

**Mansfield
District Council**

**Tenant and Resident Associations /
Community Groups Recognition Criteria**

2016/2017

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District Council**

MANSFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL

TENANT INVOLVEMENT BUDGET MANAGEMENT AND PROCEDURE

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure the proper administration of the financial affairs of the authority through the management of the Tenant Involvement Budget.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT STANDARDS

All staff and members have a duty to abide by the highest standards of probity in dealing with financial issues. This is facilitated by ensuring everyone is clear about the standards to which they are working and the controls that are in place to ensure these standards are met.

The Financial Regulations provide the framework for managing the authority's financial affairs and as employees involved in the spending or collecting of money, we must ensure that we are familiar with the contents of the regulations especially in relation to budget preparation, monitoring and controlling budgets (Ref 9) and ordering and paying for works, goods and services. (Ref 30)

BUDGET MANAGEMENT

Whilst the Policy Unit Manager retains overall responsibility for the Tenant Involvement Budget, the Tenant Involvement Officer will assist in the budget preparation, ensure that the allocated resources are used only for the purposes intended and that income and expenditure is properly recorded and accounted for.

GUIDELINES

ALLOCATING RESOURCES

Mansfield District Council is committed to ensuring that the resources are available to ensure that every Tenant has the opportunity and choice to become involved in the decisions that affect their homes and communities.

As a result it allocates an annual budget specifically aimed at supporting the Tenant Involvement Activities which serve to operate effectively across a spectrum of functions aimed at engaging, involving and investing in individuals and communities

FINANCIAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT TENANT AND RESIDENT ASSOCIATIONS AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

GRANTS

Each recognised association / group in the district receives an annual administration grant of £100.00.

In order to be eligible for the grant associations/community groups have to meet certain criteria outlined in the agreed “criteria for recognition” (See Appendix 1 for criteria and application form)

This grant is paid to associations / groups to assist with the administration costs of supporting the association / group

Community Investment Grants will also be made available to associations / groups wishing to undertake a Community Investment Project. The amount available will be dependent on the status of the association / group (see Appendix 2 for criteria and application form)

SUBSISTENCE

We recognise that some tenants that wish to become directly involved are sometimes asked to attend Council led meetings, Forums and working groups and as such incur considerable expense in travelling to and from these meetings. Therefore all are able to claim travelling expenses when attending council led meetings.

Tenants can also claim travelling expenses for attending external training and seminars arranged by the Housing department and depending on the location of the training/seminar the following will apply.

All travelling expenses will be paid in line with Council policy and where possible. Representatives are encouraged to car share when attending meetings.

- Expenses for travel will be paid at **40p** per mile if using their own transport. Claim forms must be produced.
- Access to other transport i.e. taxis is available and must be agreed by the Tenant Involvement Officer. Reimbursement for using taxis should be claimed back by using an expense form.
- Train tickets will be arranged through the Tenant Involvement Officer

In addition, expenses for meals can be claimed at the following rates and circumstances again in line with Council Policy:

If the training/seminar necessitates an early departure (before 7am) then an allowance of **£5.30** can be claimed for breakfast.

When attending all day training/seminar and no lunch is provided then an allowance of **£7.11** can be claimed. (If outside Mansfield District Council boundary)

If training/seminar starts at 2pm and goes beyond 6.30 pm, an allowance of **£3.03** can be claimed for Tea.

Claims for overnight accommodation will be considered when the travelling to a venue is excessive prior to an early start or late finish. The costs must comply with Mansfield District Council conditions.

No claim will be processed without a valid receipt attached to an expenses claim form (Appendix 3) signed by the Tenant Involvement Officer.

INFORMATION

We recognise access to Information is a pre requisite for effective involvement and we are committed to providing information in varying formats to all our tenants.

The Tenant Involvement budget will therefore allocate a specific amount to the provision of information to tenants including:

- Three newsletters per annum
- One annual Tenant Report
- Information booklets on the Specific services provided by the housing department
- Communication relating to the promotion of Tenant Involvement and opportunities for involvement
- Attendance at Housing related regional seminars

TRAINING

We recognise that for tenants to be able to play an equal part in the decision making process they need to develop their knowledge and skills. Therefore access to the appropriate training is essential.

All involved tenants are encouraged to access additional training whether in house or externally and the Tenant Involvement Officer will provide regular information on the training courses available and undertake an annual audit of the training needs of all Involved tenants to ensure all requests for training, where appropriate, are considered.

Whilst the Inspector and Mystery Shoppers do not receive payment for undertaking inspections, they do receive payment for any expenses incurred and a voucher for a sum of between £5 and £10 for undertaking the inspections.

