
Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	12 June 2012
Report By:	Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	Report No:	EDUCOM/03/12/MP
Contact Officer:	Maggie Paterson	Contact No:	01475 715450
Subject:	Grants to Voluntary Organisations – Revised Arrangements		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for further revisions of arrangements for the award of small grants from the Grants to Voluntary Organisations budget.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 At their meeting of 11 May 2011, the Regeneration Committee agreed a number of revisions to the procedures for the award of small grants of £5,000 and under. Following the implementation of these revised arrangements, a follow-up review has been undertaken and the need for supplementary revisions identified. The purpose of these revisions is to further enhance the transparency of the decision making process and to strengthen procedures which seek to ensure applicants' compliance with their legal obligations.
- 2.2 This will be achieved through amending:
- the guidance for applicants to clarify the criteria used by officers to make recommendations to the Grants Committee; and
 - the conditions of grant which applicants sign and submit along with their application.
- 2.3 A copy of the revised documentation is appended at Annexe 1 with the changes highlighted in italics for ease of reference.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Committee approve the revised arrangements for the award of small grants from the Grants to Voluntary Organisations budget.

Albert Henderson
Corporate Director
Education, Communities & Organisational Development

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 Each year the Council grants awards to voluntary organisations to undertake activities and provide services which contribute to Inverclyde Council's priorities.

These grants currently fall into the following categories:

- 3 year grants
- Support for one off projects and activities
- Small grants towards running costs, generally under £5,000

The Grants to Voluntary Organisations budget also contributes to waivers to lets for community facilities.

4.2 In May 2011 the Regeneration Committee agreed revised arrangements intended to:

- Simplify the application process
- Clarify eligibility
- Reduce duplication with the waivers to let budget
- Enhance the transparency of the decision making process
- Facilitate financial and performance monitoring
- Ensure compliance with legal obligations
- Reduce the level of resources required to operate the grant scheme.

4.3 A follow-up review has identified the need for further refinements. These focus on:

- Amendments to the guidance for applicants which will clarify the criteria used by officers to make recommendations to the Grants Committee. These amendments are intended to deter applications which are not appropriate to the purposes of the funding and to make the decision making process more transparent.
- Amendments to the conditions of grant which will require applicants who work with children and vulnerable adults to consider their statutory obligations and to evidence compliance when submitting their application.

5.0 PROPOSALS

5.1 It is proposed that changes be made to the awards process as outlined at 4 above. A draft set of the revised documentation is attached.

Finance: None

Legal: None

Personnel: None

Equalities: None

6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 Not applicable.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None.

Annexe 1

Small Grants to Voluntary Organisations Guidance Notes

The purpose of the small grants fund is to support small community and voluntary organisations who contribute to the quality of life of the people of Inverclyde.

You can only apply for one of our grants if...

- You are based and provide services in Inverclyde
- You are a non-profit group
- You have a constitution, set of rules or Memorandum of Articles and Association. These must be dated and signed as 'adopted' by an office bearer on behalf of your group.
- You have a bank or building society account which requires at least two signatures on each cheque or withdrawal
- You can enclose your most recent annual accounts or statement of income and expenditure. These must be audited or independently examined. For new groups a bank statement may suffice.
- You can spend the grant within one year of the date of our award letter.

We will consider funding

- running costs (other than the cost of lets which are eligible under the waiver to lets scheme)
- further development of an existing project
- a new project
- request for equipment or other one-off expenditure

We will not ...

- give grants to cover goods or services that you order or receive before the date on our award letter.
- fund activities which have closed membership or that discriminate against other groups or residents of Inverclyde.
- fund private clubs for commercial activities but will consider requests to support initiatives designed to widen access and increase participation by disadvantaged and under-represented groups.
- Normally fund organisations who are in receipt of other Council funding.

Your Grant Application's Journey

- your application form (and enclosed documents) comes in and we check to see if it is complete
- if your application is not complete, or there are missing supporting documents, we will send it back to you with a letter to say why

□

- if your application is complete, we will send you a letter of acknowledgement
- your application will be considered by the Grants Sub Committee

□

- if the Grants Sub-Committee decide to reject your application, we will let you know as soon as possible by letter
- if we decide to give you a grant, we will write to you and confirm the amount which will be paid directly into your nominated bank account

□

- you will have to provide an update on actual spend and activity

How we assess your application

We will look at:

- how your group/project is set up and managed
- how your group/project will help meet the needs of your community
- how well your application fits with Inverclyde Council's priorities, as outlined below.

