

## 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 please contact the Community Equity Team at [equalities@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@cambridge.gov.uk).

Also, once you have drafted the EqIA please send this to [equalities@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@cambridge.gov.uk) for checking.

<b>1. Title of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service</b>
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<b>Implementation of 3 Tier Community Grants Programme from 2027</b>
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<b>2. Webpage link to full details of the strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service (if available)</b>
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<a href="#">Community Grants - Cambridge City Council</a>
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<b>3. What is the objective or purpose of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?</b>
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<p>The evolution of the grants programme is intended to reduce administrative burden, promote trust-based funding, and support high-performing organisations to lead and adapt over time. The programme needs to balance the needs of very small grass roots organisations, much larger established groups and new groups keen to grow. Therefore a 'tiered' grant scheme is proposed to respond to the different needs of the sector:</p>
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<p>Tier 1 – Annual Grants of £5k or less.</p>
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<p>Tier 2 – Multi-year grants up to £10k p/a, activity based.</p>
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<p>Tier 3 – Multi-year unrestricted grants, organisation based. Up to £40k p/a.</p>
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<p>Multi-year funding should enable organisations to plan with confidence and manage resources more effectively, reduce the risk of service disruption due to funding gaps and support organisations to plan long-term employment and enable staff retention. Our aim is also to encourage organisations to focus on long-term outcomes rather than short-term</p>
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outputs, facilitate deeper, systemic change in communities and allow for more meaningful monitoring, evaluation, and learning.

Unrestricted grants have additional benefits including enabling long-term planning and investment in organisational development, allowing recipient groups to allocate funds where most needed and supporting a quicker response to emerging community needs. They also support staff retention and wellbeing, reducing burnout and turnover.

The recommended 3 Tier model builds on the committee report taken to Environment and Community Scrutiny Committee in June 2024, where Members agreed that the Council would introduce multi-year funding agreements to improve the stability of the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector (VCSE), whilst maintaining a funding scheme for smaller grant applications that was responsive to emerging needs, welcoming innovation and supporting developing community groups.

#### 4. Responsible Team and Group

Community Investment Team, Communities Group

#### 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 programme is 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 Community Investment 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)**

- ☒ Yes  
☐ No

If 'Yes' please provide details below:

We work closely with the Cambridge Council for Voluntary Services/Support Cambs and 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 culture, employment support, community development and poverty reduction 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. 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 Community Grants Fund
- June 2024 Community Grants Review

Changes to the Grant scheme that can be made quickly without the need for Cllr approval are made throughout the year as necessary as part of a process of continuous improvement.

The reports and evidence informing this Assessment are:

- [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](#)
- [Domestic abuse, the facts - Women's Aid \(womensaid.org.uk\)](#)
- [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>

- [UK Poverty 2024: The essential guide to understanding poverty in the UK | Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#)
- [Domestic abuse, the facts - Women's Aid](#)
- [Care leavers face 'acute challenges' in transition to adulthood - News and events, University of York](#)

The 'State of the Sector' survey report carried out annually by Support Cambridgeshire identifies issues and barriers facing groups and what groups need and want to be able to thrive. The 2024 report identified that money and volunteers remain the biggest barriers that groups face to how they continue to offer services and support. The impact is similar regardless of the income of the organisation.

In the comments, funding is mentioned regularly, but more organisations than the previous year are citing staff burnout and sickness as being an issue, as is the sectors inability to attract staff due to the inability to offer salaries or other benefits such as long term contracts that other employers are offering.

The report states that resilience and the reserves in the sector are finite and there are signs anecdotally that both are running low, and this will have a significant impact on the number of groups that close unless things improve. Quotes included in the report include:

- "No uplift in grants but everything is costing us more."
- "The demand for our service exceeds capacity. Salary increases needs to happen but income is not increasing."

The report states that the issue of raising unrestricted funding or gaining full cost funding that covers all the core costs are the biggest issues.

Respondents to the survey also highlighted the complexity of funding and the sometimes disproportional application processes as a difficulty. The report authors state that the sector needs to see funding that meets core costs and application processes that enable organisations to apply.

The Final Report from the Cambridgeshire Poverty Strategy Commission contains a recommendation to expand longer term funding across Cambridgeshire<sup>1</sup>. This report draws on the experience of 11 independent commissioners, each bringing insights, real life experiences, knowledge and expertise to the table. The report was also shaped by many service providers and contributors with direct experience of working to reduce social and economic disadvantage. Over 100 documents were also used to inform the work of the Commission, ranging from papers specifically focusing on poverty to those focusing on housing, digital inclusion, life expectancy and transport poverty.

