



Essex County Council

ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES FUND - 2005/2006: GUIDANCE NOTE

WHAT IS THE COMMUNITY INITIATIVES FUND?

Essex County Council will provide support for communities throughout Essex to deliver improvements that matter to local residents.

The County Council is inviting local bodies to make bids for grants for projects and initiatives which will help to improve the quality of life for local residents and communities.

The grant scheme is aimed at bodies which are properly constituted and broadly representative of their local community or neighbourhood:

- town and parish councils;
- neighbourhood committees and forums;
- community associations and;
- voluntary and community organisations.

FUNDING AVAILABLE

A total of **£150,000** is available in each local government District area for the financial year **2005/06**. Within this overall amount no minimum or maximum limits are placed on individual projects.

IDENTIFYING THE PROJECT

The County Council wishes to work with local organisations to identify projects which are suitable for funding taking into account:

- The project or facility will promote the social, economic or environmental well-being of the locality and will result in the creation of a new physical asset.
- This could include community, social and sporting facilities, transport initiatives, commemorative features, land purchases, playground equipment and any related



Essex County Council

feasibility, design and planning work or publicity. The fund cannot be spent on staff costs or ongoing running costs.

- The project should take account of Essex County Council and Essex Partnership priorities including tackling crime and anti-social behaviour, improving local environmental features, access to services and supporting communities.
- Projects may be given preference if they can attract matched funding, have the potential to add value to other work being undertaken in the locality and have been identified in local 'health checks' or parish plans.

QUALIFYING CRITERIA

- The project must have the support of town or parish council where this exists, or another appropriate, constituted community group.
- The expenditure must be capital in nature.
- Grant funds must be spent on the project for which the application was made. Essex County Council retains the right to access the awarded body's records (financial and otherwise) and to such answers as may be required to any questions arising from the project.
- Projects should be complete within two years of receipt of funding. Any grant remains the property of Essex County Council until spent. Unspent balances must be returned by 31 March 2008.
- Evidence that the project meets local needs should be submitted with grant applications.
- The applicant should be able to demonstrate that it can meet any ongoing revenue costs.
- Applications which have secured match funding may be given preference.
- The facility or project should be available to all sectors of the local community and must not be political in nature.
- Any permissions, consents or licences required will need to be in place before a grant can be confirmed, where appropriate.
- Project milestones and a completion date must be agreed prior to commencement of the project for the purposes of monitoring delivery of the project and accounting for expenditure.



Essex County Council

- Successful applicants will be expected to work with the County Council in promoting and publicising their initiative.

ASSESSMENT OF BIDS

- All applications will be judged locally by relevant groups where these exist, such as District Associations of Local Councils or Town and Parish Clerks' Forums. Where such bodies do not exist, the County Council in partnership with the local district or borough council will convene a group of relevant local representatives to carry out the judging process.
- The County Council will approve projects and reserves the right to reject or alter a grant recommendation, but this right will only be exercised in exceptional circumstances.
- A grant offer may be withdrawn if it becomes apparent the proposal will not be initiated.
- The grant will be repaid to the County Council if the project or facility is withdrawn within three years of the grant being paid.

TIMESCALE

- All applications must be made on the attached form, with supporting information where appropriate, and should be submitted to Sandra Bushby at the address set out at the bottom of the application form by 24 February 2006.
- Projects should be completed by 31 March 2008.

FUTURE YEARS

Details of funding arrangements in 2006/07 will be subject to decisions on the overall County Council budget in spring 2006. Conditions relating to the scheme may be revised to take account of public feedback.