

Cambridge City Council Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

This tool helps the Council ensure that we fulfil legal obligations of the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) to have due regard to the need to –

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Guidance on how to complete this tool can be found on the Cambridge City Council intranet. For specific questions on the tool email Helen Crowther, Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer at equalities@cambridge.gov.uk or phone 01223 457046.

Once you have drafted the EqIA please send this to equalities@cambridge.gov.uk for checking. For advice on consulting on equality impacts, please contact Graham Saint, Strategy Officer, (graham.saint@cambridge.gov.uk or 01223 457044).

1. Title of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service
Community Grants Fund

2. Webpage link to full details of the strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service (if available)
https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/community-grants

3. What is the objective or purpose of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?
<p>The Council has a Community Grants fund available of approximately £1 million, for community groups and voluntary organisations to bid into, for projects that will help to reduce social or economic inequality for residents with the most need, living in Cambridge City.</p> <p>The Main Grant round opens once a year and considers applications which could potentially involve beneficiaries from across the city. This round also considers discretionary rate relief applications from eligible organisations. There is no cap on the amount an eligible group can apply for. In 2021-22 106 Main Grant applications were received (this increased to 125 in 2022-23), 18 applications were not successful and only 34 applications received the full amount they requested. This reflects the Main Grants rounds being historically oversubscribed.</p>

£70,000 of the overall budget is allocated to Area Committee Grants to fund smaller, local area or neighbourhood-based projects. The budget is divided into different amounts for each area in accordance with population and poverty calculations, with the greatest levels of funding targeting the areas of greatest need.

All activities seeking funding from the Main Grants and Area Committee Grants must enable residents to access one or more of the following:

- Sporting activities
- Arts and cultural activities
- Community development activities
- Reducing poverty activities
- Legal or financial advice
- Employment support

Awards will also be considered for projects and activities which involve capacity building of the voluntary sector to achieve any of the funding priorities listed above.

Applicants must meet at least one of the following strategic outcomes:

- Reduce poverty
- Improve skills and confidence to gain employment
- Improve general health and wellbeing
- Communities come together and bring about change
- Stronger voluntary sector in the city

The Community Grant Fund is part of a 'Grants Gateway' implemented in 2019 which pulls together a single process for its 3 main funds:

Homelessness Prevention Grants

Sustainable City Grants (for environmental projects supporting the Councils climate change strategy)

Community Grants

It has enabled the Council to have

- a clear and consistent approach
- greater transparency and accountability and
- a more efficient process.

These funds are now managed by one team using the same process and timescale. The awards are considered across the funds at the same time to ensure a consistent and accountable process by experienced officers from the different service areas. The funds remain within their appropriate portfolios for decision making and to ensure alignment to each fund's strategic priorities.

4. Responsible service

Customer and Community Services

5. Who will be affected by this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

(Please tick all that apply)

- Residents
- Visitors
- Staff

Please state any specific client group or groups (e.g. City Council tenants, tourists, people who work in the city but do not live here):

The Community Grants are targeted at improving the lives of Cambridge City residents who are experiencing social and/or economic inequality. Successful applicants are expected to target individuals who meet that criteria and be able to identify how many beneficiaries there will be, where they live, their age (within a range) and whether they have any protected characteristics such as a disability or are LGBTQ+.

The Grants Team are particularly affected by the provision of Community Grants. Implementing the grants process is the core function of the team. Other officers with specialisms in equalities, sports and arts are also involved at the assessment and monitoring stages.

6. What type of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service is this?

- New
- Major change
- Minor change

7. Are other departments or partners involved in delivering this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service? (Please tick)

- Yes
- No

If 'Yes' please provide details below:

We work closely with the Cambridge Council for Voluntary Services and other voluntary sector infrastructure organisations such as Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum, to ensure groups are able to get advice on completing the application forms appropriately, thus increasing their chances of submitting a strong and successful bid.

City Council officers with specialisms in equalities, sports, arts and anti-poverty are also involved at the grant assessment and monitoring stages.

8. Has the report on your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service gone to Committee? If so, which one?

The recommendations for funding for the Main Community Grants are taken to Environment and Scrutiny Committee. The recommendations for funding for the Area Committee Grants go to their respective Area Committees.

9. What research methods/ evidence have you used in order to identify equality impacts of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

The last major Community Grants review was undertaken in July 2014. An interim EQIA was carried out in December 2013 on the Grants Review process. The EQIA informed a Review Scoping Report that was considered by Community Services Scrutiny Committee in January 2014.

The scoping report set out plans to consult voluntary groups and residents on proposals to re-focus Grant priorities and outcomes that would direct funding to voluntary sector groups and organisations that helped people with the highest need.

The proposed Grant priorities and outcomes were informed by priorities within City Council strategies for Community Development, Sports and Arts.