Best practice from other councils has informed how the scheme could work. The approach taken by Bristol City Council, Camden Council and Manchester City Council aligns in many areas: multi-year grants; a mix of core and project funding that align with their councils'

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<sup>1</sup> Cambridgeshire Poverty Strategy Commission – final report, page 46, 6: Promote longer term funding to strengthen VCSE capacity and partnership working.

strategic priorities; emphasis on partnership working; building community resilience and power; promoting social inclusion and reducing inequality.

These schemes have been particularly helpful in considering grant criteria that are equitable and explained clearly to applicants.

Feedback from the three organisations already in receipt of multi-year grants has informed the design of the scheme and given confidence that the proposed approach will have the desired impact of helping provide stability to the voluntary and community sector.

*“Moving to a three-year funding cycle has had a significant impact on staff retention and financial planning. Knowing we have longevity of funding has allowed us to assure staff their roles will be maintained for three years which has reduced the impact of staff starting to look for other jobs towards the end of the funding. Additionally, being able to forecast our budgets and spending over a longer period has provided greater certainty for longer term spending”.* Helen Cook, Cambridge and District Citizens Advice Bureau.

## 9. 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 outcomes for the overall community funding programme will change if the proposals are agreed. The new outcomes are broader than the previous outcomes and so it is likely that more applications will be received. There are outcomes around achieving your full potential which may be pertinent to young people and one around a reduced sense of isolation which may be especially pertinent to older people.

It is anticipated that the outcomes will 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, 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>).

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 scheme 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 Community Grants scheme to have an Equality and Diversity Policy in place. The Community Investment officers check the quality of the policies and that they are in date at the point of assessment. Ultimately, if the Community Investment 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 Community Investment 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 \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/digitaltechnology/articles/exploringtheukdigitaldivide/2017-03-22))

There are no anticipated impacts specifically around age for introducing multi-year grants – both restricted and unrestricted. The benefits of long-term funding that is less prescriptive are set out in the Cabinet paper at Appendix 4 and will apply in this case. There will continue to be an opportunity to apply for annual grants, twice a year if this is more suited to a particular group.

**(b) Disability**

The outcomes for the overall community funding programme will change if the proposals are agreed. The new outcomes are broader than the previous outcomes and so it is likely that more applications will be received. There are outcomes around residents being able to move around safely in their neighbourhood, one around belonging and one around a reduced sense of isolation: all of which could be particularly pertinent to 'Disability'.

It is anticipated that the outcomes will have a positive impact for people with a disability who have the highest needs due to barriers which prevent them from accessing sporting activities, arts and cultural activities, 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: [Disability facts and figures | Disability charity Scope UK](#)) which can result in low income and face extra living costs than non-disabled people (see: [Disability Price Tag 2023: the extra cost of disability | Disability charity Scope UK](#)) 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: [Disability, well-being and loneliness, UK - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)).

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 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 Community Investment officers check the quality of all policies required and that they are in date at the point of assessment. Ultimately, if the Community Investment 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 Community Investment 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 \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)).

There are no anticipated impacts specifically around disability for introducing multi-year grants – both restricted and unrestricted. The benefits of long-term funding that is less prescriptive are set out in the Cabinet paper at Appendix 4 and will apply in this case. There will continue to be an opportunity to apply for annual grants, twice a year if this is



more suited to a particular group. This may be particularly relevant given there is no overarching group operating in the in city.

### **(c) Gender reassignment**

The outcomes for the overall community funding programme will change if the proposals are agreed. The new outcomes are broader than the previous outcomes and so it is likely that more applications will be received. There are outcomes around residents feeling safe in their neighbourhood, one around belonging and one around a reduced sense of isolation: all of which could be particularly pertinent to 'Gender reassignment'.

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 outcomes for Community 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.

Any group applying for a Community Grant is expected to have an Equality and Diversity Policy in place. Community Investment officers check the quality of all policies required and that they are in date at the point of assessment. Ultimately, if the 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.

There are no anticipated impacts specifically around gender reassignment for introducing multi-year grants – both restricted and unrestricted. The benefits of long-term funding that is less prescriptive are set out in the Cabinet paper at Appendix 4 and will apply in this case. There will continue to be an opportunity to apply for annual grants, twice a year if this is more suited to a particular group.

#### **(d) Marriage and civil partnership**

The outcomes for the overall community funding programme will change if the proposals are agreed. The new outcomes are broader than the previous outcomes and so it is likely that more applications will be received.

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

#### **(e) Pregnancy and maternity**

The outcomes for the overall community funding programme will change if the proposals are agreed. The new outcomes are broader than the previous outcomes and so it is likely that more applications will be received.

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 Community Grant is expected to have an Equality and Diversity Policy in place. Community Investment officers check the quality of all policies required and that they are in date at the point of assessment. Ultimately, if 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 outcomes for the overall community funding programme will change if the proposals are agreed. The new outcomes are broader than the previous outcomes and so it is likely that more applications will be received.

