

What to Expect After Submitting an Application for the Community Grant

We know waiting for updates can be frustrating, so here's an overview of what happens after you submit your application.

Please note that this is a **multi-stage process**, which means you may hear from us more than once with follow-up questions. This is normal and part of making sure applications are complete, fair, and properly assessed so that the grant criteria is fully met and satisfies audit and due diligence requirements.

1. Initial Check – Completeness of Application

We first look to see if you have answered all required questions and uploaded all supporting documents. If anything is missing, we'll contact you to request it before moving forward. Applications of over £50,000 have extra requirements around sustainability so we will contact you with additional questions.

2. Detailed Review

Once your application is complete, we review it thoroughly.

We may contact you about

- Mistakes or unclear information
- Clarification regarding quotes and project finances
- Any missing details or answers that need more detail.

If you receive further questions from us at this stage, this is routine and helps us make sure nothing important is overlooked and that all due diligence requirements are met.

3. Team Discussion

Grants officers meet to discuss all applications. Sometimes we seek specialist advice from colleagues. We also consider whether an application may need a *special condition* (e.g., application will be considered eligible for decision, but funds release is conditional on you providing a licence or permission when obtained). You may receive additional questions, but only if we need clarification.

4. Reports and Senior Review (Approx. 2.5 -3 Weeks After Round Closes)

We prepare written reports on each application and have them signed off by senior managers. At this stage, further questions are unlikely, but still possible if something requires more clarification.

5. SEAP

If you are a Market Harborough town organisation; you must gain the support of the **Special Expenses Advisory Panel** before your application can go to the decision panel. (more on final page of guide)

6. Preparing for the Decision Panel

Once your application is ready for the panel, we'll let you know. If any special conditions apply, we'll explain these clearly. You will receive confirmation that your application is being put forward as eligible for decision, the time and date of the meeting and an invitation to attend (attendance is required for applications of over £25,000).

If you do choose to attend the decision meeting, this is public and as such recorded and shared on our website. Applications are heard one by one, and you may be invited to speak or answer questions from the panel.

Note* In rare cases, it may be necessary for the council to defer or hold over an application. This could arise due to circumstances such as:

- political considerations (e.g. a newly announced by-election in the applicant's area),
- a last-minute query during due diligence checks, or
- missing information not supplied by the applicant by the stated deadline.

In extremely rare situations, if new information comes to light after submission which clearly demonstrates that the application no longer meets the eligibility criteria, the council reserves the right to withdraw the application from consideration.

7. Receiving an Award

If your application is successful and the Grants Panel agrees an award, officers will first contact you with a grant offer. This is done through the online funding portal, so please make sure you check both the portal and your email for alerts.

Sometimes a grant will be offered with special conditions. These might include providing copies of permissions, outstanding documents, signed community agreements or licences. In these cases, your application is still considered successful, but the release of funds will be conditional on you supplying the necessary evidence.

You will then be asked to read and agree to the grant terms and conditions, and to confirm acceptance of the offer. If there are any conditions attached, you should also send us the required evidence at this stage. Once your acceptance has been received, and any conditions met, we will issue a formal legal agreement. This agreement must be signed and returned to us before funds transfer can be arranged.

When the signed agreement has been received, officers will process payment of the grant to the council's finance department to transfer the grant to your organisation.

8. Monitoring

After you receive the funds, we will begin monitoring your project. Progress will be reviewed against the timescales you provided in your original application, and officers will usually reach out every 12 weeks for updates. Finally, you will also need to submit a final completion report, which must be provided no later than 12 weeks after your declared completion date.

***Special Expenses Advisory Panel (SEAP) Market Harborough Town Applicants Only**

Community organisations based in Market Harborough must first obtain the support of the Market Harborough Special Expenses Advisory Panel (SEAP), which is made up of the ten Ward Councillors, before their application can be put forward as eligible to the Grants Sub-Committee for a decision.

When applications are considered by the SEAP, Ward Councillors receive a report containing the full application details. For this reason, organisations will need to provide a reasonably complete application at this stage. The application must be clear enough for officers to confirm eligibility and for Councillors to assess the proposal. Because of this extra step, Market Harborough applications may sometimes effectively face an earlier deadline than other groups

If there isn't time for a SEAP meeting before the current round closes, you may still submit your application, but it will only move forward once SEAP support has been confirmed. This approach is necessary to ensure the grants process can still run on time while also fitting with the democratic calendar. If you are a Market Harborough town applicant, we will contact you as soon as possible to confirm what is needed before your application is heard by the SEAP.