The final EQIA was produced in July 2014, with subsequent updates added in December 2014, which set out how the grants process transitioned to the new model and how any equality issues were handled prior, during and after the application round. For example, officers e-mailed 320 groups which had received grant funding at some point over the previous 3 years to inform them of the new grants priorities and outcomes. They were invited to send representatives to 2 Briefing Meetings where the new priorities and outcomes and application process were explained in detail. 39 people attended from 38 groups.

Officers attended 3 networking events for Arts, Sports and Executive officers and a meeting of Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum (where representatives from various local BAME groups attended) to explain the new priorities and outcomes and application process.

Officers used feedback from these meetings to work with Cambridge Council for Voluntary Services and produce a comprehensive guide/help notes which:

- explained the new grants process
- gave examples of what would and what would not be considered for funding
- gave an eligibility checklist
- signposting to a range of help and support

3 application workshops were held at different times to maximise availability for attendance for potential applicants to go through question by question what would make a good bid. 50 people attended from 44 groups / organisations.

Officers proactively contacted a number of small groups which they knew (from experience) might benefit from extra help or 1-2-1 support

Support for groups was also offered by the infrastructure organisations including CCVS, CECF and GET Group.

The Grants Team continue to carry out a range of activities to support organisations to understand the funding criteria and requirements needed for a successful application, including:

- attending organisation's committee meetings;
- 1-2-1 meetings
- training sessions and application workshops held jointly with CCVS
- Application Guide and Help Notes detailing the priorities, outcomes and eligibility criteria and giving guidance on requirements, question by question

- factsheets, templates and signposting to other funding providers

The Grants Team also meet after the application process has completed its cycle to review what went well, what could be improved and whether the strategic outcomes and priorities are still relevant and supporting Cambridge City residents with the greatest needs.

10. Potential impacts

For each category below, please explain if the strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service could have a positive/ negative impact or no impact. Where an impact has been identified, please explain what it is. Consider impacts on service users, visitors and staff members separately.

(a) Age - Please also consider any safeguarding issues for children and adults at risk

The Priorities and Outcomes for Grants have a **Positive** impact for young people and older people who have the highest needs due to barriers which prevent them from accessing sporting activities, arts and cultural activities, legal and financial advice, employment support and community development activities.

For example, the experience of applicant groups, national and local research has highlighted the impact that social isolation can have to the wellbeing of older people, especially those on low incomes. Also, the importance of activities and support that help older young people (in particular) to find work.

The grant priorities and outcomes encourage voluntary organisations to submit funding applications that will help to mitigate such issues. Any voluntary group or organisations supporting older and younger people who are more affluent and thus able to pay for access to these services are less likely to receive funding if they apply. In this way the Grant funds remain targeted at those in greatest need.

Any group seeking Community Grant Funding which is proposing to deliver activities supporting young people or vulnerable adults must have the appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place. We would also expect any applicant group applying to the Main Community Grants round to have an Equality and Diversity Policy in place. The grants officers check the quality of the policies and that they are in date at the point of assessment. Ultimately, if the grant officers are not satisfied with the safeguarding documentation, a condition would be added to the grant agreement, whereby the funds would not be released until the documentation was in place, or the grant may be refused altogether.

The Grants Team recognises that whilst it might be more efficient to receive and process all applications electronically, we must be mindful that not all applicants have the ability and/or access to IT equipment that would enable us to move to an 'online only' process. Although infrequent, smaller organisations do still submit hard copy application forms. The Grants Team remains committed to accepting hard copy applications, providing telephone advice and in person visits (subject to covid risk assessment) alongside our e-mail service and webpages. Any future review of the grants process will need to be mindful of the negative impact of moving to an 'online/electronic' only system, particularly on groups representing older people.

(b) Disability

The Priorities and Outcomes for Grants will have a **Positive** impact for city residents who have disabilities and who have the highest needs due to barriers which prevent them from accessing sporting activities, arts and cultural activities, legal and financial advice, employment support and community development activities.

The experience of applicant groups, national and local research has highlighted that disabled people are disproportionately affected by low income. They can face multiple barriers due to both their low income and their disability.

For example, people with a disability can experience particular barriers to accessing employment which can result in low income which, in turn, can prevent them from accessing social activities such as sports or arts. This can lead to further social isolation and increased mental health issues.

The proposed grants priorities and outcomes will encourage voluntary organisations to submit funding applications that will help to mitigate such issues. The Community Grant guidance notes and application form specifically ask for evidence of need and how the activity will remove barriers or addresses gaps in society for City residents.

Any group applying for a Community Grant is expected to have an Equality and Diversity Policy in place. The grants officers check the quality of all policies required and that they are in date at the point of assessment. Ultimately, if the grant officers are not satisfied with the documentation, a condition would be added to the grant agreement, whereby the funds would not be released until the documentation was in place, or the grant may be refused altogether.

