 15% Neighbourhood CIL is not properly recognised and the wording used is the somewhat bland “Improve where we live”. There should be a proper definition within the annual objectives requiring that in any particular year the local neighbourhood affected by CIL will be encouraged to put forward projects that will improve the neighbourhood that has generated the CIL.</p>	<p><b>Concern re recognition of nature of funding from CIL</b></p>	<p>use of <b>digital approaches</b> to making grant applications.  Re <b>matchfunding</b> – no all funds will require match funding e.g. ward grants do not require match funding. The Small grants fund where groups can apply for grants up to £3,000 need a minimum of 20% match funding. Volunteering hours may count as match funding.</p> <p>The different funding streams that make up the new Exeter City fund will be recognised in any policy and promotion of the fund.</p>
<p><b>ECF Steering Group</b></p>	<p>On behalf of Exeter Community Forum (ECF) the following proposal is offered with specific regard to the proposed Infrastructure Delivery Service. It is understood that Exeter City Council is seeking to commission an Infrastructure Support Service and will be developing a brief inviting organisations to tender for the service delivery.</p>	<p><b>Proposed Infrastructure Support Service</b></p>	<p>This service will be tendered in line with Council Policy.</p> <p>Collaboration with community networks in the city will be included in the specification for the tender.</p>

	<p>Exeter Community Forum is keen to play a role in providing these services for the benefit of community associations and groups across the city. As part of the service ECF could provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*connection to Community Associations through the ECF network</li> <li>*a voice for the network of CAs and ECF members</li> <li>*input to strategy and policy development</li> <li>*support for residents and community groups looking to develop an approach towards forming a community association</li> <li>*seek to become more inclusive and engage a wider range of community groups and organisations across Exeter</li> </ul> <p>This could be part of a specific arrangement within the tender specification or a collaboration with potential organisations that would wish to tender for the whole service. ECF could be commissioned to provide this service as part of the overall contract.</p>		
<p><b>ECFC City Community Trust</b></p>	<p>It is disappointing to hear that the Core and Rent Grant has now finished, as it has helped to match fund the Exeter Sports Fund in the past. I do, however, appreciate the steps the council needs to make in coming years to reduce budgets and still be able to provide opportunities for community/resident groups to access funding. I am also excited to hear more about the five new funding streams proposed in the new draft policy. For obvious reasons, the following five priorities listed in the draft policy fit nicely with the objectives of the CITY</p>	<p>Support for five identified priorities by ECC as part of consultation</p> <p>Happy to continue the partnership to support any</p>	<p>Very positive response and will be pleased to look at the opportunities for a partnership approach to help deliver the objectives of the sport England local Delivery Pilot and our aims to work with Exeter communities to improve health and wellbeing and get people active.</p>

	<p>Community Trust and other partners of the Exeter Sports Fund.</p> <p>I have discussed this with Exeter Sports Fund colleagues and we are very interested to find out how we can work in partnership to effectively distribute some of the funding streams listed in the draft policy. I feel that over the last five years, we have built up a wealth of knowledge and understanding that would be able to support you in the future.</p> <p>I am sure that colleagues from the Active Exeter working group would also be another resource to help with the distribution process, which could be the subject of future discussion.</p>	<p>future distribution of funding</p>	
<p><b>Age UK Exeter</b></p>	<p>We completely understand the financial pressure the public sector is under and also your desire to have a more open and transparent grants process. I suppose the difficulty for us is to lose the surety of a rent support grant that has contributed enormously to our sustainability over the years for the uncertainty of one-off grants via CIL funding that can only be used for refurbishment purposes.</p> <p>We are pleased to see that a Community Buildings fund is being proposed to help with running costs and I hope our centre in Cowick Street, which is a community resource, would qualify for such support. I would also hope that the unrestricted funds we put towards these running costs would count as matched funding rather than having to go down the crowd-funding route.</p>	<p>Concerns over loss of rent grant</p> <p>Community buildings Fund to support centre in future?</p> <p>Support for older people to claim benefits – links with Citizens Advice.</p>	<p>We will shortly be opening the tender for the information and advice service and I will let you know how to access this information.</p> <p>The Leader is keen to see community buildings used more comprehensively and in an integrated way. If you haven't already you may want to link up with the St Thomas community association to look for partnership/joint working</p>

	<p>We are particularly interested in your plan to commission a city-wide independent information service. Our Information and Advice Service responds to over 2,500 enquiries each year and every year supports older people in the city to claim over £1m in additional benefits. We work closely with Exeter Citizens Advice and I would see our two organisations as being well placed to take on such a role.</p> <p>Finally, while this process introduces more uncertainty, in an already uncertain world, my board and all of us at Age UK Exeter are committed to working constructively with the council to ensure that Exeter can be a great place to live for everyone, whatever their circumstances.</p>		<p>opportunities in relation to the sharing of community spaces.</p>
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### Red Quadrant Listening Exercise and Consultation Participants

#### Organisations which responded to survey:

<p>Citizens Advice Exeter                  Barnfield Theatre Ltd                  Double Elephant Print Workshop                  Food Exeter</p>	<p>Pinhoe Community Club                  Merry Go Round Toy Library                  Trews Weir Reach Field 1 Allotments (didn't make any responses)                  Devon Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Services</p>	<p>STCA                  Park Life Heavitree                  Turntable                  Plus one social group which didn't give their name.</p>
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#### Organisations that booked a place to attend Focus groups:

<p>Wellbeing Exeter - Community builders                  Estuary League of friends                  Countess Wear 100 Club Short Mat Bowls club                  Be the Change                  Newtown Community Association                  America Hall                  Wood for Good                  Newcourt Community Association                  St Thomas Community Association                  St James Vegetable Garden                  Exeter Communities Together                  Wonford Planters                  Words, Theatre, Music, Dreams</p>	<p>Substance and Shadow Theatre                  St David Neighbourhood Partnership                  Heavitree Running Group                  Exeter Literary Festival                  Stoke Hill Community Association                  Sylvania Environment and Community Project.                  The Palace Gate                  The Club                  Eager Spark                  Blind ditch                  Make Tank                  Exeter Community Transport Association                  Exeter Citizens Advice</p>	<p>Daisi                  Exeter Water Sports Association                  Age UK Exeter                  Barnfield Theatre                  Double Elephant                  Wonford Community and Learning Centre                  Magic Carpet                  Topsham Community Association                  Exeter St James Community Trust Ltd                  Exeter Scrapstore                  Alphington Community Association                  Turntable</p>
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