Community Funding Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of the Community Funding Policy is to guide the allocation and management of Council's contestable community grants. This policy supports Council's intent to walk alongside the community to achieve its aspirations. It provides clear guidance about Council's intentions and priorities for funding, fair and equitable grants processes, and upfront information about the obligations of groups and organisations if they receive a grant.

The overall objective of the Community Funding Policy is to support effective delivery of the community funding programme to meet the needs of four groups of stakeholders being:

- **Groups and organisations seeking financial support,** who require clear guidance about Council's intentions and priorities for funding, fair and equitable grants processes, and upfront information about their obligations if they receive a grant.
- **Elected members**, who are responsible for deciding on the allocation of grants in a way that best meets the needs of the community, addresses the priorities they have collectively set, and delivers good value to ratepayers.
- **Council staff**, who need a clear framework within which to work to provide high quality service and advice, stewardship of grant funds, evaluation of their impact and benefit, and effectively deliver the community funding programme.
- **Westland residents**, who fund through rates the community support the council provides, and who receive the benefit of the activities Council fund on their behalf.

1.1 Scope

This policy relates to Council's contestable community funding programme managed by the Community Services Department, which includes all contestable grants.

1.1.1 Other support

Support provided through other council functions is not within the scope of this policy. This includes but is not limited to:

- Rates, rebates, remissions, and postponements.
- Koha given in specific cultural situations and settings.
- Township Development Fund.
- Alternative funding programmes such as the Small Events Fund, and the Waste Minimisation Fund to support objectives in line with the Westland District Waste Management and Minimisation Plan.
- Community service grants and contributions to community groups undertaking activities such as mowing of grounds, roadside rubbish removal, and cleaning of public toilets.
- Third party support such as the Creative Communities Scheme that Council administers on behalf of Creative New Zealand, and the Rural Travel Fund administered on behalf of Sport New Zealand.
- Large, one-off grants towards the purchase, development or maintenance of key district infrastructure, usually approved through Annual Plan or Long Term Plan.
- Support provided to Council Controlled Organisations or other community organisations with which Council has a strategic relationship.
- Incentives and concessions relating to the lease of council-owned property.

1.2 Valuing Te Ao Māori and enabling Māori outcomes

Council is committed to upholding the Mana o Te Tiriti o Waitangi and to developing stronger relationships with tangata whenua.

In the context of this policy, this commitment means that:

- Council acknowledges the special role and significance of Māori as tangata whenua;
- Council recognises that support to eligible kaupapa Māori organisations is an important way to realise Māori aspirations;
- Council will engage effectively with Māori to promote funding opportunities available through council;
- Council will obtain a Te Ao Māori perspective from Council's Iwi Representatives;
- Council's support is appropriately recognised in funding decisions which demonstrate equitable funding support for tangata whenua.

1.3   Commencement

This policy comes into force on 25 August 2022.

1.4   Definitions

Contestable	Where a fixed amount of money is available that applicants can apply to receive a portion.
Grants	Financial support for specific community endeavours, made following a contestable process
Not for profit	Any society, association or organisation that is not carried on for the profit or gain of any individual member/s, and whose rules or objects state that any money earned or donated is used in pursuing the organisation's objectives for community good.

2. Community Funding Policy

The Westland District Council recognises that the local community, through their diverse range of activities, make a major contribution to the social, environmental, cultural and economic well-being of the Westland District.

To better enable community groups, and organisations to contribute to the well-being of the Westland District Council provides a number of support mechanisms as outlined under this policy.

This policy provides the Westland District Council with a formalised process for the allocation of community funding. It also provides clarity, transparency and consistency in the Council's community funding approach.

2.1   Approach

Community funding is delivered in accordance with Council's Vision and detailed funding principles employing the concepts of:

- whanaungatanga (fostering relationships)
- manaakitanga (showing respect and care for others)
- kotahitanga (togetherness and collective action, and
- atawhaitanga (stewardship and trust)

Community funding principles

Council endeavours to apply these community funding principles in policy and in practice when delivering its community funding.

