Cambridge City Council Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

This tool helps the Council ensure that we fulfil legal obligations of the <u>Public Sector</u> <u>Equality Duty</u> 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 Review.

2. Webpage link to full details of the strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service (if available)

Community Grants - Cambridge City Council

3. What is the objective or purpose of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

The Community Grants Review is not driven by the need to make financial savings, but instead recognises the issues that are facing the voluntary and community sector (VCS). It reflects our understanding of the challenges the sector faces in responding to inequalities and prolonged financial hardship and how we could better work alongside our VCS partners to deliver positive change for our communities. The Community Funding programme will consist of three different strands to better reflect the needs of the voluntary and community sector to help us achieve our shared vision of tackling poverty and inequality:

<u>Small Grants:</u> there will be two, lighter touch, funding rounds for small grants to encourage smaller and newer groups who are less able to plan so far in advance to apply for funding when it better suits them. Previous experience has shown that the introduction of a simpler small grants scheme

has seen an increase in the number of applications from groups supporting people from minority			
ethnic groups.			
Main Grants: We will keep some annual funding available for groups wishing to test and learn from new ideas, and for groups that may be new to us or do not require multi-year funding.			
<u>Multi-year funding</u> : We will introduce multi-year funding for groups delivering critical services in the city, recognising that we have a role to play in increasing the stability of the sector through funding assurance.			
4. Responsible team and group: Grants Team, Communities Group			
5. Who will be affected by this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?	☑ Residents☐ Visitors☑ Staff		
(Please tick all that apply)	△ Stall		
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 applicant groups 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, experience low-incomes/poverty or are care leavers.			
The Grants Team are particularly affected by the provision of Community Grants as 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)	

\boxtimes	Yes	
	No	

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. The Finance team and Legal services also play a role in the management of grants.

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 the Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee. The recommendations for funding for the Area Committee Grants previously went to their respective Area Committees. Moving forwards small grants would be approved under officer delegations as the individual award level will be £5,000 or less.

The recommendations of this review will go to the Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee meeting on 27 June 2024.

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?

An Equality Impact Assessment on the Community Grants scheme has been carried out each time there has been a significant change to the scheme process or priorities:

- January 2015 on the implementation of the Community Grants Fund
- June 2018 on the review of funding for anti-poverty projects
- January 2022 on the current Community Grants Fund

Online sources to inform this EqIA include:

- Facts and Statistics | Campaign to End Loneliness
- Exploring the UK's digital divide Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)
- Disability facts and figures | Disability charity Scope UK
- Disability Price Tag 2023: the extra cost of disability | Disability charity Scope UK
- Disability, well-being and loneliness, UK Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)
- Exploring the UK's digital divide Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)
- Trans rights are human rights: Council motion Cambridge City Council
- UK Poverty 2024 (1).pdf
- Domestic abuse, the facts Women's Aid (womensaid.org.uk)
- Care leavers face 'acute challenges' in transition to adulthood News and events, University
 of York
- Nearly half of everyone in poverty is either a disabled person or lives with a disabled person
 Disability Rights UK
- https://wearecitizensadvice.org.uk/living-on-empty-245f4b9acbe3

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 the overall community funding programme will remain the same if the proposed changes are agreed. It is hoped that the changes to the Community Grants process will better enable us to meet the priorities of the programme and therefore produce better outcomes relating to them. Additionally, there will be fewer barriers for applicant groups as there will be an additional funding window for which to apply for smaller amounts of funding.

The priorities and outcomes 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, according to information supplied by applicants in grant applications citing national and local research, one major concern for older people is the impact that social isolation can have to their wellbeing, especially those on low incomes (see: Facts and Statistics | Campaign to End Loneliness and https://wearecitizensadvice.org.uk/living-on-empty-245f4b9acbe3. Also, activities and support that help older young people (in particular) to find work are needed and evidenced through the demand of a pilot scheme for individuals wishing to get into construction.

