

Policy

COMMUNITY GRANTS AND FUNDING POLICY

TEAM:	Community and Open Spaces
RESPONSIBILITY:	Group Manager Community & Open Spaces
ADOPTED:	17 December 2025
REVIEW:	Every 5 years or as required.
CONSULTATION:	As required by the Community Engagement Policy
RELATED DOCUMENTS:	Ashburton District Long Term Plan, Local Government Act 2002, Community Engagement Policy.

Policy Objective

The purpose of distributing community grants and funding is to support programmes, projects and initiatives that benefit the Ashburton District community and promote the Ashburton District Long-Term Plan Vision. In particular, the objectives of this policy are to:

- determine the funding needs of community organisations,
- determine a responsible approach to the fair distribution of resources, and
- establish effective monitoring and reporting with regard to applications and funds allocation, and accountability for use of funds.

Definitions

Contestable, for the purposes of this policy, means that:

- applications are invited during scheduled funding rounds, with publicly advertised opening and closing dates,
- any eligible organisation has an equal opportunity to be considered, and
- clearly defined processes will be applied to all applications

Council: means Ashburton District Council.

Grant: means a monetary contribution from Council, for a specific purpose or project, administered through a Council contestable grant scheme.

Funding: means a monetary contribution from Council, for operational funding of an organisation, administered through a Council contestable funding process. Funding requests are considered either through the community grants application process, or during budget discussions on the annual or long-term plans.

Policy Statement

1. Introduction

1.1 Details on the available Community Grants & Funding can be found on Councils website.

1.2 Community grants and funding schemes will be advertised and promoted to the community.

1.3 Council's allocation of community grant funding will be prioritised to encourage the following:

- Contribution toward the achievement of Council's long term community outcomes for Ashburton District.
- Recognition of volunteer input (including volunteers, in-kind work or materials and financial support).
- Cost-effectiveness and sustainability
- Number of people in the community who will benefit.
- Accessibility of the project, programme or initiative to the wider community.

1.4 Applications for grants and funding will only be accepted where the event or project is located in Ashburton District.

1.5 Priority will be given where the application is:

- available to the wider community, and
- organised by a non-profit organisation.

2. Criteria

2.1 Applications for community grants and funding must demonstrate:

- an identifiable project or need and the benefit to the community,
- the ability to responsibly plan and administer the project or initiative, and
- the impact of the project on the wellbeing of the community.

2.2 Specific criteria apply to each grant or fund where contestable funds are available. The criteria are detailed on the application form and available to applicants when the application process opens.

2.3 The Discretionary grant gets budgeted annually through the Annual or Long-Term Plan budget process. This funding is available from 1 July each year for any purpose by resolution of Council.

2.4 There are no criteria for the allocation of the Discretionary Grant and therefore in previous years, the Grant has been allocated by Council as applications are received throughout the year. Council considers any application through a report.

3. Community grants

- 3.1 Council administers contestable grant schemes to support projects and initiatives that benefit the Ashburton District community.
- 3.2 Each community grant scheme has an individual purpose and eligibility criteria approved by Council.

4. Funding

- 4.1 Council administers contestable funding and contractual agreements to support the operational costs of groups and organisations meeting an evidential need in the Ashburton District community.
- 4.2 Applications for funding will be considered against the priorities for Ashburton District as identified by Council's Long-Term Plan. Council will only fund applications where there is a clear link between these priorities and the projects for which funds are sought.
- 4.3 Applications over \$20,000 are required to supply the latest annual statement of accounts, balance sheets and bank statement as part of their application.

5. Application process

- 5.1 Applications for community grants are open at dates determined by the Group Manager
- 5.2 For contractual agreements business cases must be provided.
- 5.3 Applications must complete an online application form and include the following information:
 - a description of the project / event,
 - the benefit and need to the community or district,
 - the total cost of the project / event,
 - the reason for the project / event,
 - the outcomes of the project
 - the contribution, if any, by the applicant, volunteers or other organisations , and
 - if other sources of funding is being sought.
- 5.4 Successful applications will be notified via email after the applications close.
- 5.5 Applications must be received by the closing date specified. Late applications will not be accepted.
- 5.6 Applicants should endeavour to submit full and complete applications. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure all relevant information is included.

6. Who can apply?

6.1 Priority will be given to organisations/individuals that can:

- demonstrate significant value per head;
- demonstrate they are seeking other sources of funding. Council is a complementary rather than a primary funder;

- demonstrate there is both a community need and community support for their project or activity.

6.2 **Projects, events or groups which immediately do not qualify:**

- those where the sole purpose is to raise funds to further religious or political beliefs;
- groups who seek funds for education centres (i.e. childhood education centres, primary and secondary schools, kindergartens and play centres)
- those run by and for the benefit of commercial or profit-oriented organisations, excepting such organisations registered with the Charities Services (and excluding heritage buildings);
- travel for meetings, events or conference attendance, except where volunteer training is the primary purpose; and
- projects or events that have already commenced, or equipment that has already been purchased.

6.3 **Retrospective applications**

Council will not normally fund retrospective applications, except in emergency circumstances, as determined by Council.

7. Requirements of recipients when a grant or funding is received

7.1 **Reporting requirements**

Council requires all successful applicants to complete a reporting form and provide formal certification/receipt of work completed to the satisfaction of Council, within 12 months of the funding being allocated. Failure to comply with reporting requirements may jeopardise future funding requests at the discretion of Council.

7.2 **Return of unused funds**

Any unspent funds must be returned to Council if they have not been spent within twelve months of receiving the money in their bank account, unless they have been approved to carry-over funds as per clause 7.4.

7.3 **Repurposing funds**

Council acknowledges that there are situations where funds may need to be repurposed. However, these situations are unlikely to be a common occurrence.

Recipients of funds must contact Council if they wish to repurpose funds with a clear reason and rationale. Quotes are required for the re-purposing of funds.

The Group Manager will then determine if the funding can be re-purposed, or if funds should be returned to Council.

7.4 **Carry-over of funds**

When a recipient is unable to use the funds at the intended time, they must contact Council with a clear reason and rationale on why they wish to carry over the funds to a later date.

The Group Manager will then determine if the funding can be carried over, or if funds should be returned to Council.

8. Appeals

- 8.1 Appeals must be lodged in writing no later than five working days after receipt of the letter from Council advising of the outcome of the application.
- 8.2 Appeals will only be accepted where new information is provided that was not initially included in the application.
- 8.3 The appeal will be reassessed by relevant Council officers. If officers determine the appeal includes new information which requires assessment by Council the application will be presented to Council at the next scheduled meeting. If no new information is provided, the applicant will be advised the appeal has been unsuccessful.
- 8.4 Decisions made on appeals are final. The applicant is still entitled to apply for future grants and funding rounds provided the criteria is met.

9. External Organisations

- 9.1 Council may at times choose to distribute grant funding through external organisations. This funding will be subject to criteria prior approved by Council.

10. Conflict of interest

- 10.1 Organisations affiliated in some way to elected members or employees of Council can still be considered for grant funding, however, organisations in this category should note any possible conflict of interest (or perception of a conflict of interest) in their application, to ensure any necessary steps can be taken to mitigate this.
- 10.2 Elected members or Council officers are also required to note any possible conflict of interest (or perception of a conflict of interest), and will take appropriate actions as required.