

Community Budgeting Phase 5 2020/21 Criteria & Guidance Notes

Community Budgeting is West Dunbartonshire's version of Participatory Budgeting (PB). PB is a form of budget allocation to community groups and voluntary organisations for projects where the final decision on who is funded is made by local residents.

PB is part of a wider agenda for engaging communities, developing participatory democracy and public services reform. It also links to the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 and helps to deliver the public sector equality duty by advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between different groups.

Previous rounds of Community Budgeting in West Dunbartonshire have seen local people attend voting events to decide how grants were allocated to groups and projects working in their local communities.

How Community Budgeting works

Community groups and voluntary organisations are invited to make applications for funding of up to **£5000** to support activities taking place in communities across West Dunbartonshire. The voting will take place online in **February 2021** (details to be confirmed) where local people will have the opportunity to find out about what groups/organisations are proposing to do with the funding and to vote to decide which groups are funded.

Who can be funded?

Community groups and voluntary organisations can apply to Community Budgeting if you can meet the following requirements:

- Your group/organisation provides a service in, or of benefit to, communities in West Dunbartonshire
- You have a constitution or governing document (or have a host organisation that has one)
- You have a bank account in the name of your group (with at least 2 unrelated signatories)
- You are a not-for-profit group/organisation
- You hold public liability insurance should your activities require it.
- You are not undertaking any physical works to buildings / assets without evidencing permission from the owner and/or planning department, if required.
- Your group / organisation responded to evaluation and monitoring requests from Phase 4

What if my group doesn't meet all of the requirements?

Community Budgeting is about funding ideas and projects that will have a positive impact on the lives of local people. Support is available to help your group develop its idea and look at the options available to you to meet the application requirements.

- We can support your group to get a constitution and/ or bank account in place. These **must** be in place before the application deadline for your application to be eligible.
- Groups who do not wish to have a constitution or bank account can apply for up to **£500** by asking another, more established community group who does meet the criteria to act as a host for the funding. Your group will still decide how the money is spent, but the host group would look after it in their bank account. A letter of consent from the host organisation **must** be included with your application at the time of submission.
- If you are not sure if your group meets the criteria, support is available to help develop your plan and complete your application form.

What can be funded?

Community budgeting can support both **capital** and **revenue** funding applications.

As a general rule capital funding is spending that is one-off and doesn't recur on a regular basis. If you buy an item or items they are capital if these would be expected to last more than 12 months. Everything else is revenue.

- An example of **capital spending** is buying the building materials for a community project such as a community garden.
- An example of **revenue spending** is paying for your group's use of a community hall for regular meetings or activities.

A few examples of what can and can't be funded are listed in the boxes below:

What we can fund:

- **Buying equipment**
- **Community events**
- **Environmental improvements**
- **Training**
- **Community gardens**
- **Group start-up costs**
- **Volunteer or sessional staff costs**
- **Team strips**

What we won't fund

- **Projects which conflict with WDC policies.**
- **Applications from statutory bodies such as Council departments, schools etc.**
- **Applications from companies.**
- **Retrospective spending.**
- **Physical works to assets not owned by the group, unless it has been approved by the owner and evidence of consent provided**

Is help available to complete an application?

Yes. If you aren't sure what type of funding your project or idea needs or you need to speak to someone about your application, help will be available.

You can make an appointment to speak with a member of the Communities Team between 9.30am and 4.30pm.

What should your project do?

Projects funded through Community Budgeting should have a positive impact on the lives of people living within your local community. We will ask you to describe how your project will have a positive influence on one or more of the following:

- Reducing social isolation.
- Encouraging more people to be active in their local community.
- Increasing skills and capacity within communities.
- More opportunities for young people.
- Addressing inequalities in communities.
- Mental Health and Wellbeing

Can groups previously funded by Community Budgeting apply?

Yes. Groups that have had funding from previous rounds of Community Budgeting can apply this time.

However, we would encourage newer groups and groups from neighbourhoods which haven't previously received any funding to come forward. Help is available to develop your idea and complete your application.

How much can be applied for?

Groups who can meet all of the criteria before the application deadline can apply for any amount up to £5000. **Only one application per group / organisation is permitted.**

Groups who do not have a constitution or bank account and have a host organisation to hold the funds can apply for any amount up to £500.

How do we know our project is needed?

The application form asks groups/organisations to describe how they have consulted with the community and how their project is designed to help communities. The people you have spoken to could live in the area where the project will take place, or it could be the people who regularly attend your group or take part in your activities. You need to demonstrate that you have taken steps to find out if the project you are seeking to fund is wanted and needed.

How long should the project last?

Successful groups need to be able to spend the funding received for the project within 12 months (before the end of March 2022).

The application form also asks about the **sustainability** of your project or idea. This means, what happens after the 12 months and you have spent the funding. We ask groups/organisations to think about what their project legacy will be and, even if it does only last during the funding period, what will be the impact on the local people who participated in it or were part of it?

We also want groups who are applying for physical works to assets, play equipment or other equipment for a public space to think about how this will be maintained in the long run.

What happens after I submit the application?

- Applications must be submitted by **12 noon** on **25th January 2021**
- All accompanying documents must be sent in before the closing date in order for your application to be eligible.
- **Applications without the appropriate documents at this stage will not be progressed.**
- All eligible applications will be screened by a panel of council officers.
- Applicants who are not progressing to voting will be notified and support will be provided.
- Applicants progressing to the voting will be notified.
- Information will be released on what is expected of groups for online voting. Anybody wishing to vote will require an email address so you may want to ensure you encourage your potential supporters to be 'vote ready' and we can also assist in this process.
- Successful groups will be asked to submit funding claim forms in order to draw down the money.

Please note: the results will be announced on the first Monday following the online voting.

Do groups need to write a report when the funding from Community Budgeting has been spent?

Yes. A short financial/evaluation report on how the money was spent is required. In addition you will need to provide a summary of what difference the funding and your project made to the local community or to the people who took part in it.

We will ask you to tell us how the things you hoped to achieve were achieved or of any difficulties you encountered. The story of how your group or idea helped make a positive difference to local people. A report template to help you report back will be provided.

Financial evidence will also be required (e.g. receipts, end of year accounts).

Further Information

Completed forms must be returned by **12 noon** on **25th January**

2021 to CommunityBudgeting@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

Useful Contacts

To discuss your application, please contact;

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