- 1 Inverclyde's population is stable with an appropriate balance of socio-economic groups.
- 2 Communities are stronger, responsible and more able to identify, articulate and take action on their needs and aspirations to bring about an improvement in the quality of community life.
- 3 The area's economic regeneration is secured.
- 4 Economic activity in Inverclyde is increased, and skills development enables both those in work and those furthest from the labour market to realise their full potential.
- 5 The health of local people is improved, combating health inequality and promoting healthy lifestyles.
- 6 A positive culture change will have taken place in Inverclyde in attitudes to alcohol, resulting in fewer associated health problems, social problems and reduced crime rates.
- 7 All our young people have the best possible start in life
- 8 Inverclyde is a sustainable and pleasant place where people want to live now whilst at the same time safeguarding the environment for future generations.

As we consider your application, we may phone you for more information about your group or activity. We may also contact your referee.

Successful applications

If we award you a grant, you will have to keep to our terms and conditions. You must agree to these in advance by signing the Conditions section of the application form. This does not guarantee that you will get a grant but will help us to pay any grant quickly.

Notes to help you with the questions on the application form

This section takes you through the questions on the application form. Please keep these guidance notes beside you and refer to them while you complete the form.

Section 1 - Organisational details

This section is about your organisation's details. The main contact requested in (1b) must be someone from your group who can talk about your application in detail. Please count everyone involved in running your group in question (1g).

When assessing this section of your application officers will consider:

- *how your organisation is structured and managed*
- *the extent to which the work of your organisation is directed and delivered by local people*
- *the extent to which the beneficiaries of your project live in Inverclyde*

Section 2 – Grant particulars

These questions are about what your group would do with the grant if your application is successful.

This section in particular will allow us to assess your application so it is important that you complete it to the best of your ability. It is important that your work is additional to what is already available and that it does not duplicate services provided by another group or agency. Work that complements services provided by another group or agency is acceptable as long as it is clearly additional. Please give us a realistic number for the number of people who will benefit from the grant (question 2d). Please do not put "everyone in the area" unless you can clearly justify this.

When assessing this part of the application officers will consider:

- *the contribution your project can make to achieving the priorities of the Council*
- *whether the grant will represent value for money in terms of the number of people it will benefit*

Section 3 – about the grant

Please make sure the amount you are asking for is based on real and accurate costs. We would like to see most applicants contributing something

towards their costs - cash, in kind or both. Please try to estimate the cost of in kind support to the nearest pound (in kind support includes items such as volunteer time, materials, premises, transport and so on).

It is important to tell us if you are applying to another funder for anything that is included in this application. Should any other such application be successful, it is vital that you tell us as soon as practicable. Failure to disclose this information may result in an offer of grant being withdrawn or your group having to repay some or all of any grant paid out.

When assessing this part of your application officers will consider:

- *the proportion of running costs the Council will be paying with a view to avoiding an organisation becoming entirely dependant on Council funding*
- *whether funding the staffing costs of an organisation could place the Council in a position where they might be implicated in job losses if the grant is not continued*
- *whether the proposed use of the grant could set a precedent which might impact negatively on the effectiveness of the Council's grant scheme*
- *the sustainability of a new project or development of an existing project if grant funding were to be discontinued*
- *the level of turnover of your organisation as this is a small grant scheme (the average grant last year was £1,700) intended for small organisations*
- *the operating profit or loss of your organisation and how this might impact on your ability to deliver the actions*
- *the amount requested relative to the amount held in reserves*
- *the efforts made by your organisation to attract funding from other sources*

Section 4 – other information

Please tell us if your group has previously submitted an application to Inverclyde Council. This helps us to monitor the groups that are receiving assistance on a regular basis. Please continue this information on a separate sheet if necessary.

We need to be able to check that your organisation is financially sound. For this reason we need to be certain that your group has a bank account and that at least two signatories are required for each cheque or withdrawal.

It is important that you enclose all supporting documentation with your application. It does not matter if you have previously submitted an application to Inverclyde Council – **ALL** the information requested should be submitted with each application you make. Failure to provide such information will result in your application being deemed as incomplete. Applications will not be assessed until all relevant supporting documentation has been received. It is therefore vital for you to ensure that all supporting information is enclosed to avoid a delay in your application being processed.