The principles are:

Effective	Council is effective and responsive, providing support in a timely, effective and responsible manner enabling our communities to deliver their projects successfully for the benefit of the District. There are robust processes appropriate to the level of funding, and funding provides assistance and does not fund dependency. Council remains responsible for key district amenities and will support communities to maintain and enhance these where possible.
Equitable	Council will provide an equitable division of support across our diverse communities of people, place and interest.
Consistent	Delivery of funding opportunities will be consistent and fair, including ensuring all eligible organisations can compete for the same support.
Transparent	Our approach, criteria, processes, consideration and decision-making is clear, open, and publicly available and can stand up to scrutiny.
Flexible	Council will be flexible, adaptable and able to be agile in order to support the community when, how and where it seeks our support.
Inclusive	Council supports programmes, services, facilities and activities that are inclusive for all its communities of place, people and attribute, including, but not limited to: • Māori, hapū and iwi • Pacific people and all our ethnic communities • Older people, youth and people with disabilities • The rainbow community

2.2 Priorities

Council aims to support a balanced mix of social amenities and services that meet the needs of all our diverse communities that make up the Westland District.

Council supports activities coming from outside of the district that will enrich the experience of the people of Westland and address local needs.

An open, transparent and equitable process ensures Council puts available funds to good use in serving the Westland District.

Funding priorities

To support the four well-beings in the Local Government Act, and Council's vision and community outcomes, community funding has four priority areas for funding.

Mana tangata whenua	Recognising iwi kāinga as a treaty partner and the important role they play in achieving Council's Vision, community outcomes, and the goals of the four well-beings.
Arts, Culture and Heritage	Celebrate the history, language, culture and art of mana whenua and all of our diverse communities.
Recreation and Sport	Deliver a variety of recreation and sporting opportunities for all ages, abilities and life stages.
Environment	Celebrate and protect our flora, our fauna and our special places for current and future generations to enjoy, with a focus on national environmental policies. We particularly want to see applications that align with: • Waste minimisation objectives. • Climate change adaption or mitigation objectives. • National objectives such as Predator Free 2050. • Enabling kaitiakitanga of the district's taiao (natural environment).
Community Well-being	Celebrate happy, healthy, connected communities and individuals. We particularly want to see applications that • Support communities to help themselves. • Promote community well-being and address disadvantage. Promote and celebrate community participation and identity

2.3 Eligibility

Generally, eligible applicants for Council's support are community organisations that are not-for-profit/charitable with a formal legal structure and founding documents, whose primary aim is to provide services and benefits to the community at large. Applications from individuals will be considered where a specific grant or fund may make provision for this, such as a Mayoral Relief Fund associated with impacts from Civil Defence events.

These organisations will have appropriate financial management practices for their size, and a bank account in the organisation's name.

Community organisations that do not have a formal legal structure would need to nominate an 'umbrella' organisation that agrees to receive and administer the grant on their behalf and to be accountable to Council for the value of the grant should any issues with its use arises.

2.3.1 Ineligible applications

Community funding will not support:

• Debt servicing, gambling or prize money, travel costs, conference fees, costs related to fines or disputes
• Retrospective expenses incurred

- Activities or projects:
  - Where the primary purpose is to promote religious, political, or commercial activity
  - It considers are the core business of another organisation or service provider
  - It considers the responsibility of central government or other agencies
  - that start before funding decisions are made
  - that are self-funding or for fundraising purposes
- applicants it has significant concerns with, financial or otherwise
- who have not completed their obligations for prior funding received
- applicants that can fund the initiative themselves

Council reserves the right to support applications and organisations outside of these criteria where there is clear community benefit, while continuing to use ratepayer funds responsibly.

2.4 Funds available

Council's current Community funding is available on Council's website under community support and resources.

Applicants' contact details may be added to a mailing list for the purposes of advising of upcoming funding opportunities.

2.5 Application, assessment and approval process

Support for applicants

Council staff will provide advice and support for applicants with language, literacy or other access needs to ensure equitable access to Council's support, whenever possible.

