

Ward Committee Grants Policy Guidance Notes

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Guidance for Applicants

The money for Ward Committee grants comes from City of York Council (CYC) Ward Committee budgets. These guidance notes explain what the budgets are for and how they are used. They will help you fill in the Ward Committee Grant Application Form.

BEFORE YOU FILL IN THE FORM

Before you start filling in the form, you can talk to the Neighbourhood Management Officer (NMO) covering the Ward Committee you are applying to. Talking over your application with them will help you to ensure that your proposal meets the requirements for a Ward Committee grant. You can contact your NMO at the Neighbourhood Management Unit, 9 St Leonard's Place, York YO1 7ET tel: 01904 551832.

WHAT ARE WARD COMMITTEE BUDGETS FOR?

Ward Committee budgets pay for the implementation of schemes and grant projects by not-for-profit organisations which:

- i) **improve** the physical environment and
- ii) provide **local services** in any of the 18 Ward Committee areas of the Council.

The aim is to make Ward Committee areas better places in which to live, work and play.

Each ward has ambitions and priorities (set out in their Neighbourhood Action Plan) which seek to do this and the Council is committed to listening to communities to ensure that people have a greater say in deciding local priorities.

Schemes and grant projects are suggested by local people, Ward Councillors, community groups and other public organisations in each Ward Committee area.

Not-for-profit groups and organisations who are active locally, can apply for grants for projects to be completed in the financial year in which they are awarded, for the benefit of people living in the ward committee area.

It is important to note that Ward Committee grants are annual and no guarantee can be given that the same grants will be renewed each year.

1. What project is eligible for funding?

Your application needs to show that your project fits these criteria before we can consider it.

Any scheme suggestion or grant request can be considered for funding if it is:

- for the benefit of the local community within the ward, can be accessible to all and there is a demonstrable need
- legal and feasible within CYC or national policy
- has planning permissions or other relevant approvals
- can be completed within the financial year in which it is awarded (i.e. financial year runs between 01 April 2009 – 31 March 2010)

2. What projects cannot be funded?

- Projects which cannot be completed in the financial year in which they are awarded
- Commercial schemes e.g. shops, businesses
- Projects which are not legal and/or run counter to CYC policy
- Projects which do not have planning approval
- Projects which have started before the time they are approved or have already been committed to, by way of contract i.e. grants cannot be given retrospectively
- Projects which do not show clear evidence of financial need
- Projects which do not show community benefit/need
- Events/activities that have party political or religious goals
- **Multi-ward applications**

Ward Committee grant funding applicants must demonstrate that any schemes/services for which funding is sought provide additional benefits to people in the ward and are **additional** to the schemes/services that applicants already provide. Applications must relate specifically to the Ward in question and demonstrate the specific additional services and benefits to that particular Ward. Applicants will be required to demonstrate how the residents in the relevant ward, including the number of residents, will benefit. Applications will need to contain customer satisfaction or other measurable outcomes at ward level. The Ward Committee grant process does not preclude applications being made to more than one Ward Committee but each application will have to be tailored to the needs and priorities of each ward and must evidence measurable outcomes in relation to that ward. Blanket applications for grant funding, where a generic application is made to all, or a number of, Ward Committees will not be permitted.

3. Who can apply for a Ward Committee grant?

- Not-for-profit, constituted community groups (N.B. if you do not have a constitution why not approach a larger organisation to act as your sponsor.)
- Ward-based voluntary organisations
- Parish or Town Councils which are active in the Ward Committee area
- Council departments, to do ward-based schemes which are **additional** to the Council's core service provision

4. Who cannot apply for a Ward Committee grant?

- Individuals
- Commercial organisations
- Profit-making organisations

5. How much can you apply for?

In 2009/10, there is no upper or lower limit on how much can be applied for, however if the request exceeds £10,000, you are less likely to be awarded a grant due to the limited budgets.

Generally, we receive more proposals than we can support.

MAKING A DECISION

6. Who decides whether or not you will be awarded a grant?

Ward Councillors make the decision on what schemes are funded taking into account ward priorities, residents' preferences and budget availability.

Ward Councillors firstly look at whether your group and your project are eligible.

They also consider whether your proposal :

- Improves the local environment
- Improves local community safety
- Helps the local community become self sufficient
- Regenerates areas which local people consider run-down
- Helps tackle social exclusion and/or poor health
- Has the support of local communities and takes into account their needs and priorities
- Tackles local priorities that have been highlighted by residents
- Provides good value for money
- Helps the wider aims of the Council and its partners

In deciding the Ward Councillors look at:

- How much money is available overall in the Ward Committee budget
- The preferences of local people. Information about possible projects are published in the ward newsletter, Your Ward. All ward residents can vote to indicate their preference for the schemes that they would like to see funded in their Ward.
- Advice from the Ward Team (including Parish Councillors (if applicable), Town Councillors (if applicable), Neighbourhood Policing Teams, Street Environment Officers, and Neighbourhood Management Officers or other relevant members of the ward.
- Your scheme must comply with Council policies. The Ward Committee will not support schemes which conflict with decisions taken at Full Council. Information is enclosed to help you decide whether your application supports the Council's Vision for York as well as the ambitions and priorities which have been identified and agreed for each ward's Neighbourhood Action Plan.

7. How long will it take before I find out if my application has been successful?

Grant awards are likely to be confirmed in July each year, subject to the receipt of all relevant information.

8. Is there a right of appeal if we are unsuccessful?

Appeals will only be accepted under exceptional circumstances.

9. When will I receive the grant?

The payment of approved grants will be confirmed in writing by the Neighbourhood Management Unit and provided that all relevant information has been returned (including a signed grant agreement form), a payment will be made by BACS (Bankers Automated Clearing Services) in one instalment by the end of July.

10. Monitoring and reporting progress

We will only fund grant projects which will be completed by 31st March of the financial year in which the grant has been awarded. A progress report is required at the end of September of that year. A final report showing how allocated funds have been used is required by the end of June of the following financial year or

three months after the completion of the scheme, whichever is soonest. We may ask organisations to attend Ward Committee meetings to report back on the work that is being done.

The Council will require the organisation to repay all or part of the sum paid if:

- a) the money is not used for the purpose specified, unless changes are made by prior agreement between the Council and the organisation.
- b) the organisation is not able to provide project details as requested in the monitoring reports
- c) the organisation is not able to spend the sum within the financial year in which it is awarded
- d) the organisation is wound up or ceases to exist.
- e) You do not provide the necessary paperwork including the return of the grant agreement form and the progress report form