



Fermanagh & Omagh
District Council
Comhairle Ceantair
Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council

Corporate Funding Policy

Council Committee Name:	Fermanagh and Omagh District Council Shadow Policy and Resources Committee
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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Fermanagh and Omagh District Council is committed to the principle of making funding provision available to individuals and non-profit taking organisations.
- 1.2 The Council will deliver a programme of grant aid across a range of Council functions and services with appropriate monitoring and evaluation systems.
- 1.3 Financial support will be provided for activities that meet the priorities identified in the Council's Corporate Plan and Community Plan.
- 1.4 All funding programmes are subject to available resources.
- 1.5 The Council reserves the right to introduce or promote other funding streams which may be required to meet exceptional or unexpected circumstances.

2 Aim and Objectives

2.1 Aim of the Funding Policy

- The overall aim of the Council's funding policy is to provide clear, transparent and consistent detail on the application driven process, the assessment and evaluation procedures and the appeals and monitoring systems in place.

2.2 Objectives of Funding Policy

The objectives of this policy are to ensure that all funding and grants allocated will:

- Further the priorities outlined within the Council's Corporate Plan and the Community Plan (any other relevant strategies)
- Target resources to meet identified needs
- Maximise leverage (for example in kind contributions or match funding)
- Maximise sustainability (economic, environmental and social)
- Achieve greater accountability and openness
- Ensure Equality and Good Relations is considered in all applications in line with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998
- All funding provided will have due regard to the needs of rural areas.

3 Scope

- 3.1 This policy will inform the delivery of funding provision across service areas through the allocation of financial assistance to individuals and non-profit taking organisations.
- 3.2 By working in accordance with this Policy and related procedures the Council intends to ensure that all funding provided will:
- Facilitate the implementation of the Council's Corporate Plan and Community Plan.
 - Provide transparency and accountability in the decision-making process.
 - Ensure Equality and Good Relations is considered in all applications in line with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.
 - Maximise leverage and the opportunities for match funding.
 - Facilitate the strategic targeting of resources to maximise sustainability (financial, environmental, and social) and the climate change agenda.
 - Develop linkages with other programmes.
 - Proactively support the development of local community and voluntary activity.

4 Availability of Funding

- 4.1 Following the completion of the annual budget setting process, a number of grant calls will be opened each financial year. Details of the grants on offer with funding criteria and the application process will be made known to all interested parties via public advertisement, social media and the Council website.
- 4.2 To be eligible for Council funding, groups must demonstrate that their organisation has an appropriate governance framework and decision-making structures in place.
- 4.3 Organisations and individuals applying for funding must either reside within the Council area or deliver an activity in the Council area related to the Council's Corporate Plan and/or Community Plan. The need for the project must be identified within the Council area.
- 4.4 The Council will not provide any funding towards the following:
- Fundraising activities/Charitable Donations
 - Retrospective applications for grant aid/Repayment of debts
 - Fireworks
 - Where project need is not identified from within the Community of benefit

- Projects that are likely to cause displacement of users from existing projects or where the result would be duplication of services in a particular geographical area
- Schools, **with the exception** of the **Good Relations Schools Programme**, Sole traders, profit-taking organisations, statutory bodies or Education Authorities
- Events/projects which are profit making (No grant will be paid where the income exceeds expenditure)
- Projects which are party political or organised by a political party
- Activities/Projects that promote a particular religion
- Monetary prizes
- Projects/activities which are the responsibility of another agency
- Miscellaneous costs - all costs must be identified
- Any activity that is contrary to the Council's ethos.

The above list is not exhaustive.

4.5 Applications will be assessed against the programme specific criteria, in order to ensure consistent and fair consideration. A set scoring matrix will be applied where applicable. Details of the assessment process, including the programme specific criteria, are provided in the Code of Practice and the Grant Aid Guidance.

4.6 Fermanagh and Omagh District Council reserves the right to limit funding to an event, activity or project where there is not a clear demonstration of financial need.

4.7 Fermanagh and Omagh District Council reserves the right to withhold grant aid or apply penalties to a grant where non-compliance with terms and conditions of grant aid have been found.

4.8 Fermanagh and Omagh District Council reserves the right to make provision for the administering of financial support in response to unexpected emerging needs, which may require immediate action.

4.9 For groups or individuals who wish to appeal a decision of the Grant Aid Panel, the process as outlined in Appendix 1 must be followed.

5 Fraud and Corruption

5.1 Fermanagh and Omagh District Council is committed to carrying out business fairly, honestly and openly and has a zero tolerance towards fraud, bribery and corruption. Fermanagh and Omagh District Council expects full compliance with the requirements of both the Fraud and Corruption Policy and Bribery Act 2010 from Groups or Individuals applying for, or in receipt of grant aid. This is also relevant to Councillors, Employees, Agents, Partners and Suppliers involved in your project/event. Fermanagh and Omagh District Council is committed to developing, implementing and maintaining effective procedures and controls to prevent any occurrence of fraud and corruption. The Fraud and Corruption Policy can be found on the Fermanagh and Omagh District website at <https://www.fermanaghomagh.com/app/uploads/2023/04/Fraud-and-Corruption-Policy-September-2023.pdf>

All cases of irregularities or anomalies involving attempted or suspected fraud will be reported to appropriate authorities, including the Northern Ireland Audit Office, PSNI and any other relevant funding body (if applicable) or departments within the Council (if applicable).

