

BROXBOURNE BOROUGH COUNCIL COMMUNITY GRANTS SCHEME POLICY

NOVEMBER 2019

The Council adopted the Community Grants Scheme Policy in April 2008. It has since been amended to reflect any changes to the grants process.

The Council's grant scheme only offers rent relief, facility subsidy and business rate relief. The Council no longer offers cash grants.

1. Introduction

The Council has an established community grants scheme which provides modest financial support to charitable organisations. The Council is not statutorily obliged to give grant support but does so as it recognises the diversity and individuality of community organisations within the Borough and their contribution in improving the quality of life for residents. The general objectives of awarding grants are:

- to support and help widen the provision of facilities and services which directly benefit and enhance the local community;
- to help address key community issues;
- to promote and strengthen volunteering and voluntary endeavour;
- to build a healthier community spirit for the general benefit of the Borough;
- to ensure that the full range of community needs are supported as best as practicable.

2. Who can apply for a grant?

The following bodies are eligible to apply for grant support:

- Local not-for-profit community groups and voluntary organisations;
- Local charities;
- Regional and national charities with a focus within the borough;
- Not-for-profit sports clubs and Community Amateur Sports Clubs.

Provided that:

- They are properly constituted bodies;
- Membership or use of its services is open to all residents; or all members of a specific demographic in the case of specialised groups, (for example disabled groups, over sixties groups, etc).

In the above context 'local' means located and operating within the Borough of Broxbourne. In extenuating circumstances support may be given to bodies based outside the Borough but whose facilities or services significantly benefit residents. The following bodies are not eligible for grant support:

- Individuals;
- Commercial organisations;
- Statutory bodies including schools;
- Bodies discharging the statutory duties of statutory bodies;
- Charities or not-for-profit organisations that undertake work which does not directly benefit Borough residents.

The Council is unlikely to support organisations which:

- do not contribute to addressing the themes of the Council's objectives;
- have substantial cash balances which could be used for funding;
- could reasonably be expected to obtain funds from other sources;
- do not demonstrate a specific benefit to borough residents.
- have not sought support from other sources of funding.

The Council will not support:

- The cost of celebratory events;
- The cost of hiring or renting facilities belonging to a third party;

3. Grant support available

The Council generally offers the following types of grant support:

Facility subsidy: A discount on the cost of hiring Council-operated facilities.

Non-Domestic Rate Relief (NDR/business rate relief): A discount on an organisation's business rates where they are payable to the Borough of Broxbourne

Notional rental: A discount on the cost of renting a Council property.

Other: The Council is also able to offer other 'in kind' support, such as the use of printing facilities, central stationary purchasing, desktop publishing facilities, officer time and assistance.

4. Grant Support Specifics

The specific policies which govern the level of support that can be granted for the support outlined in section three is set out below.

Facility Subsidy

- For one-off events, which includes a 'run' of shows for arts and active events, a discretionary award of up to 100%.
- For regular events, the maximum discount is 20%.
- The total amount of facility subsidy the panel can offer can not be larger than the budget set. Once this limit has been reached no further facility hire discounts can be given.
- Facility subsidies will be calculated on the proposed fees and charges for the year the subsidy relates to and are exclusive of VAT.
- The award of facility subsidy does not guarantee usage of the facility for which the grant has been awarded. The organisation will still need to arrange usage and make a booking with the relevant facility;
- Facility subsidies must be applied for on an annual basis.
- In 2019, the Grants Panel agreed that the amount of relief granted for facility subsidy would be a gradually reduced for all applicants.

National Non-Domestic Rate Relief (Business Rate Relief)

There are different qualification criteria for (a) Charities, (b) Voluntary Organisations and (c) Voluntary Organisations with sporting facilities.

(a) Charities

- All recognised charities (not necessarily registered) and Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) are entitled to 80% mandatory rating relief. This is administered separately from the grants process by the business rates section.
- The Council can grant up to a further 20% discretionary rating relief.

- In February 2019 the Grants Panel, agreed the amount of relief granted for discretionary rating relief funding would be gradual reduced. This is show in the following table.

First Year	20%
Second Year	10%
Third Year	0%

- In exceptional circumstances the Grants Panel can revise the above scale.
- CASCs must include a copy of their CASC confirmation from HM Revenue and Customs with their application.
- Charity shops must indicate the proportion of new goods sold.