(c) Gender reassignment

There have been no groups solely representing people who have undergone gender reassignment that have applied for a community grant to date although some applications will include such residents within their wider remit.

The Priorities and Outcomes for Grants will have a **Positive** impact for city residents who have the highest needs due to barriers caused by discrimination due to their gender, sex or sexual orientation which prevent them from accessing sporting activities, arts and cultural activities, legal and financial advice, employment support and community development activities.

The proposed grants priorities and outcomes will encourage voluntary organisations to submit funding applications that will help to mitigate such issues. The Community Grant guidance notes and application form specifically ask for evidence of need and how the activity will remove barriers or addresses gaps in society for City residents.

Any group applying for a Community Grant is expected to have an Equality and Diversity Policy in place. The grants officers check the quality of all policies required and that they are in date at the point of assessment. Ultimately, if the grant officers are not satisfied with the documentation, a condition would be added to the grant agreement, whereby the funds would not be released until the documentation was in place, or the grant may be refused altogether.

(d) Marriage and civil partnership

There have not been any applications that directly relate to beneficiaries in the 'marriage and civil partnership' equality strand although frequently applications are submitted which aim to support people from the LGBTQ+ communities who may have experienced discrimination as a result of their gender or sexual orientation. Applicants must be able to demonstrate their proposed activities reduce social and/or economic inequality for Cambridge City residents with the most need. There is no reason an application targeting people experiencing discrimination as a result of their gender, sex or sexual orientation would not be welcome and no reason to think this group would be negatively impacted by the provision of a Community Grant.

Any group applying for a Community Grant is expected to have an Equality and Diversity Policy in place. The grants officers check the quality of all policies required and that they are in date at the point of assessment. Ultimately, if the grant officers are not satisfied with the documentation, a condition would be added to the grant agreement, whereby the funds would not be released until the documentation was in place, or the grant may be refused altogether.

(e) Pregnancy and maternity

There have not been any applications in recent years that directly relate to beneficiaries in the 'pregnancy and maternity' equality strand although frequently applications are submitted which aim to support women and families with young children. Provided an application was able to demonstrate its activities reduce social and/or economic inequality for Cambridge City residents with the most need, there is no reason an application targeting pregnant women or women on maternity leave would not be welcome and no reason to think this group would be negatively impacted by the provision of a Community Grant.

Any group applying for a Community Grant is expected to have an Equality and Diversity Policy in place. The grants officers check the quality of all policies required and that they are in date at the point of assessment. Ultimately, if the grant officers are not satisfied with the documentation, a condition would be added to the grant agreement, whereby the funds would not be released until the documentation was in place, or the grant may be refused altogether.

(f) Race – Note that the protected characteristic ‘race’ refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

The Priorities and Outcomes for Grants will have a **Positive** impact for groups and organisations representing ethnic minority residents who have the highest needs due to barriers which prevent them from accessing sporting activities, arts and cultural activities, legal and financial advice, employment support and community development activities.

For example, an application could be submitted aimed at building confidence and improving physical activity levels, through taster sports sessions or similar. Also, particular ethnic minority groups are often on low incomes or find it hard to access work due to language or skills barriers, and so would clearly meet the Community Grant funding priorities and outcomes.

Such applications would be considered by the Councils Community Development Officer (Inclusion and Engagement) alongside the grants team to ensure the needs of the group are considered appropriately.

Any group applying for a Community Grant is expected to have an Equality and Diversity Policy in place. The grants officers check the quality of all policies required and that they are in date at the point of assessment. Ultimately, if the grant officers are not satisfied with the documentation, a condition would be added to the grant agreement, whereby the funds would not be released until the documentation was in place, or the grant may be refused altogether.

The Grants Team is mindful that completing an application form can be challenging – especially if English is not your first language. Experience to date suggests this is particularly the case with smaller and less established groups. The Grants Team can offer 1:1 support and will seek clarification from groups as necessary to inform the assessment process. Groups are also encouraged to seek support from the Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum to complete the application form and ensure the required paperwork is in place. Monitoring visits from the Grants Team are also a useful way to gather information about the activities which may not be apparent from the application form. This knowledge can be used to inform future grant applications and helps build trusting relationships.

(g) Religion or belief

The Council's Community Grants criteria specifically exclude 'Faith' activities and so there will be **no impact**.

Occasionally groups are funded which have a particular faith ethos to deliver non-faith activities providing that the group and the activities meet our grants priorities and are not for religious instruction or worship. Such groups are not allowed to exclude those from attending/participating that have a different / no religion.

On occasion, an application is from an organisation representing an ethnic minority group where cultural activities can be closely linked to religious practice. Such applications would be considered by the Council's Community Development Officer (Inclusion and Engagement) alongside the Grants Team to ensure the needs of the group are considered appropriately.

