

BASILDON BOROUGH COUNCIL
GUIDANCE NOTE FOR ALLOCATING NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING GRANTS
2020 - 2023

1.0 Introduction

Basildon Borough Council (BBC) has allocated a £50,000 budget, to help facilitate the preparation of Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) and/or Neighbourhood Development Orders (NDOs) in the borough.

Neighbourhood planning groups wishing to apply to the Council for funding should read this guidance note to help them through the process.

The Council has also adopted a [Neighbourhood Planning Support Policy](#) which provides clarity on the level of 'advice and assistance' that BBC will provide at the various stages of the neighbourhood planning process.

2.0 Eligibility Criteria

Neighbourhood planning groups must demonstrate that they have met the following eligibility criteria when applying to the Council for funding aid.

2.1 How much Grant Funding can you apply for?

All groups undertaking a NDP or NDO will be eligible to apply for up to £10,000 as a basic grant, to be allotted from the existing £50,000 budget. The grant ceiling applies to the period from April 2020 to March 2023.

Groups facing more complex issues may be eligible for additional funding where they are:

- Allocating sites for development in their neighbourhood plan;
- Proposing to include design codes in their neighbourhood plan;
- Writing a business-led neighbourhood plan;
- Preparing a plan for a cluster of three or more parish councils;
- Neighbourhood plans for areas with a population of over 25,000 people;
- Designated neighbourhood forums;
- Groups based in areas which have a high level of deprivation (where 30% or more of the neighbourhood area or population is in the 20% most deprived areas in England according to the Index of multiple deprivation);
- Groups who are looking to bring forward affordable housing for sale.

2.2 Exempt Expenditure

Expenditure claims will not be permitted for the following items:

- Any general administration costs, such as arranging and minuting steering group meetings.
- Funding salaried posts to compensating for the loss of earnings, this includes paying additional hours for an existing member of staff and/ or employing someone on a casual or freelance basis at an agreed hourly rate. The only exception to this is where groups are

engaging a planning consultant, or someone to deliver specialist, technical support, on an hourly basis although even in these circumstances groups may prefer to get a fixed priced quote for the work to be undertaken.

- Paying for volunteer time, however reimbursement of reasonable out of pocket expenses is eligible.
- Reimbursing expenditure which has already been incurred.
- Funding for issues which are not within the remit of a neighbourhood plan – for example highways issues. Many transport matters cannot be dealt with through a neighbourhood plan. For example, work that aims to provide solutions to traffic management on existing roads (e.g. new traffic lights), or work associated with making a case to change speed limits.
- Capital items – generally this means that a purchase results in owning a lasting asset such as computers, photocopiers or digital projectors.
- Any other activity which is not directly associated with developing the Neighbourhood Plan or Neighbourhood Development Order.
- General contingency for unknown costs or cost overruns.
- Personal Protective Equipment.

2.3 What Supporting Information does the Council require?

In addition to the above, neighbourhood planning groups must fulfil the following requirements, when requesting for financial support from the Council:

- Provide evidence to the Council that central government grants have been maximised in respect to the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan, and the various layers of funding available.
- Provide information as to what and why additional funding is being sought, including rates of reimbursement for external support. The Council will not be providing any funds, prior to agreement on how such funds will be used.
- Where applicable, provide information as to where there is a gap within the Council's existing evidence base, with a reasoning as to why further work needs to be done where comparable information can be used.
- Demonstrate that the additional resource from the Council will provide strategic benefits to the wider area, such as the provision of new housing, jobs and infrastructure.

3.0 **How to Apply for Grant Funding**

➤ **Step one: Read the Guidance Note**

This will help you understand what you need to do to complete the process.

➤ **Step two: Apply to the Council**

Submit all required information and evidence to the Council.

➤ **Step three: Assessing your application**

The Council will assess your application within a minimum of 15 working days of receiving all the information we need to assess the application.

➤ **Step four: Decision on your application**

You will receive an email to let you know the outcome of your application. This will include information on next steps if your application has been successful, so that you can start receiving your support.