



Bromsgrove
District Council
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Community Investment Fund Policy

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Investment Fund

April 2026

1. Introduction

Bromsgrove District Council is committed to investing in high-quality community activities and infrastructure that enhance neighbourhoods, supports community participation, and improves residents' quality of life. The Community Investment Fund (CIF) provides funding to support projects that deliver new or improved community assets and provides revenue funding to support community events and activities that increase footfall in the town centre, local centres and parks; enhance the vibrancy of public spaces, encourage local economic activity, strengthen community engagement and delivers positive outcomes for local people.

The Council recognises that strong social and community infrastructure contributes significantly to social, cultural, environmental, and economic wellbeing. This policy sets out how funding will be administered, assessed, and monitored, ensuring decisions are fair, transparent, and consistent with statutory responsibilities and the Council's corporate priorities.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all applications to the Community Investment Fund for projects delivered during the period **1 April 2026 to 31 March 2028**.

2.2 The programme provides capital funding, with a limited amount of related revenue expenditure permitted where it directly supports delivery of the capital project.

2.3 Revenue funding is available to support delivery of events and activities that benefit the community.

2.4 This policy applies only to the Community Investment Fund and does not cover other forms of Council funding, support, or commissioning.

3. Purpose of the Community Investment Fund

3.1 The purpose of the Community Investment Fund is to enable organisations to deliver projects that create, enhance, or modernise community infrastructure within Bromsgrove District; to support delivery of community services and activities that benefit local people; or to hold events that increase footfall and the vibrancy of the Town Centre, local centres and public parks.

3.2 Funding will be prioritised for projects that demonstrate clear alignment with the Council plan and other published Council strategies, and deliver defined, measurable community benefits.

3.3 Grant funding is available through three programmes:

- **Small Community Infrastructure Funding:**
Grants from **£5,000 to £30,000** for neighbourhood-scale improvements.

- **Large Community Infrastructure Funding:**
Grants from **£30,000 to £200,000**, with the potential for larger awards for **major projects** providing district-wide benefit or new community facilities.
- **Community Events and Activities Revenue Funding:**
Grants from **£2,000 to £10,000** for events and activities that enhance the vibrancy of town and local centres and public parks by increasing footfall; or delivers community services and activities that benefit local people.

3.4 Projects must be outcome-focused and demonstrate a lasting positive impact on residents. We are particularly looking for projects to be delivered in areas experiencing greater need or limited existing provision

4. Available Funding

4.1 The fund will operate through competitive bidding rounds across the 2026–2028 programme period.

4.2 Funding may only be used for eligible purposes and must comply with statutory financial rules, subsidy control requirements, and the Council’s Procurement Policy (see section 12).

4.3 The Council may vary, pause, or withdraw the fund should budget or strategic circumstances change.

5. Who Can Apply

Applications will be accepted from:

- Parish Councils
- Registered Charities
- Community Interest Companies (CICs)
- Formally constituted, unincorporated community groups and associations
- Local Authority Trading Companies
- Bromsgrove District Council departments

Eligible organisations must:

- Operate on a not-for-profit basis
- Have appropriate governance and financial controls
- Hold a bank account requiring at least two unrelated signatories
- Demonstrate the ability to deliver and manage the project

6. What Will and Will Not Be Funded

6.1 Eligible Projects

Eligible projects include the creation or improvement of:

- Public buildings including community centres, village halls, community libraries, public toilets
- Green or blue spaces including parks, gardens, woodlands, allotments, cemeteries, play areas
- Public realm including street furniture, wayfinding, car parks, visual amenity
- Arts, heritage, cultural, or sporting facilities
- Free to attend community events including music festivals, seasonal events such as a Christmas light switch-on, street entertainment, art and craft activities, sports tournaments
- Delivery of activities and services to local people on a non-commercial basis.

Projects must:

- Be located within Bromsgrove District, and
- Demonstrate that the primary beneficiaries will be Bromsgrove District residents

6.2 Ineligible Expenditure

The CIF will not fund:

- Expenditure required to deliver statutory obligations
- Retrospective costs or items purchased before a grant agreement is in place
- Projects eligible for alternative Council funding, including Ward Councillor Fund where funding is still available
- Ongoing operational costs not directly related to project delivery
- Activities of a political or campaigning nature
- VAT reclaimable from HMRC
- Projects lacking necessary planning or regulatory approvals or licences
- Work that cannot be completed within the agreed timescales

7. Timescales

7.1 The Council will publish the following for each round:

- Application opening date

- Application deadline
- Assessment period
- Expected decision date

7.2 All funding will be available in round 1 and any unallocated funding will go forward to the next round. Further rounds will only take place if there is funding available. The timing of rounds 1 - 3 are detailed in the table below:

Funding Round	Open	Close	Awards Confirmed
Round 1	27/4/26	7/6/26	3/7/26
Round 2	7/9/26	4/10/26	23/10/26
Round 3	January 2027	February 2027	March 2027

7.3 Decisions will normally be communicated within the published timescales.

8. Application Process

8.1 Applications must be submitted through the Council's online portal. There are separate application forms for the Small Community Infrastructure Funding, the Large Community Infrastructure Funding and the Community Events and Activities Funding.