Any group applying for a Community Grant is expected to have an Equality and Diversity Policy in place. The grants officers check the quality of all policies required and that they are in date at the point of assessment. Ultimately, if the grant officers are not satisfied with the documentation, a condition would be added to the grant agreement, whereby the funds would not be released until the documentation was in place, or the grant may be refused altogether.

(h) Sex

The Priorities and Outcomes for Grants will have a **Positive** impact for city residents who have the highest needs due to barriers because of their sex which prevent them from accessing sporting activities, arts and cultural activities, legal and financial advice, employment support and community development activities.

The proposed grants priorities and outcomes will encourage voluntary organisations to submit funding applications that will help to mitigate such issues.

Any group applying for a community grant is expected to have an Equality and Diversity Policy in place. The grants officers check the quality of all policies required and that they are in date at the point of assessment. Ultimately, if the grant officers are not satisfied with the documentation, a condition would be added to the grant agreement, whereby the funds would not be released until the documentation was in place, or the grant may be refused altogether.

(i) Sexual orientation

The Priorities and Outcomes for Grants will have a **Positive** impact for city residents who have the highest needs due to barriers because of their sexual orientation which prevent them from accessing sporting activities, arts and cultural activities, legal and financial advice, employment support and community development activities.

The proposed grants priorities and outcomes will encourage voluntary organisations to submit funding applications that will help to mitigate such issues.

Any group applying for a community grant is expected to have an Equality and Diversity Policy in place. The grants officers check the quality of all policies required and that they are in date at the point of assessment. Ultimately, if the grant officers are not satisfied with the documentation, a condition would be added to the grant agreement, whereby the funds would not be released until the documentation was in place, or the grant may be refused altogether.

(j) Other factors that may lead to inequality – in particular, please consider the impact of any changes on:

- **Low-income groups or those experiencing the impacts of poverty**
- **Groups who have more than one protected characteristic that taken together create overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage. (Here you are being asked to consider intersectionality, and for more information see: https://media.ed.ac.uk/media/1_159kt25q).**

The Community Grant priorities and outcomes focus the available funding on groups and organisations that offer help and support to those residents in most need, in line with the Councils corporate priority 'Tackling poverty & inequality and helping people in the greatest need'.

This cuts across all the protected characteristics as poverty is often experienced by people who also face discrimination or lack of equality due to race, gender, disability etc.

This focus means that those groups and organisations that offer help to more affluent and articulate residents with protected characteristics who may, for example, be able to pay for support, may receive less or no funding. However, there may also be groups supporting residents with particularly high barriers to equality that are unrelated to income. The Community Grants scheme prioritises applications that seek to address these high barriers.

Many applications reflect the experience of their beneficiaries around intersectionality, albeit it is rarely couched in those terms. Links are frequently made between older people, disabilities and poverty for example, or particular ethnic minority groups, sex or gender and poverty. Many people experiencing interdependent discrimination and disadvantage are unable to access community development, sporting and cultural activities which enhance quality of life and improve and sustain wellbeing. The Community Grant Fund recognises the importance of equal access to such provision and welcomes applications which address this.

11. Action plan – New equality impacts will be identified in different stages throughout the planning and implementation stages of changes to your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service. How will you monitor these going forward? Also, how will you ensure that any potential negative impacts of the changes will be mitigated? (Please include dates where possible for when you will update this EqlA accordingly.)

The Community Grants process is cyclical in nature. This provides windows of opportunity to review the process throughout the year. The application forms, guidance notes, monitoring requirements and grant agreements are discussed annually by the Grants Team and other key officers involved in the grant process. Amendments are made as necessary to reflect feedback from applicants, changes in Council policy or direction, national or local research and even potentially changes to the services delivered by other organisations. We also welcome feedback from infrastructure organisations providing support to applicants, such as the Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service (CCVS) and Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum.

The Council will be reviewing the grants process in 2022-23. Any changes will require the production of a new EQIA to ensure any potentially negative impacts will be mitigated.

12. Do you have any additional comments?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

13. Sign off

Name and job title of lead officer for this equality impact assessment: **Julie Cornwell, Senior Grants Officer**

Names and job titles of other assessment team members and people consulted:

Jackie Hanson, Community Funding and Development Manager; Melanie Baker Grants Officer; Chris Mason, Community Accountancy Officer; Jane McElroy, Information Officer (Grants); Ariadne Henry, CDO (Inclusion and Engagement)

Date of EqlA sign off: 26/05/22

Date of next review of the equalities impact assessment: 2022-23

Date to be published on Cambridge City Council website: [Click here to enter text.](#)

All EqlAs need to be sent to Helen Crowther, Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer at helen.crowther@cambridge.gov.uk.