We require the signature of the contact person in (4c). In addition to this, we require the name and contact details for an independent referee. This could be a local councillor, lawyer, Justice of the Peace, senior bank official or someone in your community with particular experience in your area of work.

The person who signs (4e) and the Conditions clause **should not** be the same person who is the contact person.

CONDITIONS OF GRANT

Please read the Conditions of Grant carefully and only sign them if you understand and agree them. Organisations working with vulnerable adults and/or children and young people are now required to demonstrate that they have appropriate procedures in place prior to their grant being approved. Most commonly these procedures will relate to staff and volunteers being subject to checks through the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme (PVG). If your organisation works with children under 8 on a regular basis that exceeds 2 hours per day for more than six days a year, you may require to be registered with the Care Inspectorate. It is the responsibility of your organisation to establish these obligations. If you are unsure of your obligations, further information and support can be obtained from CVS Inverclyde by calling 01475 711733 or by e-mailing admin@cvsinverclyde.org.uk

Completed applications should be sent to:

Safer & Sustainable Communities
40 West Stewart Street
Greenock
PA15 1YA

Or by e-mail to safer.communities@inverclyde.gov.uk

CONDITIONS OF GRANT

I confirm that the *organisation* named in question (1a) has authorised me to sign this agreement on *their* behalf. To the best of my knowledge and belief, all the information we have given in this application is true and correct. If this application is successful, in full or part, the *organisation* will keep to the following terms and conditions. I understand that this is an agreement between the organisation and Inverclyde Council.

We understand and agree the following:

- 1 We will use any grant for exactly the purpose set out in this application and will not make any major changes to our plans without first receiving Inverclyde Council's agreement in writing.
- 2 We will not sell or dispose of any equipment or other assets costing over £100 which we have bought with a grant without first receiving Inverclyde Council's agreement in writing.
- 3 If we make any alterations to our constitution, we shall forward a copy to Inverclyde Council. This copy will be duly dated and signed as adopted.
- 4 We will inform Inverclyde Council of any changes to our bank or building society account.
- 5 We will spend the grant within one year of the date of the award letter. Any surplus will be immediately repaid to Inverclyde Council.
- 6 We will submit the End of Grant report including an update on the information provided at 2b, 2c, 2d and 3a. within one year of the date of the award letter.
- 7 We understand that any liability or claims are the sole responsibility of our organisation / group and not Inverclyde Council.
- 8 We will keep all financial records and accounts, including receipts for items bought with the grant, for at least two years from receiving the grant and make these available to Inverclyde Council if asked. We understand that this does not release us from our legal responsibility to keep records for longer periods.
- 9 We agree to provide access for persons authorised by Inverclyde Council to all records of our organisation / group and recognise that they have authority to seek explanations as deemed necessary.
- 10 We understand Inverclyde Council may hold back a grant or ask us to repay a grant, in whole or in part:
 - if we fail to keep to these conditions in any way.
 - if the application form was completed dishonestly or the supporting documents gave false or misleading information.
 - if we do not follow equal opportunities practice in employing people, recruiting new members and providing our services.
 - if any member of our governing body, staff or volunteers acts dishonestly or negligently in their work for us at any time during our project.

11 If our group closes down or becomes insolvent, any assets secured with a grant from Inverclyde Council will be transferred to another group with similar aims and objectives. The organisation to benefit from such a transfer will be agreed with Inverclyde Council prior to the transfer taking place.

12 These terms and conditions will apply until we have spent all the grant and until the End of Grant report has been received and approved by Inverclyde Council. If we buy any equipment or assets with the grant, these terms and conditions will apply until the end of the normal working life of the assets.

13 We will acknowledge the Council's grant in our annual report, our Chair's or Secretary's report at our AGM, the accounts which cover the period of the grant and in any publicity materials we produce about the project.

For organisations working with vulnerable adults and/or children and young people under 16 years of age only:

Please tick all that apply:

We understand our obligations in respect of the above groups

We attach a copy of our organisation's arrangements to ensure compliance with procedures for the protection of children and vulnerable groups

We recognise that our activities are subject to regulation by the Care Inspectorate and attach documentation to support our compliance.

Name Position in the group

Signed Date