

Exeter City Council

Final Draft General Grants Policy February 2023

1. Context

1.1 As one of the fastest growing cities in the country with high employment within a high tech, high knowledge and high wage economy in a fantastic location, and encouraging bounce back from the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic, we have much to celebrate. Our city brand: *Exeter Live Better, the brilliant alternative* sums this up, however we are not complacent. Not everyone has benefited from growth: small pockets of the city are among the most deprived areas in the country with life expectancy varying in different parts of the City and these are communities that will have taken the biggest hit from the pandemic and increasing cost of living. Ensuring that all residents benefit from our success and that we achieve our goals for the future are clear priorities for the Council as set out in the *2022/25 Corporate Plan*.

2. Why do we need a General Grants Policy?

2.1 The scale of change required to sustain the city for the future is huge and from time to time we will need to be agile and move at pace, working with partners in a living lab model, testing out ideas and innovations, learning (and failing) fast, identifying ways to solve problems that could be scaled up to offer sustainable city-wide solutions. This policy describes how the Council may, from time to time, award grants to organisations to fund activities and tests of change that will contribute to the achievement of priorities set out in the Corporate Plan.

2.2 This **General Grants** policy will work alongside **Exeter Community Grants Programme (2019)** which aims to support community groups and organisations to address the demands that development places on the city. The **Exeter Community Grants Programme** is supported by the **Exeter Grants Fund** initially created from a combination of Neighbourhood Portion of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and New Homes Bonus funding.

2.3 This policy works alongside the Councils Procurement Policy.

2.4 There is no particular funding attached to the **General Grants Policy**, and the establishment of this policy is not a call for bids. This policy is to ensure that should the Council wish to award grants over and above those within the Community Grants Programme, it has clear and transparent decision-making process through which to identify opportunities, allocate funds and award grants. The policy will be applied in response to an approach by a 3rd party with a request for grant funding and the funds are available to do so; or when a particular issue has been identified which is best delivered through a General Grant and the funds are available to do so.

3. General Grant Policy Aims

3.1 The **General Grants Policy** will support organisations or projects with grant funding that will contribute to city transformation by:

- Contributing to the Exeter Vision and help deliver Corporate Plan Strategic Priorities;
- Testing out or expanding new ideas or innovations that could potentially be rolled out across the city;
- Connecting people and organisations across sectors to enable collaboration within a whole systems approach, or

- Enhancing existing Council plans to improve public realm/assets through wider partnership working.

4. Grant Terms and Conditions

4.1 A simple set of rules and conditions will apply to all grants and these will be published on the Council website and based on those set out in appendix 1. All grant recipients will be expected to provide an impact report within 1 month of their project completing and a simple framework for this is set out in appendix 2.

5. Governance

5.1 Proposals for grants to be awarded under this policy will be reported to the Executive Committee for decision making in line with Council constitution and financial regulations. This enables the Executive to maintain oversight of General Grants and to ensure that grant award recommendations are made in line with Council priorities and requirements. The Leader will be accountable for ensuring that decisions and recommendations made by the Committee are fair and transparent and that the underpinning system and processes are proportionate to the funding required/awarded.

Appendix 1: Draft Rules and Conditions for General Grant Awards

All grant applications/awards will:

- Only be made/accepted from non for profit constituted bodies with bank accounts in the name of the organisation.
- Supported by copies of appropriate policies if required for example Safeguarding Policy.
- Show that the project ties in with one or more of our corporate priorities and how it meets the challenge of City transformation.
- Show that at least 75% of people benefiting from the project live in Exeter
- Show how the outcomes of the project will contribute to the Exeter Vision and the City Council's Corporate Priorities.
- Be required to provide feedback about how the grant has been used supplying proof of how fund monies have been spent in the form of invoices, photos and a simple project summary and impact template within 1 month of project completion.
- Acknowledge Exeter City Council support in project publicity material by using the logo provided.
- Give Exeter City Council the right to share information provided in public reports and publicity material.

All grant applicants/recipients will need to confirm that they understand:

- Funds must only be spent as detailed in the project application/agreement.
- 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 Council if you supply false information or you do not spend funds within 12 months.
- Repeat funding will only be awarded when there is a compelling business case proving transition to sustainability.
- Repayment of the grant can be required at the sole discretion of Exeter City Council if funds are not spent within 12 months

Appendix 2: Impacts Evaluation Framework for Grant Applications

Provide 6 monthly interim and final end of project report, using the template below, setting out what you have learnt and how your project has impacted on the city.

What needs/needed to change and why: how has/did the project contribute to city transformation?	Who was affected? What issues are they/you facing? What opportunities do you see? Which council priorities did this change address?
What will/did you do to make this change?	What will/did you do? Who will/did you work with? When and at what point/how many people will/did you work with?
How do you know this will/did create the change you want?	What evidence do you have that this will/did work? Or what evidence makes you think this will/did work?
What will/did you look at and measure to see if your change has worked?	What 3 outcomes will/did you see if your change is successful? How would/did you measure them?
How will/did the outcomes of your project contribute to the Exeter Vision and the City Council's Corporate Priorities?	How do your outcomes contribute to the Exeter Vision and the City Council's Corporate Priorities?