(b) Voluntary Organisations

- The Council can grant discretionary rate relief up to 100%. The proportion of income generated from bar sales and gaming facilities are taken into account when agreeing a discretion.
- Where a voluntary body has a bar and gambling facility details of gross bar turnover must be provided which will be compared to the turnover for the whole organisation. This will then inform the level of discount granted as follows:

	Level of relief (up to)
no bar	100%
less than a third of turnover	75%
between a third and a half of turnover	50%
between a third and two thirds of turnover	25%
more than two thirds of turnover	NIL

(c.) Voluntary Organisations with their own sporting facilities

- The Council can grant discretionary rate relief up to 100%. The proportion of income generated from bar sales and gaming facilities are considered when agreeing a discretion.
- The organisation must provide and maintain its own playing areas, (courts, rinks or pitches) and associated facilities. Where this includes a bar and gambling facility details of gross bar turnover must be provided which will be compared to the turnover for the whole organisation. Information regarding profit made by gaming machines must also be provided.

	Level of relief (up to)
no bar or bar activity which is less than half of turnover	100%
bar activity between a half and two thirds of turnover	75%
bar activity which is more than two thirds of turnover	50%

Notional Rental

Notional rental is a discount given on rent for tenants of Council property. The maximum level of support which can be given is 50% of the annual rent.

Other Grant Support

Other 'in kind' support can be offered by the Council. 'In kind' support can take the following forms:

- Stationery provision;
- Use of printing and photocopying services;
- Use of desktop publishing services;
- Officer time and administrative support;

As with other in-kind support such as facility subsidy, this support would be assigned a 'cash value' and be appropriately budgeted for.

5. How does the Grant Panel determine what assistance should be given?

- The grants scheme is centrally administered within the Member Services section;
- Grant applications are accepted in November for assistance in the following financial year;
- All eligible and fully completed applications are determined by the Grants Panel. This is a politically balanced subgroup of members appointed by the Leader of the Council;
- When the Grants Panel is unable to meet, applications may be determined by officers in consultation with the Chairman of the Grants Panel;
- It is standard practice for the Grants Panel to meet in early February to determine eligible applications;
- Further meetings are scheduled when needed;
- To ensure all applications are treated fairly and equally the following points are considered when determining an application.
 - The number of beneficiaries;
 - Whether an organisation represents the whole Borough or a single locality within the Borough;
 - The cash balance and annual surplus or deficit of the applicant;
 - Whether funding has been secured from other sources;
 - Whether the proposed project or service should be funded by, or is the responsibility of, another statutory agency or funding body;
 - Other support (financial or otherwise) provided by the Council;
 - Wider implications and related issues, such as any licensing, community safety, property, planning, environmental, legal or commercial issues;

6. General Conditions

- Recipients of support are requested to acknowledge the Council's support on their publicity material and associated literature;
- Awards are made for one financial year only (defined as the period from 1 April to 31 March). If an organisation wishes to receive future funding it must re-apply;
- No organisation is guaranteed assistance;
- If an applicant has been awarded assistance in the past, this does not guarantee future support;
- Awards may be subject to conditions;
- Applicants must submit audited accounts (audited in this sense means reviewed by an independent person, not necessarily a fully qualified accountant), including a balance sheet, income and expenditure account plus any explanatory notes;
- Applicants must submit with their application a copy of their most recent: constitution or governing documents (if a new applicant), annual report, or annual general meeting minutes if no report is produced.
- The Council will publish details of the grants awarded.

Monitoring

- Grants are awarded from public funds and accordingly it is appropriate for the Council to monitor and evaluate how organisations have spent grants awarded by the Council. Grant recipients should therefore keep copies of all receipts/invoices in relation to their project to enable an evaluation to take place. Grant recipients may also be asked to provide a copy of the annual accounts for the year to which the grant award relates. The satisfactory completion of the evaluation exercise may impact upon future grant awards to organisations.

7. Retrospective Grant Applications

Retrospective applications (applications relating to a previous financial year) are only permitted in exceptional circumstances. Retrospective grants may only be awarded for one previous financial year and will not be awarded to groups that had already applied for a grant in that application year.

Any queries on the community grants scheme should be directed to the Grants Officer in Member Services. Please email member.services@broxbourne.gov.uk or call **01992 785555 ext. 5755**.