AFFILIATION

It is important that the quality of Tenant Involvement in Mansfield District Council is maintained and continually improved. In order to be able to access good practice we are affiliated to the East Midlands Tenant Participation Forum. Affiliations will be scrutinised on an annual basis by the Tenant Involvement Officer to ensure the services provided by organisations are value for money.

BUDGET PREPARATION

RECORDING AND MONITORING

Recording

Maintaining proper accounting records is one of the ways in which the authority discharges its responsibility for stewardship of public resources and all transactions relating to Tenant Involvement income and expenditure need to be recorded completely, accurately and on a timely basis.

All income and expenditure transactions will be inputted onto the Tenant Involvement Budget spreadsheet on a weekly basis as a minimum by the Tenant Involvement Officer.

Procedures also need to be in place to enable accounting records to be reconstituted in the event of systems failure. Therefore the Tenant Involvement Officer should ensure that hard copies of all orders and invoices are retained and filed.

Reconciliation

It is the responsibility of the Involvement Officer to reconcile the Tenant Involvement budget against the general ledger on a monthly basis to ensure transactions are recorded consistently on both the general ledger and the Tenant Involvement Budget spreadsheet.

PREPARING AND REPORTING STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Tenant Involvement Officer is required to prepare and present financial statements which present fairly the financial position of the Department in relation to the Tenant Involvement budget showing all expenditure and income incurred within a given period.

The Tenant Involvement Officer will therefore monitor the Tenant Involvement budget to ensure that spending remains within the limits set on a quarterly basis. A report will then be prepared and discussed with the Policy Unit Manager which identifies projected spends for the following quarter and highlighting any appropriate corrective action where significant variations from the previous quarters projected spends have occurred.

PROCEDURE FOR ORDERING AND PAYING FOR WORK, GOODS AND SERVICES

This document outlines the allocated budget categories and provides guidance on what resources can be spent on within each of the categories and the Tenant Involvement Officer must ensure that the ordering of any works, goods or services are in line with and comply with the guidance. Official orders / payment vouchers must not be raised for any work, goods or services that are not contained in the guidance without prior approval from their immediate line manager.

Following the correct procedures will ensure that the ordering, receiving and payment process complies with the financial regulations in that two authorised members of staff, namely the

Tenant Involvement Officer and the Policy Unit Manager are involved in the ordering, receiving and payment process.

Official orders / payment vouchers should be used at all times and be in a form approved by the Head of Finance.

When producing a new order form the order number must be increased by 1 before it is printed and this change must be saved before the file is closed.

The Tenant Involvement Officer should also keep a hard copy of the order form /payment voucher on file.

Order Processing System

In certain circumstances orders are put through on the order processing system i.e. for training. For guidance on raising an order see appendix 6.

Again a copy of the order raised should be retained as a hard copy and filed.

Payment of Annual Grant

Payments for annual grants should only be authorised if the group meets all the criteria set out and has provided any supporting documentation required. (see appendix 1)

Once the Tenant Involvement Officer has received all supporting documentation and has all evidence that the group complies with the criteria, a Mansfield District Council Payment Voucher should be completed and forwarded to Business Support to arrange payment. A hard copy should be kept on file.

Payment of Community Investment Grant

Training

All training for tenant representatives that is to be paid for out of the Tenant Participation Budget must be authorised and booked by the Tenant Involvement Officer.

If the booking is made verbally over the telephone then the Tenant Involvement Officer must also raise a confirmation order on the order processing system.

All printed confirmation orders must be retrieved from the printer in BSU and filed

If a booking is made via the original booking form provided or via the internet then a copy should be made and filed.

Subsistence

All claims for subsistence from individual tenant should be put through for payment via a Mansfield District Council Payment Voucher and be supported by a completed application for reimbursement of expenses form (see appendix 6) and appropriate receipts where applicable.

NB: Where taxis are used by Tenants, a receipt must be attached to an expense form and returned to the Tenant Involvement Officer for reimbursement. Where a mini bus is verbally ordered the Tenant Involvement Officer will raise a confirmation order via the Order processing System and retain the order for filing.

Catering

Where external caterers are used the Tenant Involvement Officer will raise a confirmation order via the order processing system with a hard copy retained for filing

Equipment

When ordering equipment all orders must be ordered in accordance with the authorities Contract regulations unless they are purchased from sources within the authority using the appropriate order processing system.

NB: All IT hard ware and software must be ordered by the IT department.

However when ordering computers and software for associations / groups under the agreed guidelines for requesting computers for the associations/groups, a Mansfield District Council Payment voucher should be completed by the Tenant Involvement Officer upon receipt of a completed computer application pro forma and quotation.