In addition, the council has a Youth Strategy, which includes goals around making sure there are good, accessible opportunities for all young people to engage in activities outside of school and helping young people to take part in all that our city has to offer – which community grants can help meet.

The grant priorities and outcomes encourage voluntary organisations to submit funding applications that will help to mitigate such issues. Any voluntary group or organisation 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 remains committed to providing assistance to groups who need help completing their application, providing telephone advice and in person visits alongside our e-mail service and webpages. This is particularly relevant where applicant groups may have people less confident at using IT systems to complete an e-form, such as older people who are more likely to be digitally excluded (for example, see: Exploring the UK's digital divide - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk))

(b) Disability

The Priorities and Outcomes for the overall community funding programme will remain the same if the proposed changes are agreed. It is hoped that the changes to the Community Grants process will better enable us to meet the priorities of the programme and therefore produce better outcomes relating to them. Additionally, there will be fewer barriers for applicant groups as there will be an additional funding window for which to apply for smaller amounts of funding.

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 and national research (Nearly half of everyone in poverty is either a disabled person or lives with a disabled person | Disability Rights UK) and https://wearecitizensadvice.org.uk/living-on-empty-245f4b9acbe3 as highlighted that disabled people are disproportionately affected by low income. They can face multiple barriers due to both their low income and their disability, which cause them to be socially excluded.

For example, people with a disability can experience particular barriers to accessing employment (see: <u>Disability facts and figures | Disability charity Scope UK</u>) which can result in low income and face extra living costs than non-disabled people (see: <u>Disability Price Tag 2023: the extra cost of disability | Disability charity Scope UK</u>) which, in turn, can prevent them from accessing social activities such as sports or arts. This means that disabled people are more likely to experience social isolation and poor mental wellbeing (see: <u>Disability, well-being and loneliness, UK - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)</u>).

The grants priorities and outcomes will encourage voluntary organisations to submit funding applications that will help to promote disabled people's economic and social inclusion. 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 Main Community Grant is expected to have an Equality and Diversity Policy in place, including plans to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people where needed. 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 remains committed to providing assistance to groups who need help completing their application, providing telephone advice and in person visits alongside our e-mail service and webpages. This is particularly relevant for disabled people making applications as they are more likely to be digitally excluded (for instance see: Exploring the UK's digital divide - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)).

(c) Gender reassignment

The Priorities and Outcomes for the overall community funding programme will remain the same if the proposed changes are agreed. It is hoped that the changes to the Community Grants process will better enable us to meet the priorities of the programme and therefore produce better outcomes relating to them. Additionally, there will be fewer barriers for applicant groups as there will be an additional funding window for which to apply for smaller amounts of funding.

To date there have been no groups solely representing people who have undergone gender reassignment that have applied for a community grant 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 social and/or economic inequality caused by discrimination due to their gender identity, 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. Cambridge City Council has a Trans Rights Are Human Rights motion that was passed in October 2020, which is about standing in solidarity with trans people (including people with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment). It also makes the commitment to "look into what we can do as a council to ... raise awareness of the community grants fund amongst LGBTQIA+ groups" (see: Trans rights are human rights: Council motion - Cambridge City Council). The community grants also have provided opportunities for celebration of LGBTQ+ people's identities and to bring LGBTQ+ people together. This is important as LGBTQ+ people may be more likely to experience social isolation, which also arose as a key issue in the Cambridgeshire LGBTQ+ people's needs assessment undertaken in 2020.

(d) Marriage and civil partnership

The Priorities and Outcomes for the overall community funding programme will remain the same if the proposed changes are agreed. It is hoped that the changes to the Community Grants process will better enable us to meet the priorities of the programme and therefore produce better outcomes relating to them. Additionally, there will be fewer barriers for applicant groups as there will be an additional funding window for which to apply for smaller amounts of funding.

There have not been any applications that directly relate to beneficiaries under the 'marriage and civil partnership' protected characteristic and it is not anticipate that this will change as a result of the proposals.

