

EXTERNAL GRANT APPLICATIONS PROTOCOLS

Bewdley Town Council is funded by the residents of Bewdley through taxation known as the Precept.

To enable Bewdley Town Council to support larger community projects, the Council has to apply for additional funding from outside agencies. As a public body the Council has to ensure that any funding applications are completed in an open and transparent way and are monitored to ensure the projects are implemented and deliver best value for money. To that aim the following processes should be followed.

Prior to any funding application being made a report should be taken to the Finance and Facilities Committee outlining:

- how the applications meet the Councils corporate objectives (Is this a planned project?)
- the reasons for the application (what is the money needed for?)
- the amount of money required (how much will the project cost?)
- the benefits to the community (who will benefit?)

If in agreement with the proposed application the Finance and Facilities Committee should recommend the application for approval to the next Council meeting.

Prior to the submission of the application, the application form or letter should be independently reviewed for accuracy and completeness and signed off by the Chairman of the Finance and Facilities Committee to evidence agreement for submission or The Mayor if appropriate.

For monitoring purposes, the Finance and Facilities-Committee should receive regular project progress reports and a project completion report from the Town Clerk. These should be reviewed and recommended for approval by the Council.

At the end of each project the Council should reflect on the project outcomes to ensure constant improvement.

FUNDING APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Planning a funding application:

Finding the right funder

Different organisations award different type of grants to community and voluntary organisations, these could include large charities, councils, private companies or trusts.

It is important that Bewdley Town Council selects the funder that best suits the project or activity for which funding is sought. Time should be taken in choosing the right funder before any application is completed.

Lists of funding organisations can be obtained from the internet.

Read the funders guidelines carefully.

The more closely the project matches the funder's priorities the more likely the funding will be granted.

- What type of activities do they want to fund?
- Do they already fund project in the area?
- What kinds of people they want to provide funding for? (children, adults, people facing particular challenges)
- What kinds of benefits do they want the activities to have? (improve health, help learn new skills)
- Is the funder only interested in new activities or projects? (not interested in day to day running costs)
- Will they fund running costs for existing activities?
- How much money will they be prepared to give?
- Can the money be spent on specific areas?
- Do they require match funding?
- Are there application deadlines?

Ensure a record is maintained of how each criteria is met.

Before you apply

Most funders will require evidence of the following:

- Governing documents
- Committees
- A bank account
- A statement of accounts

Dependant on the funder or on the project they may also require sight of:

- Insurance
- A health and safety policy or risk assessment
- An equal opportunities policy
- A safeguarding policy

Writing the Application

1. Always keep the project in mind

Don't over commit because it looks better on the application.

2. Write in plain English

Short sentences, no acronym or jargon – keep it simple.

3. Be specific about what is planned

State exactly what the project aims to deliver (weekly session over 6-month period lasting 2 hours each sessions for approx. 15 children)

4. Focus the application on the funders priorities

5. Provide evidence that the project is needed

6. Provide all information the funder asks for

Don't miss anything out.

7. Meet the deadlines

Late applications will not be considered.

8. Make the budget as specific as possible

Get quotations for anything that needs to be paid for

9. Do not include non-specific budget items

Don't say contingency costs or miscellaneous.

10. Do not apply to more than one funder for the same costs at the same time

Completing an application form

When you complete an application form follow these basic guidelines:

- 1. Take care to read each question carefully** - make sure your answers include specific information that is relevant to the question.
- 2. Give yourself enough time to do a bit of extra research** - ensure you can answer all the questions fully.
- 3. Be clear, precise, and positive about the Council and the proposed project.**
- 4. Keep in mind the funder's guidelines and criteria when answering the questions.**
- 5. Do not include any attachments that aren't specifically requested by the funder.**
- 6. Online Forms** - write the answers in a word document first, so they can be saved as you go along and shared prior to submission.
- 7. Ask somebody else to check the form thoroughly before it is sent off**
- 8. Keep a copy of your completed form.**

Writing a Letter of Application

If the funder does not have a standard application form.

- 1. Focus your letter on the aims and criteria of the organisation that the application is made to**
How your project or activities fit into these, don't send a standard letter.
- 2. Your letter should be:**
 - On headed paper.
 - Addressed personally to the named contact for the funding body.
 - Short and to the point. Keep your letter to two sides of A4. Focus on providing relevant information about the Council, what you want to do, and why it fits into the priorities of the funder.
 - Written in plain language. Do not use jargon or abbreviations.
 - Signed by the Chairman of the Finance and Facilities Committee, the Mayor or the Town Clerk who can be contacted for further information.
- 3. Some funders will tell you what to include in your letter**
If they don't, use the following list as a guide:
 - The project title

- A project summary and how much money is being applied for
- An introduction to Bewdley Town Council,
- A clear description of the project, the projects aims, key achievement dates and any support from other bodies
- Why the project is important and how it will benefit its users.
- A summary of how you will monitor and evaluate the project.

Always finish the letter with an offer for them to contact the Council for more information.

4. Attached the following documents with the letter

- Project budget, including all the costs of the project, which bits they are being asked to fund, and where the rest of the money will come from.
- Bank details
- A governing document (e.g. constitution / trust deed / memorandum and article of association).
- The most recent accounts.

What to do if you are successful

If the Council is offered a grant, the funder will often request further information or paperwork before they give you the money. Send this to them as soon as possible, and make sure any deadlines are met. Failure to do so could mean the Council don't get the grant after all.

Read through the terms and conditions of the grant carefully.

- What items have they agreed to fund?
- Do they specify any other conditions of how the money is to be spent or handled?
- What kind of monitoring information do they want?
- How do they want it presented?

Ensure the project includes a system for monitoring and start this as soon as your project or activities begins. If the funder asks for a report, make sure it is sent to them in good time, including all the information they have requested. Even if the information is not asked for, it is worth writing to funders to let them know how your project is going and highlighting any particular successes.