

ROYAL LEAMINGTON SPA TOWN COUNCIL - COMMUNITY GRANT FUND 2022/23

NOTES FROM 'HOW TO' WORKSHOP HELD ON 23rd APRIL 2022

Facts about the Fund:

- £50,000/financial year allocated for community grants in the Town Council budget
- Each group/organisation can apply once every financial year and can apply for up to a maximum of £2,000.
- 3 funding rounds per financial year – May, August and December with outcomes in June, September and January
- What can be funded – capital items (ie equipment, tools, uniforms) and revenue items (ie hourly rates for tutors, artists fees)
- What cannot be funded – anything which should be funded as part of a statutory service (NHS, Police, Warwick District Council, Warwickshire County Council), anything retrospective, no religious or faith activities (a place of worship can apply for funding for a project on their grounds or in their buildings if the projects are open to all the community or for pieces of equipment to support such a project)
- Projects/events must be for the benefit of Leamington residents. Project or applying group can be based outside the town boundary if it is robustly demonstrated how many Leamington residents are members or will be participants. Fund does not cover Warwick, Whitnash, Radford Semele, Cubbington or Old Milverton.
- Examples of recent successful projects are green space improvements, public art, marketing and promotional materials, website creation, community/seasonal events, social media support and end-of-life care support.

What you need to have in place:

- The Town Council does not give grant funding to individuals. Therefore, you must be applying on behalf of a community group, charity or CIC.
- In order to establish a new community group, you will need People, a Constitution and a Community Bank Account:
- People – minimum of three as you will need a Chair, a Secretary and a Treasurer; between 5 and 8 is better
- Constitution – guiding document setting out who you are, what your aims are as a group, who your Officers are, how often you meet and how your finances will be managed. Simple templates found online can be adapted for your specific uses.
- Community bank account: need to open a community bank account to hold funds. Many high street banks offer these as do some online banks such as Unity Trust. Some now come with account maintenance fees (about £6.50/month), some are still free of charge. Good to try the bank you are already a customer with to see what they offer. Bear in

mind you will need to check and access your account online via an app so make sure you have the tech to do that. Many applicants still prefer to use a bank with easy high street access in Leamington.

Application Form:

- Read carefully through the info on pages 1 & 2 to ensure your project idea is eligible.
- The 11 criteria which the Town Council is looking for in applications are listed in bold on page 2. These are very significant. They are wide-ranging in scope and we do not expect projects to hit all of them; 4 or 5 is the norm. Read through these criteria in detail to ascertain which ones match your project. When you include them in your application, you will then need to demonstrate why your project fulfils these specified criteria.
- Criteria of particular relevance in 2022/23 are Covid recovery, reducing social isolation and support for the environment/climate change.
- Deadline dates for submission and decisions are listed on page 3.
- Accounts: 1st question on the form is about your financial management and accounts. Most community groups are below the threshold for the requirement to have annual audited accounts produced – we receive these from charities such as Air Ambulance and Myton Hospice. Well-established groups submit the last two year's completed balance sheets (profit and loss) and this is acceptable. If the group has been operating for less than a year, your last three bank statements can be submitted. If your group is just getting started, a letter from your bank on headed paper from a manager stating that you have opened or are in the process of opening a community account with them is sufficient. Your first statement from your online account would be helpful too.
- Project title: Be clear and succinct – what you put here must be what your project is known as if successful and when it goes live in Leamington.
- Description: List aims first, be descriptive, upbeat, detailed and push the benefits of your project for Leamington, its residents and any specific target markets. This is your opportunity to 'sell' your project to the Council. List intended outcomes second - list facts, advantages, wellbeing benefits and any long term outcomes envisaged.
- Location: Be specific – exact locations of project delivery
- Amount of funding requested: What amount are you asking the Town Council for? If your project is going to cost more than £2000, tell us here. Breakdown your costs as much as you can – the more detail the better. Individual items over £500 must have two quotes included. Show you have looked around for value for money, local suppliers preferred if possible.
- Partners: Who else would be involved in delivery of your project? Name them here. If they are providing in-kind support e.g. volunteer hours, free room hire list these. If they are providing additional funds, list this and what that will cover. If you have or intend to apply to other funders for more funding such as ASDA or Heart of England Community Foundation, let us know that here.
- What specific community needs does your project aim to fulfil?: This is where you list the relevant criteria and explain how the project will hit these. Show knowledge of your intended audience, how this project will help them and any wider knock-on effects in the local community. Again, be clear and positive.
- Evidence of community need: Additional evidence to back up your application and the relevant criteria e.g. quotes, facts and figures, photos, newspaper articles, letters of support, social media shots and stats

- How will your project meet this need?: How exactly? What parts of your project will hit these criteria? Is it the location, the intended participants, the proposed activities, benefits during and after the project, partnership working? What do you foresee as the legacy of the project? Will it be repeated or lead onto something else?
- Timetable: Include specific dates and set out a realistic timetable which shows you can deliver within a year. There is some flexibility in terms of extensions to grant expenditure if extenuating circumstances exist and this is agreed in advance with the Town Council. The grant should be expended within two years of receipt.
- Application checklist: check through and complete. This is a final check for you and shows us that you have been thorough.

Submission & Evaluation

- You can either email your completed application and financial documents to admin@leamingtonspatowncouncil.gov.uk or post hard copies to the Town Hall (not Riverside House) Remember to include quotes if over £500.
- Receipt of the documents will be acknowledged via email and any further queries, should there be any, will come via email too. The deadline is 5pm on the given deadline date. If you are waiting on a quote, let us have the rest of the documentation by the deadline and chase the quote to be submitted as soon as possible after.
- Repeat applicants must have submitted a completed Monitoring Form for their previous project in order to be included for consideration.
- Application forms are then redacted and uploaded to the Town Council website. The forms are sent to the 8 members of the Town Council's Cultural & Community Committee which is the body which considers and makes the decisions on each application a week before the relevant Committee meeting for them to read through.
- Evaluation tools include a criteria scoring sheet, robust financial documentation, detail and clarity throughout the application, encouragement of volunteers/work experience, robust evidence of need and evidence of previous successes.
- Each application is discussed in detail at the Cultural & Community Committee meeting. If a Councillor has declared a personal interest in any application for e.g. they are a member of the applying group, they do not participate in discussion on that application and will not vote on it. Decisions are taken unanimously or by a majority vote. The meeting is a public meeting – people must register if they intend to attend.
- The Community Grant Fund renews at the start of April each year so there is necessarily more funding available in the May round than there is in the subsequent rounds.

Payment

- If your application has been successful, I will be in touch with a formal notification via email the day after the Cultural & Community Committee meeting has been held.
- Payment is made by BACS and the grant will be transferred within the following week – you will receive an email to confirm this has happened.
- If your application has been unsuccessful, I will also inform you and give the reasons why. You are then welcome to come in for a chat about improving/altering your application or I can signpost to other possibly more appropriate grant funders.

Monitoring

- Along with the formal notification of your successful application, you will receive a copy of the Town Council crest for use on all related publicity materials and a Monitoring Form.
- The Monitoring Form is a simple, two-sided sheet which must be completed once your project has been delivered. Please put down as much detail as possible and include photos, newspaper coverage, posters etc. This form is then shared with the Cultural & Community Committee and kept for our records. If you do not complete and return the Monitoring Form, you are exempt from applying to the Fund again.