(e) Pregnancy and maternity

The Priorities and Outcomes for the overall community funding programme will remain the same if the proposed changes are agreed. It is hoped that the changes to the Community Grants process will better enable us to meet the priorities of the programme and therefore produce better outcomes relating to them. Additionally, there will be fewer barriers for applicant groups as there will be an additional funding window for which to apply for smaller amounts of funding.

There have not been any applications in recent years that directly support pregnant beneficiaries although frequently applications are submitted which aim to support women and families with young children that can be in support of maternity. It might be that there are not applications supporting pregnant women specifically, as support for pregnant women that groups seek might be more related to health outcomes, which is the responsibility of the NHS and community grants do not fund activities that are the responsibility of another public service. Any group applying for a Main 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 the overall community funding programme will remain the same if the proposed changes are agreed. It is hoped that the changes to the Community Grants process will better enable us to meet the priorities of the programme and therefore produce better outcomes relating to them. Additionally, there will be fewer barriers for applicant groups as there will be an additional funding window for which to apply for smaller amounts of funding.

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

For example, some ethnic groups are more likely to be on low incomes or to experience poverty, especially Bangladeshi and Pakistani households (see: UK Poverty 2024 (1).pdf), which can mean they are excluded from taking part in different activities.. Community grants can also support groups to fund opportunities to celebrate their cultures, increasing community cohesion within communities of people with a particular ethnic background and/or people with different ethnic backgrounds to each other.

Applications supporting people of different ethnic backgrounds are 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 Main 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. Moreover, the council has an interpretation and translation service it can use to support applicants. 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 Priorities and Outcomes for the overall community funding programme will remain the same if the proposed changes are agreed. It is hoped that the changes to the Community Grants process will better enable us to meet the priorities of the programme and therefore produce better outcomes relating to them. Additionally, there will be fewer barriers for applicant groups as there will be an additional funding window for which to apply for smaller amounts of funding.

The Council's Community Grants criteria specifically exclude 'Faith' activities and so there will be **no impact**. Faith activities are excluded as these activities will discriminate against people who do not share their faith.

Occasionally groups are funded which have a particular faith ethos to deliver non-faith activities in support of local communities, 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 different religions or beliefs or who have no religion.

On occasion, an application is from an organisation representing an ethnic monitory group where cultural activities can be closely linked to religious practice. 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 in relation to reducing social and economic inequality.

(h) Sex

The Priorities and Outcomes for the overall community funding programme will remain the same if the proposed changes are agreed. It is hoped that the changes to the Community Grants process will better enable us to meet the priorities of the programme and therefore produce better outcomes relating to them. Additionally, there will be fewer barriers for applicant groups as there will be an additional funding window for which to apply for smaller amounts of funding.

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. Women are more likely to experience poverty than men, especially if they are lone parents or have other informal caring responsibilities (see: UK Poverty 2024 (1).pdf), and are more likely to experience domestic abuse (see: Domestic abuse, the facts - Women's Aid (womensaid.org.uk). Community grants have supported women things like seeking employment opportunities and with domestic abuse. They have also supported women from different ethnic backgrounds of different ages who might be more likely to experience social isolation.

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

(i) Sexual orientation

The Priorities and Outcomes for the overall community funding programme will remain the same if the proposed changes are agreed. It is hoped that the changes to the Community Grants process will better enable us to meet the priorities of the programme and therefore produce better outcomes relating to them. Additionally, there will be fewer barriers for applicant groups as there will be an additional funding window for which to apply for smaller amounts of funding.

The Priorities and Outcomes for Grants will have a **Positive** impact for city residents who have the highest needs due to barriers because discrimination relating to their sexual orientation which prevent them from accessing sporting activities, arts and cultural activities, legal and financial advice, employment support and community development activities. Our Trans Rights Are Human Rights motion commits us to "Look into what we can do as a council to... raise awareness of the community grants fund amongst LGBTQIA+ groups." The community grants also have provided opportunities for celebration of LGBTQ+ people's identities and to bring LGBTQ+ people together. This is important as LGBTQ+ people may be more likely to experience social isolation, which also arose as a key issue in the Cambridgeshire LGBTQ+ people's needs assessment undertaken in 2020.

