Large Community Grant Applications Assessment Guide

1. The Evaluation Process

Step 1:Eligibility Check by Staff

Staff will check applications to ensure that the general eligibility criteria are met and that required documentation has been submitted.

Step 2: Preliminary Review by a Working Group

a. The detailed assessment of applications is delegated to a Councillor Working Group

b. Working Group members will evaluate each application using the standard Assessment & Scoring Matrix (section 2).

c. If an application scores 0 under any of the criteria the working group may recommend that funding is refused.

d. For every application, the Working Group will record:

- Scores across each criterion
- A Brief explanation of how the score was determined based on the information provided.
- Funding Conditions, such as Service Level Agreements, proof of match-funding, specific monitoring requirements etc.
- A Preliminary Funding Recommendation: Suggested grant award level (Full, Partial, or Refuse).

Step 3: Preparation for the Finance Committee

a. All members of the Finance Committee will receive copies of all submitted application forms.
b. Finance Committee members will have read all applications ahead of the meeting to ensure informed decision-making based on facts and evidence.
c. The Working Group will submit its scoring to the Finance Committee.

Step 4: Finance Committee Discussion & Agreement

a. Any Councillor with a personal or prejudicial interest in an applying organisation or project must declare it and follow the Council's Code of Conduct regarding participation and voting.
b. The Finance Committee will review the Working Group's assessments alongside their own reading of the applications.
c. The Finance Committee will discuss each application, agree upon the recommended funding levels, and attach any agreed caveats or conditions.
d. The Finance Committee will forward its final list of recommended grant awards and conditions to Full Council for formal approval.

2. Scoring the Grant Applications

Grant Assessments

Scoring Section	Questionnaire Section	Criterion	Max Score
1	3a	Community need and added value	5
2	3b	Community Benefit	5
3	3c	Project Planning and delivery	5
4	4	Financial Need	5
5	5	Project value for money	5
6	6	Project sustainability	5
7	7	Alignment with Council priorities	5
			35

1. Community Need and Added Value

Score	Criteria
5	Addresses a clear gap in local provision and offers something unique.
4	Meets an identified local need and adds something different.
3	There is a reasonable need for the project.
2	Evidence of need is weak or duplicates existing provision.
1	Largely duplicates an existing service or organisation.
0	No clear need identified.

2. Community Benefit

Score	Criteria
5	Benefits a large number of residents and is highly inclusive.
4	Benefits a significant section of the community and is accessible.
3	Benefits a specific group but remains open to the wider community.
2	Benefits a small group with limited wider impact.
1	Benefits are largely restricted to group members.
0	No clear benefit to Wem residents.

3. Project Planning and Delivery

Score	Criteria
5	Clear project plan, realistic timescales and strong governance.
4	Well-structured project plan with suitable governance arrangements.
3	Basic but achievable plan with adequate governance.
2	Some concerns about delivery or organisational capacity.
1	Major concerns about delivery, governance or stability.
0	Project is not deliverable or key governance documents are missing.

4. Financial Need

Score	Criteria
5	Very limited reserves and the project cannot proceed without the grant.
4	Limited reserves and using them would seriously affect operations.
3	Reserves are held for a justified reason but using them would reduce financial security.
2	The organisation has sufficient reserves to fund much of the project itself.
1	Large unallocated reserves with no clear reason for seeking funding.
0	Insufficient financial information provided.

5. Value for Money

Score	Criteria
5	Budget is clear, fully itemised and supported by evidence. Good match funding, volunteer support or excellent community benefit.
4	Budget is detailed, realistic and demonstrates good value for money.
3	Budget is mostly clear and costs are reasonable.
2	Budget lacks detail or some costs appear high.
1	Budget is vague, incomplete or poor value for money.
0	No budget or cost justification provided.

6. Project Sustainability

Score	Criteria
5	Highly sustainable with little or no future need for Council funding.
4	Clear plan for meeting future costs through other funding sources.
3	Likely to remain viable in the medium term.
2	Ongoing costs are high with no clear funding plan.
1	Likely to require ongoing Council funding.
0	Not financially viable beyond the initial grant.

7. Alignment with Council Priorities

Score	Criteria
5	Directly supports key Council priorities and the Council's vision.
4	Clearly supports Council priorities and the wider community.
3	Provides positive local benefits and broadly supports the Council's vision.
2	Some local benefit but limited alignment with priorities.
1	Benefits only a small group and has little relevance to Council priorities.
0	No alignment with Council priorities or benefit to Wem residents.