5.2 Fermanagh and Omagh District Council reserves the right to disallow any other grant applications and claims submitted by a group or an individual member of a group in respect of the financial year and to apply a moratorium on Council funding to any group or individual member of a group where fraudulent activity has been identified within the current financial year and for at least two forthcoming financial years. This also applies to individuals applying or claiming for bursaries.

5.3 Fermanagh and Omagh District Council will inform the group's Chairperson where attempted or suspected fraud has been identified.

6 Responsibilities

6.1 The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for ensuring corporate compliance with the funding policy. The Chief Executive is supported in these responsibilities by the relevant budget holding Directors for grant purposes and by the Director of Regeneration and Planning who has responsibility for ensuring the policy is adhered to.

6.2 The Grant Aid Panel and the Grant Aid Appeals Panel will be made up of elected representatives. The Terms of Reference for each panel is set out in Appendix 2.

6.3 The Council's Grants Team is responsible for ensuring the agreed administration, reporting and monitoring arrangements are implemented.

6.4 Under a scheme of delegation, Senior Officers are permitted to award funding of up to £500. All awards of funding will be made available to the Grant Aid Panel for noting.

6.5 Council employees are required to adhere to this policy and to take appropriate action to ensure the policy aims and objectives, together with all Conflict of Interest procedures, are fulfilled.

6.6 The responsibilities of Grant Aid recipients are detailed within the Letter of Offer.

7 Monitoring

7.1 The Council will monitor the implementation of the Policy at regular intervals and will respond to emerging issues and/or changing circumstances.

8 Linkages

8.1 This Policy provides a framework to guide the Council's practice in relation to funding support.

8.2 The policy will operate in conjunction with the relevant Grant Aid Code of Practice (Appendix 3) and general guidance documents.

9 Review

9.1 The Funding Policy along with supporting documents will, under normal circumstances be reviewed every three years.

9.2 This policy will be subject to scrutiny and, from time to time, updates and re-issues will be circulated.

9.3 The policy will be reviewed sooner in the event of any one or more of the following:

- Failure or weakness in the policy is highlighted.
- Changes in legislative requirements.
- Changes in Government/Council directives.
- Changes to Council priorities

10 Appendices

Appendix 1: Appeals Process

Appendix 2A: Terms of Reference Grant Aid Panel

Appendix 2B: Terms of Reference Grant Aid Appeals Panel

Appendix 3: Grant Aid Code of Practice

Appeals

If your application is unsuccessful, or you are not satisfied with the recommendation, you must contact the Grants Team for feedback before submitting an appeal.

For groups or individuals who wish to appeal a decision of the Grant Aid Panel following receipt of feedback, the process will be as follows:

- Contact the Grants Team in writing outlining the reasons for appeal within 10 working days of the date of your unsuccessful letter/ notification of application outcome.
- Anyone requesting an appeal will receive an acknowledgement of their request.

Requests for an appeal of a grant outcome will only be considered on the following grounds:

- **Option 1** - the decision was wrong because the Council failed to take into account the information contained within the written application or took into account information that was not contained within the written application; and/or
- **Option 2** - there was a failure in adherence to procedures and guidance issued with the call for applications or a failure in systems that materially affected or could have materially affected the decision; and/or
- **Option 3** - that officers involved in the assessment process have had a clear Conflict of Interest and have failed to declare this in the appropriate manner.

Appeals on any other grounds will not be considered.

It should also be noted that no additional supporting documentation other than that submitted with the application will be considered at this stage.

- The Grant Aid Appeals Panel will be convened to determine whether the grounds for a reassessment of a grant outcome have been met;
- The Grant Aid Appeals Panel will be provided with a copy of the written appeal request which should clearly outline the identified option(s) for appeal (as described above) and the related supporting information in respect of each option identified.
- Alongside the information submitted by the Appellant, the Grant Aid Appeals Panel will be provided with the Scheme Scoring Criteria, breakdown of the Appellant's original application scoring, a summary of the rationale for the score and the original application form. The Senior Officer facilitating the appeal will advise the Grant Aid Appeals Panel on the grounds for appeal and the original grant outcome.
- If the appeal is upheld the Grant Aid Appeals Panel will confirm the grounds upon which the appeal is upheld (ie, Options 1-3) and will refer the application to a Senior Officer (Head of Service or above), who was not involved in the original assessment process for reassessment based upon the upheld grounds. Once

this process is complete, the application will be considered by the Grant Aid Panel and a recommendation will then be presented to the Regeneration and Community Committee. Following Council approval, the appellant will be notified of the outcome.

- If the appeal is not upheld, a report for noting will be presented to the Regeneration and Community Committee. Following Council approval, the appellant will be informed of the decision. The decision of the Council at this point is final.

Appeals Process Flowchart:

