



Bracknell Forest Borough Council

Core Grant Funding

Explained

October 2007

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Introduction

It is not a statutory requirement to do so, but the Council has made a positive decision to exercise certain powers given to it under the Local Government Act 2000 to fund community based initiatives using public money.

We support the funding of voluntary and community groups through grants because we recognise that it can be difficult for organisations, especially smaller or less well-known groups, to secure financial support or sponsorship and that sometimes, it may be these very same community based organisations that are best placed to deliver services or run projects directly to and within communities.

Our overall objectives are to:

- Get more people actively involved in their communities
- Enable people to identify their own needs, priorities and responses
- Help improve their local quality of life
- Foster community involvement and
- Help people create a connection with the broader community in which they live.

Our grants can only be awarded to organisations that help us achieve our key objectives and service priorities within the Borough.

What are the Council's Objectives?

The purpose of Bracknell Forest Borough Council is quite simply to make Bracknell Forest a place where people want to live and work.

We work with other organisations seeking to make the sum of the parts greater than our individual efforts. The Council has identified several objectives where it seeks to make a difference over the medium-term:

Draft Medium Term Objectives

Priority one: a town centre fit for the 21st century:

1. Build a vibrant Bracknell town centre that residents are proud of.

Priority two: protecting and enhancing our environment:

2. Keep our parks, open spaces and leisure facilities accessible and attractive.
3. Promote sustainable housing and infrastructure development.
4. Keep Bracknell Forest clean and green.

Priority three: promoting health and achievement:

5. Improve health and well being within the Borough.
6. Improve the outcomes for children and families through the Children and Young People's Plan.
7. Seek to ensure that every resident feels included and able to access the services they need.

Priority four: create a borough where people are, and feel, safe:

8. Reduce crime and increase people's sense of safety in the Borough.
9. Promote independence and choice for vulnerable adults and older people
10. Be accountable and provide excellent value for money.

What Grants Are Available?

Grants under £5,000

The Council is no longer able to provide these grants. An alternative source of funding is Berkshire Community Foundation who operate under criteria which can be accessed at www.berkshirecommunityfoundation.org.uk or, alternatively, ring Ray Emans, Grant Officer on 0118 303021

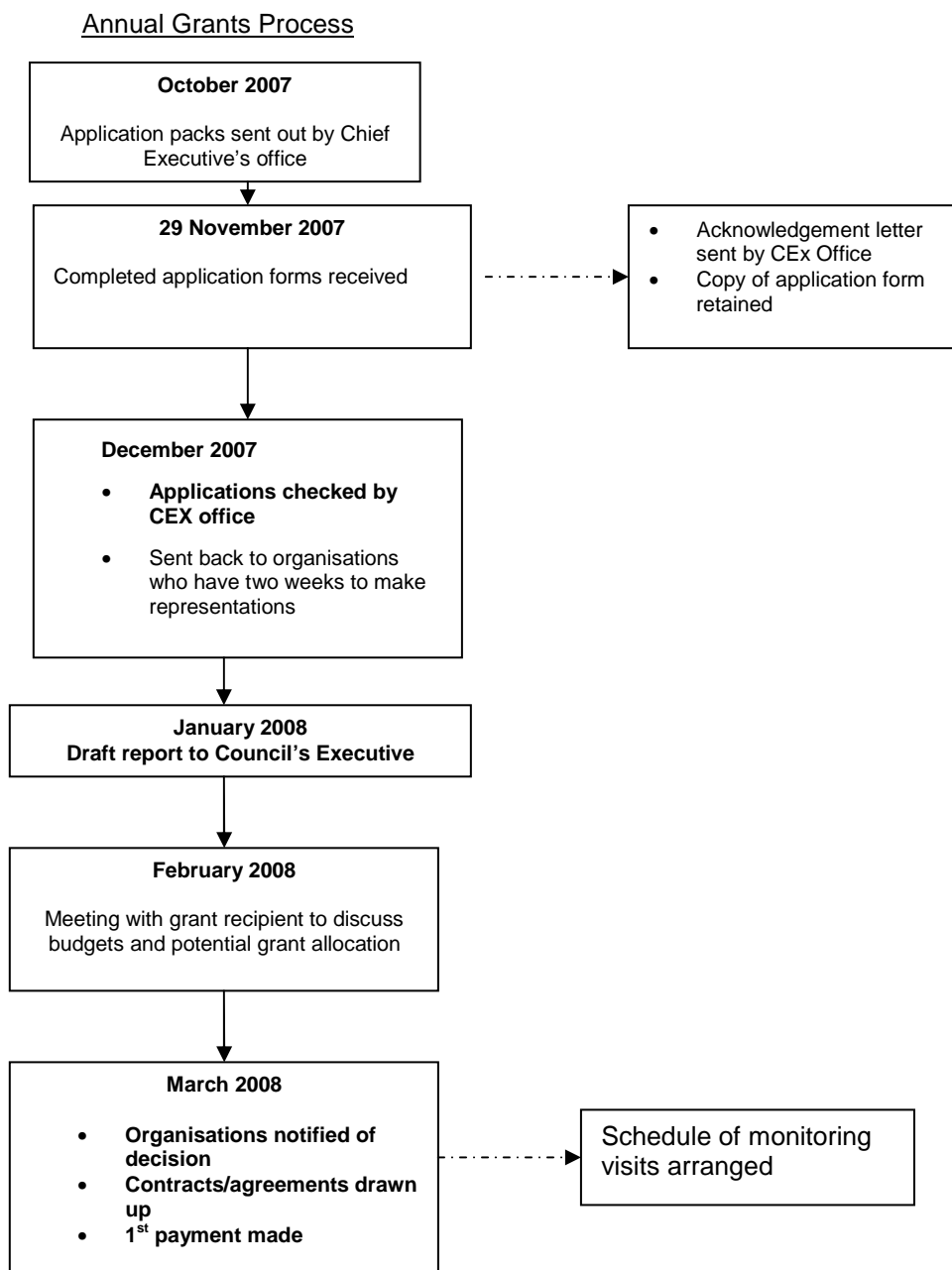
Grants of over £5,000

Grants of over £5,000 are decided upon as part of Bracknell Forest Borough Council's service planning processes and are awarded to organisations that either contribute to the Council's Medium Term Objectives (MTOs) or provide a service that the Council may otherwise have to provide itself. This is in recognition of the fact that the voluntary sector is not only a partner in the Council's work but can also contribute to and deliver specialised services to a higher standard than the Council would be able to on its own.