- (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
 - People of any age with care experience this refers to individuals who spent part of their childhood in the care system due to situations beyond their control, primarily arising from abuse and neglect within their families. The term "Care experience" is a description of a definition in law, it includes anyone that had the state as its corporate parent by virtue of a care order in accordance with the Children Act 1989 and amendments.
 - 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 funding 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'. People with care experience are more likely to experience poverty and also social isolation as they lack family networks (e.g. see: Care leavers face 'acute challenges' in transition to adulthood - News and events, University of York) so may benefit from community grants, although to date no grants recipients have explicitly supported this group.

The impact of Community Grants cuts across all the protected characteristics as poverty is often experienced by people who also face discrimination and systemic disadvantage due to race, gender, disability etc.

This focus means that those groups and organisations that offer help to more affluent 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 equality groups with social inclusion that are unrelated to income but may relate to discrimination. The Community Grants scheme prioritises applications that seek to address these high barriers.

Many applications reflect the experience of their beneficiaries around intersectionality. 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 relating to being from more than one protected characteristic group are unable to access community development, sporting and cultural activities which enhance quality of life and improve and sustain wellbeing. The Community Grants programme helps 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 EqIA 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 Community Grants priorities and outcomes with a view to implementing any changes ready for the 2026/27 funding round. Any changes will require the production of a new EQIA to ensure any potentially negative impacts will be mitigated.

It is the intention to adopt a staggered approach to the introduction of multi-year funding agreements. Accordingly, there will be a reduction in funding available for annual grants as the fund available for multi-year awards increases. This process is likely to require some consultation to ensure that the balance is right and has minimal negative impact on the VCS supporting city residents in greatest need.

With respect to the specific changes proposed from 2025/26: if approved, a publicity programme will be agreed with the Communications team to ensure all previous and potential applicants are aware of the changes. This will include social media posts, physical posters, email communications and webinars. We will also utilise the newsletters of our partner organisations where the timings align.

12. Do you have any additional comments?

The Grants team will offer virtual and in-person support to groups requiring help with completing their applications. For the 2025/26 funding round, both Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service (CCVS) and Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum are going to be present at in person drop-in sessions offered during the application windows to provide the best package of support possible.

Each year the Grants team 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

- application webinars held jointly with CCVS
- Application Guide and Help Notes detailing the priorities, outcomes and eligibility criteria and giving guidance on requirements, question by question
- signposting to other funding providers

The City Council also funds CCVS to provide a year-round package of 'on-demand', online and in person training on a variety of subjects which support the development of community groups and to help them become 'application ready'.

The Grants team is confident that the proposed approach to community funding is the right approach as the findings of the Annual VCS 'State of the Sector' Survey Report consistently point to the need for increased sustainability for the sector via longer term funding arrangements, and more proportionate application processes balancing the value of the award with the level of information required from applicant groups. The 'Emerging from Covid Report 2022' also describes the state of the VCS and sets out recommendations to help meet the challenges the sector is facing. The proposed changes to the approach to community funding takes a step towards addressing some of these issues and supports the councils ambitions of building wealth in communities. The ideas were also shared with CCVS during the development stage with a request to act as a 'critical friend' to help identify any potential areas where more thought was needed.

13. Sign off

Name and job title of lead officer for this equality impact assessment: Julie Cornwell, Community Funding & Voluntary Sector Manager

Names and job titles of other assessment team members and people consulted: Melanie Baker, Senior Grants Officer; Chris Mason, Community Accountancy Officer; Mark Freeman, CEO, CCVS

Date of EqIA sign off: 23-05-24

Date of next review of the equalities impact assessment: 2025/26

Date to be published on Cambridge City Council website: Click here to enter text.

All EqlAs need to be sent to the Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer at equalities@cambridge.gov.uk