

APPENDIX 1 - WCC Councillors' Grant Fund 2020-21 COVID-19 Support Fund Briefing Note

Purpose

We are all in the fight against COVID-19 together and brilliant work is happening across Warwickshire to keep people stay safe and well.

A co-ordinated effort across the voluntary and community sector is making a tremendous difference to isolated and vulnerable people and those most in need of help.

To sustain this effort, it is proposed that a special round of Councillors' Grant Funding take place, named the COVID-19 Support Fund.

There are 57 Councillors, each Councillor having an allocation of £6,000.

Proposed process

A simple application form and guidance notes have been created ([click here](#)) These have been based along the lines of Staffordshire County Council Fund, although adhering to the basic format of the Warwickshire County Council, Councillors' Grant Fund.

Using the online form, groups will be limited to one Councillor per application, although they can submit further applications to other Councillors if they wish.

In Warwick District, the County Councillors normally separate their £6,000 between the County Councillors' Grant Fund and the Community Forum Grant Funds for their divisions. Alistair Rigby will contact the County Councillors in Warwick District to ask them how much of their pots they wish to allocate to the COVID-19 Support Fund.

Proposed timescales for the fund are as follows:

Launch Date	Monday 13 April
Closing Date	Sunday 26 April
Process data and send applications to Councillors	w/c Monday 27 April
Inform applicants of success of application	w/c Monday 4 May
Process payments	w/c Monday 11 & 18 May

Meeting these deadlines is dependent on the following:

- Availability of 3 members of business support staff to be deployed to this task specifically for the processing of applications, preparing applications for Councillors, liaising with Councillors, and processing payments.

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- Availability of E Services staff to amend webpages ready for launch on 13 April.
- Quick decisions by County Councillors with divisions in Warwick District on how much of their £6,000 pots they wish to allocate to the COVID-19 Support Fund.
- Remove the step of Localities Officers scoring applications, so the applications can go directly to Councillors after the closing date, once the admin team have processed the applications.
- Quick turnaround from Councillors (suggestion of 2 days) from when they receive their applications to them making decisions in terms of allocations.
- Quick turnaround by groups in returning their grant acceptance forms and bank details, following successful notification.

As with the standard WCC Councillors' Grant Fund, groups will be required to complete an evaluation/monitoring form to ensure the monies awarded have been spent in accordance with the requirements of the COVID-19 Support Fund.

Recommendation

The full amount of £342,000 (57 x £6,000) is allocated to the COVID-19 Support Fund (minus any monies retained by County Councillors with divisions in Warwick District, retained for the Community Forum Grant Funds).

Conclusion

The COVID-19 Support Fund should be seen as a quick and simple, yet transparent, process which will support the voluntary and community groups within Warwickshire through this crisis.

This briefing note, guidance notes, application form and other supporting documentation have been pulled together by Amanda Wilson-Patterson, Lori Harvey and Asmaa Ahmedabadi in the Localities & Partnerships Team.

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