Core "social well-being" grants will no longer be available for 2008-09.

How is my Application Processed?

The application process is outlined in the following pages, to give you a general idea of the process, the paperwork and the payments concerning a grant application.



Applications for Core Revenue Funding must be received by the Senior Policy Officer by the 29th November 2007

Process

1. Application forms and guidelines will be sent to you in both hard copy and electronic format.
2. All applications must be completed in accordance with the instructions provided and received by the Senior Policy Officer no later than 29th November 2007.
3. Applications will be acknowledged by the Project Support Officer within 10 working days of receipt.
4. The Senior Policy Officer will then assess your application and will submit a report, based on the information you provide, to the "Portfolio Holder" (or other officer or authority) for that Service Department. The Portfolio Holder will be an Executive Member of the Council and he or she will make the final decision as to whether support for your grant application can be granted.
5. The proposed decision on your application will be posted on the Council's website, as part of the Executive Work Programme, and your organisation will receive a copy of the decision by post.
6. Feedback on applications will be given, by the Senior Police Officer, on request
7. Where an application is successful, an agreement will be drawn up in consultation with your organisation which may detail any special conditions or specific monitoring arrangements (see below).

Paperwork

Application Forms

Applications forms are set out in a common format and this enables the Borough council to assess each application fairly. All decisions will be based purely on the information that you provide on this form; therefore please do not assume we have any prior knowledge of your organisation.

Agreements

Successful applications will be subject to agreements between the organisation and Bracknell Forest Borough Council and you should expect to be issued with a Service Level Agreement (SLA). The purpose and amount of funding will be reflected in the requirements of the SLA which will detail the amount of the grant, the purpose for which the grant must be used and the conditions that you must comply with in order to receive the grant.

It should be noted that these are legally binding documents and if the terms are broken, we will be obliged to protect our financial investment.

If you are in any doubt as to the meaning of the document that you will be asked to sign you should take the advice of a solicitor.

Payments

Payments will generally be made by BACS in instalments and payment details will be outlined in your SLA.

General Criteria

The following GENERAL criteria apply for ALL Core Grants. Groups and organisations must:

1. Identify clearly their need for the money or assistance and how they intend to use it
2. Show how they involve their members in the running of the organisation
3. Work in partnership with the local authority to extend and improve the quality of life for residents of the Borough of Bracknell Forest
4. Actively promote Bracknell Forest Borough Council's Medium Term Objectives by providing high quality, cost effective services within local communities across the Borough
5. Demonstrate that they are open to all members of the community within the remit of their group
6. Provide an up to date business plan or work programme which states the objective of their work and sets out how they intend to monitor the success of their work
7. Undertake a monitoring visit with the Senior Policy Officer quarterly

SPECIFIC criteria also apply to each grant.

Who is not eligible?

Groups or organisations cannot be considered for a grant if:

- They have a view, or the potential, to profit from their activities, in the sense of distributing funds to shareholders/members.
- They seek to cover expenditure which has already been incurred.
- The Council feels that membership fees are set so high that they effectively restrict access to a limited number in the community.
- Financial assistance in the form of donation or sponsorship if sought for profit making organisations or individuals.

How should I apply?

The Council will notify you of when the grants process starts and your eligibility. If you have not applied for this type of grant funding before and wish to be considered under these arrangements please contact the Senior Policy Officer on 01344 353315

Specific Criteria

Key Voluntary Organisation Funding

These are grants available to cover the general running costs of voluntary and community organisations. Funding will contribute to the core functions of an organisation that enable it to develop and maintain services which Bracknell Forest Borough Council has identified as supporting one or more of the Council's Medium Term Objectives.

Eligibility

Groups and organisations must first show that they meet the General Criteria for Grants.

In addition, the following **specific criteria** also apply:

1. Organisations must have been identified as being:
 - Borough Wide
 - A key Partner
 - Delivering services that the Council may otherwise have to provide itself or
 - Specifically delivering on the Council's key MTOs.

Please contact Fiona Heston, Senior Policy Officer on 01344 353315 should you have any questions.

The Voluntary Sector Compact

The Voluntary Sector Compact is an agreement which aims to clarify and develop the relationship between the Borough Council, voluntary and community groups and other organisations. By working in partnership with these groups we aim to establish core values, rights and responsibilities through codes of good practice which will ensure that we are all effective in our common goal of serving the needs of the community and that a voice is provided for any voluntary or community group regardless of its size or the projects or activities its provides.

The Compact is currently out to consultation until early 2008.

How can I contact Bracknell Forest Borough Council?

By Phone

Any enquiries on criteria or for more general information, please contact Bracknell Forest Borough Council on 01344 353315

By Email

Write to grant.aid@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

By Post

Core Grant Funding
Senior Policy Officer
Chief Executive's Office
Bracknell Forest Borough Council
Easthampstead House
Town Square
Bracknell
Berkshire
RG12 1AQ

Free publicity

If you want to let others know about your organisation, you can join our list of community organisations by visiting the Community Groups Pages on the Council's web-site.