The Outcomes for Community 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 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: The essential guide to understanding poverty in the UK | Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#), 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 Equality & Diversity Team alongside the Community Investment 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. Officers check the quality of all policies required and that they are in date at the point of assessment. Ultimately, if the 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 Community Investment 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 Community Investment 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 Community Investment 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.

There are no anticipated impacts specifically around race for introducing multi-year grants – both restricted and unrestricted. The benefits of long-term funding that is less prescriptive are set out in the Cabinet paper at Appendix 4 and will apply in this case. CECF are already in receipt of a multi-year grant and would be eligible for an unrestricted grant should they wish to apply. There will continue to be an opportunity to apply for annual grants, twice a year if this is more suited to a particular group. We anticipate the take up of Tier 1 to be high amongst groups representing people from minority ethnic backgrounds.

#### **(g) Religion or belief**

The outcomes for the overall community funding programme will change if the proposals are agreed. The new outcomes are broader than the previous outcomes and so it is likely that more applications will be received.

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 minority group where cultural activities can be closely linked to religious practice. Such applications would be considered by the Councils Equality & Diversity Team alongside the Community Investment team to ensure the needs of the group are considered appropriately in relation to reducing social and economic inequality.

Any group applying for a Community Grant is expected to have an Equality and Diversity Policy in place. Officers check the quality of all policies required and that they are in date at the point of assessment. Ultimately, if the 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 outcomes for the overall community funding programme will change if the proposals are agreed. The new outcomes are broader than the previous outcomes and so it is likely that more applications will be received.

The outcomes for Community 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 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: The essential guide to understanding poverty in the UK | Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#)), and are more likely to experience domestic abuse (see: [Domestic abuse, the facts - Women's Aid](#)). Community grants have supported women with 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 scheme 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 Community Investment officers check the quality of all policies required and that they are in date at the point of assessment. Ultimately, if 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.

There are no anticipated impacts specifically around sex for introducing multi-year grants – both restricted and unrestricted. The benefits of long-term funding that is less prescriptive are set out in the Cabinet paper at Appendix 4 and will apply in this case. Some of the groups supporting women that we have funded frequently in the past are expected to qualify for a multi-year grant and would likely be eligible for an unrestricted grant should they wish to apply. There will continue to be an opportunity to apply for annual grants, twice a year if this is more suited to a particular group.

## **(i) Sexual orientation**

The outcomes for the overall community funding programme will change if the proposals are agreed. The new outcomes are broader than the previous outcomes and so it is likely that more applications will be received.

The 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 and community development activities. The Council's 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.

Any group applying for a Community Grant is expected to have an Equality and Diversity Policy in place. The Community Investment officers check the quality of all policies required and that they are in date at the point of assessment. Ultimately, if 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.

There are no anticipated impacts specifically around sexual orientation for introducing multi-year grants – both restricted and unrestricted. The benefits of long-term funding that is less prescriptive are set out in the Cabinet paper at Appendix 4 and will apply in this case. Some of the groups supporting LGBTQ+ that we have funded frequently in the past are expected to qualify for a multi-year grant and would likely be eligible for an unrestricted grant should they wish to apply. There will continue to be an opportunity to apply for annual grants, twice a year if this is more suited to a particular group.

**(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\\_l59kt25q](https://media.ed.ac.uk/media/1_l59kt25q)).**

The Community funding 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.



**10. 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 Community Investment 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)/Support Cambs and Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum.

With respect to the specific changes proposed from 2027/28 onwards: if approved, publicity will be developed 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.

**11. Do you have any additional comments?**

The Community Investment team offer virtual and in-person support to groups requiring help with completing their applications. For the 2026/27 funding round, both Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service (CCVS) and Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum were present at in-person sessions offered during the application windows to provide the best package of support possible. This has been well received and will continue into the future.

Each year the Community Investment 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 outcomes and eligibility criteria and giving guidance on requirements
- 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'. CECF also offer tailored training.

The Community Investment 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 addresses some of these issues and supports the councils ambitions of building wealth in communities. The ideas were also shared with CCVS & CECF during the development stage with a request to act as a 'critical friend' to help identify any potential areas where more thought was needed.

## 12. Sign off

Name and job title of lead officer for this equality impact assessment: Julie Cornwell, Strategic Community Investment Lead

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

Date of EqlA sign off: 09-12-25

Date of next review of the equalities impact assessment: 2028-29

Date to be published on Cambridge City Council website: When Cabinet Agenda papers are published for 13 January 26 Cabinet meeting

**All EqlAs need to be sent to the Community Equity Team at [equalities@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@cambridge.gov.uk)**