

Small Grants Panel Terms of Reference

Background

The Copeland Community Fund was established to recognise the unique role the Copeland community plays in hosting the national Low Level Waste Repository close to the village of Drigg.

The Fund provides a grant scheme specifically for the benefit of Copeland and is also committed to supporting community groups to develop their skills and confidence in applying for funding. This has been done through the recruitment of a Community Development Team hosted by Copeland Borough Council who help groups themselves and also signpost to other support organisations.

There are two grant schemes available:

- Small Grant Scheme £3,000 - £50,000
- Large Grant Scheme Over £50,000

Purpose of the small grants panel

The purpose of the Grants Panel is to provide an objective assessment of applications to the Copeland Community Fund small grant scheme (£3,000-50,000) that have been scored and recommended for approval by the Grants Officer and consider and make decisions on those applications. Full details of the assessment process are set out in Appendix 1.

In addition, to assessing and selecting the projects to be funded, the Panel's role is to also to provide guidance and feedback on applications to the applicant via the Grants Officer.

The panel will also discuss emerging projects and their suitability to the Fund.

Objectives

The objectives of the Panel will be to:

- consider applications for funding against criteria and make decisions with the authority to set conditions against them
- ensure projects receiving support are fully aligned with local and regional priorities, particularly with regard to the NDA socio economic policy.
- ensure projects align with other funding streams and activity to promote the Copeland Community Fund and, where possible, avoid duplication;
- maximise the impact and coverage of the available funding for the benefit of Copeland; and
- oversee and manage the programme-level output and match funding requirements.

Membership

Membership of the Grants Panel will comprise representatives from:

- NDA
- CCC
- CBC

Meetings

The Panel will meet monthly to assess and approve applications. We anticipate each meeting lasting a maximum of 2 hours.

The panels will be organised and managed by the team Leader and Grants Officer who will provide Panel members with relevant papers at least one week before scheduled meetings.

Minutes and key actions/decisions of each panel will also be recorded by the Grants Officer to ensure an accurate record of the meeting.

Panel responsibilities

In participating in the Panel, members will be expected:

- to adopt a fair and objective approach to assessing all project applications on their individual merit;
- to treat circulated information and discussions held in a confidential manner;
- not to discuss decisions outside of the meeting until such time as all applicants have been informed of decisions and these have been made publicly available; and
- to declare any actual or potential conflicts of interest.

Appendix 1 Grants Panel Assessment of Applications

Panel members will be equipped with 5 types of information and analysis to aid their deliberation and inform their recommendations.

- I. Copy of application form
- II. Business/project plan
- III. Community Development and thematic commentary
- IV. Appraisal form
- V. Score sheet

Moderation zone

moderating only those projects scoring above an agreed minimum score of 50%.

Drawing on their own experience of project delivery as well as regional/local knowledge, members of the Panel are asked to consider:

a. high scorers where there is a previous history of a poor track record (i.e. possible indication of a good bid writer involved);

b. usually reliable project applicants which have uncharacteristically scored low;

c. geographical and thematic coverage – whilst not compromising on the quality of the projects (as scored) it will be important to try to get a reasonable spread of projects across the borough and different themes; and

d. synergy and fit with other funding programmes across the borough.

The intention is for the Panel not to have to review all the applications received, but to assess and moderate only those which score above 60%

Copies of the full applications will be brought to the meeting for any further questions but it is anticipated that the summary information provided in the appraisal should be sufficient to reach a decision in most cases.

Appendix 2 Current members of the Grants Panel

Grants Panel:

Brian Hough – NDA
Julie Betteridge – CBC
Sam Bramwell - CCC

Secretariat:

Heather Askew – Community Development Team Leader
Kim Miller – Community Development Worker
Paula Ratcliffe – Community Development Worker
Kimberley Young – Grants Officer