Authorising Payments

Where possible a different officer from the person who signed the order should authorise the invoice. Payment should not be authorised unless a proper VAT invoice chargeable to the Council has been received, checked, coded and certified for payment confirming:

- Receipt of goods or services
- That the invoice has not previously been paid
- That expenditure has been properly incurred and is within budget provision
- That prices and arithmetic are correct and accord with quotations, tenders, contracts or catalogue prices
- That the invoice is correctly coded.

Where the Tenant Involvement Officer has been responsible for the ordering of goods or services, any payments will need to be checked and authorised by the Policy Unit Manager

Appendix 1

CRITERIA FOR ANNUAL ADMINISTRATION GRANT FUNDING

In order to be eligible for an annual grant of £100 towards administration costs associations /groups will:

- Have a Constitution (setting out their aims and any membership details if any)
- Have a Committee (the election of which will be dependent on their constitution and membership of individual groups)
- Have a bank account
- Operate in an area where there is a **high concentration of Council owned properties.**

Associations / groups wishing to be considered for an annual administration grant must complete the attached form and submit it to the Tenant Involvement Officer by the end of each financial year (31 March)

APPLICATION FOR AN ANNUAL GRANT

Name of Association/Group:	
Name of person making application:	
Position in Association/Group:	
Tel No.:	
Bank Name: Account no: Sort code:	

We hereby apply for an administration grant to be used towards our running costs. We declare that we:

- have followed the criteria for recognition as agreed by the MDC criteria
- Agree to abide by, and work within, the principles laid down by MDC

Signed.....Chair

Signed.....Secretary

On behalf of(state group name

OFFICE USE ONLY

Granted Yes/No Amount: £100.00 Pay BACS
Raise order to:..... AccountNo:230000-0519

signed:..... Position:.....

Apendix 2

APPLICATION FOR COMMUNITY INVESTMENT GRANT

Mansfield District Council provides grant funding to associations / groups who focus their efforts on addressing Community Investment themes identified below:

Theme	Examples
Strengthening Local economies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Employment and skills training• In house procurement• In house apprenticeships• Social enterprise support
Poverty and Exclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Financial and debt advice• Community cohesion• Financial Inclusion
Young People	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Diversionary activities• Sports and leisure• Advice and support
Health and Well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Independent living• Vulnerability• Loneliness
Community Capacity and Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supporting civic infrastructure• Supporting community enterprise• Building 'under the radar' capacity• Management / ownership of assets
Environment and Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Environmental improvements• Energy efficiency• Community energy initiatives• Community transport

The amount of Community Investment Grant for which you can apply for will depend on your association / group status. If you are in receipt of the annual administration grant you will automatically be eligible to apply for up to £500 in each financial year.

Other individuals /associations / groups will be eligible to apply for up to £250 towards their Community Investment project.

NB: Grants made to any un-constituted groups will be paid directly to contractor / provider / service etc.

Any application for the Community Investment Grant should be made on the attached form and submitted to the Tenant Involvement Officer no later than the last day of February in each financial year. Any applications received after this date will be subject to funding availability. Priority will be given to applications from those groups who are in receipt of the annual administration grant.

Please complete and return this form to the Tenant Involvement Officer:

Name of individual/association / group	
Name of person completing form	
Address	
Postcode	
Telephone Number	
Email	
Bank Details Name of Bank Sort code Account number	
If you do not have a bank, the grant will be paid directly to the contractor Name of contractor Address Telephone number	

Are you in receipt of the annual administration grant?	Yes		No		Don't Know	
What is your main aim?	(Please state)					
Which of the Community Investment themes (identified on page 1) will your project help to deliver?	(Please state)					
Please provide details of your project: (Please state)						

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Please continue on separate sheet if necessary

Will the project benefit a specific community /neighbourhood / ward?	If yes please state:	
Will the project benefit a specific group? i.e. elderly / young people	If yes please state:	
What is the total cost of the project?	£	
What is the amount of grant you are applying for?	£	
How much funding has already been raised to support the project?	£	
Have you applied to other organisations for funding?	If yes please state:	
What are the timescales for completing the project?	_ _ / _ _ / _ _ _ _	

How will you measure the impact / outcomes of your project? (Please state)	
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NB: where there are several applications of a similar nature in the same locality then groups will be encouraged to work together. If this is not feasible then the grant will be administered on a first come first serve basis

Declaration:

I can confirm that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, all the information in this application for the Community Investment grant is true and correct.

Applicant :

Name:

Signature:

Position:

Date:

Supported by:

Name:

Signature:

Position:

Date:

OFFICE USE ONLY

Granted

Yes/No

Amount:

Raise order to:.....

Account No:230000-0519

Signed:..... Position:.....