

# **Neighbourhood Fund Criteria and Guidance Notes**

The Neighbourhood Fund is a rolling programme over three years and the process will be in three stages through which bidders can be supported through the process by an officer.

The three stages of the process are:

- Expressions of interest
- Presentation
- Final submission

The application process is competitive – applications will be judged and scored against the criteria and against the quality and need of other applications.

Further information and guidance is available from East Staffordshire Borough Council's Neighbourhood Working team on [neighbourhoods.team@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:neighbourhoods.team@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk) or 01283 508037/8.

## **Stage 1 – Expression of Interest**

- 1.1. The scheme is designed to provide a “one-off” capital investment for a project.
- 1.2. Expressions of interest must be submitted on the forms available from the Neighbourhood Working Team or via the ESBC website.
- 1.3. Projects must be able to demonstrate an alignment to East Staffordshire Borough Council's Corporate Priorities. The current priorities can be obtained from the ESBC website or from the Neighbourhood Team.
- 1.4. Proposed projects must also be supported through at least one of the following:
  - East Staffordshire Borough Council Corporate Plan
  - The Local Plan
  - Neighbourhood Plan
  - Other strategic documents which indicate the support of the local community
  - Other consultation with evidence supplied
- 1.5. Projects that have already started are not eligible for this funding stream
- 1.6. Your Ward Councillor should be made aware of the potential project for which you are submitting an Expression of Interest as evidence of their support is required.

## **Stage 2 – Presentation**

- 2.1. Presentations will be made to the Neighbourhood Funding panel at one of the quarterly meetings. The format can be discussed with a member of the Neighbourhood Working team but must address each of the points on the assessment criteria.
- 2.2. The Applicant is expected to provide a project plan that includes milestones as well as expected project start and completion dates.
- 2.3. Any project involving alterations to a building should provide a floor plan or architect's drawing. If the project is being done in phases, please mark on the plan the area that is covered in this application (where applicable).

- 2.4. At this stage the Panel will provide feedback to the applicant about the project and whether it will be able to continue along this path to secure the funding for the project. If the Panel grant support to an applicant, an “in principle” decision will be given as to the level of funding that could be awarded at the final submission stage.
- 2.5. Except for in exceptional circumstances, 50% match funding is required.

**Stage 3 – Final submission**

- 3.1. For projects that are able to progress to this stage a Neighbourhood Fund grant application will need to be completed and submitted to one of the quarterly panel meetings. Forms are available from the Neighbourhood Working team.
- 3.2. Evidence of other sources of funding for the project will have to be supplied.
- 3.3. Grants can be approved pending confirmation that the other funding sources have been secured but the funds will not be released until such confirmations are supplied.
- 3.4. The value of the application will determine the procedures that have to be adhered to. The table below sets out ESBC rules and copies of quotes will need to be supplied at this stage.

Goods/Services	Procurement Procedure
Up to £3000	One oral quotation (confirmed in writing over £500)
£3,001 to £50,000	Three Written Quotations
£50,001 or more	Invitation to tender to at least three, normally no more than 6

- 3.5. The grant approval is based on the information given during the process.
- 3.6. The Applicant will use the grant only in accordance with the details in the application.
- 3.7. All relevant permissions (Planning and/or Building Regulations consent) have been obtained by the time your application is assessed by the grants panel (where applicable).
- 3.8. Projects will need to complete an equality assessment of a type that is included in the application pack.
- 3.9. No additional awards will be made to cover the cost of Value Added Tax.
- 3.10. Applicants must understand their responsibilities and have in place, suitable policies such as Health and Safety, safeguarding, use of volunteers. Applicants must demonstrate compliance with any other legislation governing the activity being undertaken. Overall responsibility remains with the organisation applying for the grant and not with East Staffordshire Borough Council.
- 3.11. By accepting a grant from the Neighbourhood Fund, applicants agree to complete project update forms in the format that will be supplied to them and within the agreed timescales.

## **Post funding award and project completion**

- 4.1. The applicant will provide documentary evidence on request as East Staffordshire Borough Council will require confirmation that the applicant has complied with the terms of the grant.
- 4.2. All invoices, receipts, and accounting records relating to the project must be kept for at least 6 years after completion of the project, and made available for inspection by East Staffordshire Borough Council, its auditors or other nominees.
- 4.3. If the project is not completed or progressed within the agreed timescales the Council can ask for the money back or not make any further payments.
- 4.4. The applicant will provide a written report and photographs (where appropriate) on the work undertaken, detailing improvements and associated benefits to the community. This will be provided within three months of the payment of the invoices.
- 4.5. Any asset bought by the grant must be adequately stored, maintained, insured and available for inspection on request.
- 4.6. The applicant and applicant's organisation must publicise in a way to the satisfaction of East Staffordshire Borough Council the support given by the Council. In particular any publicity material, press releases, handouts, notice boards must include and acknowledge that this project received funding from East Staffordshire Borough Council's Neighbourhood Fund.
- 4.7. The applicant and/or applicant's organisation must make a representative available for any PR organised by East Staffordshire Borough Council.
- 4.8. East Staffordshire Borough Council reserves the right to use the applicant and/or applicant's organisation details in publicity materials.
- 4.9. If the applicant or any person connected with the application fails to comply with these conditions or commits any breach of faith such as misrepresentation or concealment of information, the Council may require the immediate repayment of all or part of the grant.