Council aims to balance 'funding for success' (supporting an application in full to enable the initiative to be a success) with the need to support a variety of initiatives within a limited budget.

Applying for funding

All requests for support from Council must be made on the appropriate application form or as otherwise stated for each Fund.

Supporting documents are required for most Funds. Applicants who have previously applied for Council's support, do not need to submit supporting documents that Council already has on record, unless otherwise stated.

Multiple or recurring grants

A project, activity or initiative can generally only receive funding once from community funding each financial year (1 July – 30 June). Applicants can seek funding for multiple projects, activities and initiatives in a financial year, however any funding already received will be considered and preference may be given to other applicants.

Any support Council provides is not an indication or guarantee of future support.

Community funding does not provide multi-year support, and a new application in full must be made for each request.

Assessment

Staff assess each application based on:

- eligibility and alignment with this policy;
- alignment with Council's vision, community outcomes, four well beings, and funding priorities;
- community impact and need;

- readiness of the applicant, risk, and ability to deliver;
- available budget and funding priority weightings;
- previous or practiced levels of support for the type of activity that funding is sought for; and
- professional insight.

As demand for Council's support typically exceeds the available budget, Council may apply further prioritisation to deliver consistent, fair and equitable outcomes. When required, preference may be given to:

- local applications and applicants.
- volunteer-run organisations.
- new applicants.
- essential needs such as health and safety and protection of community assets.

Decision-making

Decisions on funding allocations will be made by an appointed Committee of Council. The Council may delegate some functions to staff from time to time.

Funding decisions are final and cannot be contested, however applicants may apply again in a future funding round.

Funding decisions are generally advised within eight (8) weeks of a funding round closing.

Council may withhold the payment of grants allocated until evidence of meeting grant conditions is provided.

Declaring potential conflicts of interest

A conflict of interest may exist where any elected member, or council staff member, has any interest or involvement in the project or activity proposed for Council's support.

Any perceived conflict of interest must be declared by applicants on their application form, and by staff and elected members appointed to a committee where the request for funding will be discussed.

Council's Standing Orders (procedures for the conduct of meetings) outline how potential conflicts of interest will be managed.

2.6 Recipient responsibilities

Receiving funding

Recipients of funding must:

- use the funding as intended within 12 months of receiving the funding
- return any unspent funds
- seek approval for any changes that may affect the use of the funds as they were granted
- publically acknowledge Council's support in any marketing material, advertising and/or on social media
- provide a brief report on the use of the grant as specified for the Fund.

Grant reports

Reporting on the use and impact of funding received is required for most funding allocated.

Reports are required within two months of the funded activity being completed, or as otherwise indicated for each Fund.

Council may withhold future funding or request funding to be returned if reports are overdue, incomplete or indicate funds received were not used as intended.

In some instances, staff may waive the need for a full report, such as if the activity or event was attended by or sighted by Community Services Staff, or is of low financial value, or is otherwise not deemed necessary.

Reporting requirements will be outlined with each Fund and can include:

- Grant Report Form
- Receipts and photos of work or activity
- Progress reports and a full report when project completed
- Presentation to Council Committee

Terms and conditions

This policy outlines the terms in which Council will provide support through community funding and the obligations of those receiving that support. Council may impose additional terms and conditions if required.

The terms and conditions of receiving support from Council are deemed acceptable when a recipient presents and invoice to Council or otherwise accepts any payment made.

3. Reporting

The Community Development Advisor will provide a report to the Community Development Committee or other nominated committee.

Council's Annual Report also includes performance measures for grant funding that must be reported on.

4. Related Documents and Acts

The following Westland District Council documents relate to this policy:

- Staff Handbook
- Community Funding Procedure
- Long Term Plan 2021 - 2031

The following Legislation relates to this policy:

- Local Government Act 2002

Note: Any legislation referred to should be interpreted as meaning the Act and its amendments

5. Policy Review

A review of this policy will take place in July 2025.

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