8.2 Applicants must provide:

- A project proposal
- Evidence of alignment with the Council Plan or other published Council strategies
- Evidence of need for the project and the benefits that it will provide for the community.
- A detailed budget for the project and 3 quotations for any grant funded expenditure below £25,000 (see procurement requirements in Section 12 for expenditure over £25,000)
- A detailed delivery plan including key milestones
- Risk identification and mitigation (required for larger grants)
- Confirmation from the relevant Ward Member that they are supportive of the project

9. Assessment of Applications

9.1 All applications will be assessed against a scoring matrix. Applications will be scored against the following criteria:

- Alignment with the Council Plan and the Council's priorities

- Scale of the impact of the project
- Deliverability
- Value for money

9.2 The Council may consider previous performance in delivering funded projects when assessing applications.

9.3 The geographical spread of projects may be taken into account when assessing applications.

9.4 Incomplete applications will not be assessed.

9.5 The decisions of the funding panel are final and there is no right to appeal.

9.6 Applicants who are not successful may reapply in future rounds but only if they have made substantial changes to their proposal that address the reasons their previous application was declined.

10. Grant Conditions

10.1 Funding is awarded subject to a formal funding agreement, which must be signed before any payment is made.

10.2 Funding will generally be paid **on defrayed expenditure**, meaning applicants will be reimbursed for eligible costs paid after the date of the funding agreement. Larger grants may use phased payments linked to milestones. In exceptional circumstances, smaller funding amounts may be paid in advance.

10.3 All expenditure must be supported by:

- Evidence of compliant procurement (see Section 12)
- Invoices
- Proof of payment

10.4 There is no requirement to provide match funding; however, offering match contributions can strengthen an application and may positively influence the value for money assessment. Where match funding is included, an intervention rate will be set at that level meaning the funding will cover only a fixed proportion of the project's total cost up to a maximum value. If the project's actual costs are lower than those stated in the application the funding awarded will be reduced accordingly to maintain that same proportion.

10.5 All grants will be awarded in accordance with the Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA) subsidy control regime or other appropriate subsidy control routes.

11. Risk Considerations in Awarding Funding

11.1 The Council must ensure its funding is used effectively and delivers value for money. Risks relating to deliverability, governance, financial management, planning

constraints, and procurement compliance will be assessed as part of every application.

11.2 Large Infrastructure projects require:

- A project delivery plan with milestones
- A risk register outlining mitigation measures
- Demonstration of organisational capacity to deliver a capital project

11.3 Where risks are high, the Council may impose:

- Phased payment schedules
- Additional monitoring
- Conditions or restrictions in the grant agreement

12. Procurement Requirements

12.1 To ensure value for money, all funded expenditure must follow the Council's procurement rules:

- Up to £3,000 per item: evidence of competitive enquiries undertaken
- £3,001 - £25,000 per item: 3 written quotations and record of how supplier is selected
- £25,001 - £50,000 per item: Advertise a request for quotation via a procurement portal or project deliverer's website
- £50,001+ per item: Issue an invitation to tender via a suitable procurement portal

12.2 Where quotations cannot be sourced due to market limitations applicants must provide evidence and justification.

12.3 Any queries regarding procurement requirements and approach should be sent to the CIF programme officers.

13. Monitoring

13.1 Monitoring requirements will be proportionate to the size of the funding and will be set out in the funding agreement.

13.2 Monitoring may include:

- Progress reports
- Updated risk assessments
- Photographs of completed works
- A final evaluation

13.3 The Council reserves the right to withhold future payments or reclaim funding if:

- Monitoring requirements are not met
- Expenditure is non-compliant
- Delivery deviates from the approved proposal unless agreed in advance.

14. Branding Requirements

14.1 Branding requirements relate to all communication materials and public facing documents including print and publications through to digital and electronic materials.

Use of Logos

14.2 Project deliverers are required to include the Supported by Bromsgrove District Council and Community Investment Fund logos in all communication materials and public facing documents. The Supported by Bromsgrove District Council logo should be positioned in the upper left corner of documents with the Community Investment Fund logo in the bottom right corner.

14.3 Logos must not be stretched, squashed, broken up or reproduced in colours other than those provided. The logos must not be reproduced in a different typeface or be rotated. No additional wording or illustrations may be added to them.

Plaques

14.4 For infrastructure projects, no later than 3 months after completion of the project, the project delivered shall put up a permanent plaque of significant size at a location readily visible to the public and the Council should be invited to unveil the plaque.

14.5 The plaque should include the Supported by Bromsgrove District Council logo and the Community Investment Fund logo and the following text:

The [Name of Project] is [funded/part-funded] by Bromsgrove District Council through the Community Investment Fund.

14.6 Plaques should be at least 250 x 200mm as a minimum. The cost of producing and installing the plaque is an eligible expense.

Digital Materials including Websites and Social Media

14.7 Digital channels can provide a quick way to reach audiences and promote funded activities. Where details of funded activities are published on a website, a clear and prominent reference to the funding from the Community Investment Fund is to be included as follows:

This project is [funded/part-funded] by Bromsgrove District Council through the Community Investment Fund

14.8 When describing or promoting funded activities on social media, the relevant Bromsgrove Districts Council social media account should be tagged.

Press and Media including Press Releases

14.9 The content of all press releases must be authorised by the district council prior to distribution. The district council retains the right to include a quote from a council representative in the press release to acknowledge its support.

14.10 Press releases must include a clear and prominent reference to the Community Investment Fund in the main body of the press release.