



Ref: Agenda/TCM-18052021

13th May 2021

Dear Sir/Madam

Members of the Town Centre Management Committee are hereby summoned to the meeting on Tuesday 18th May 2021 at the offices of **Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade** commencing at **7:00pm**, in order to transact the under mentioned items of business.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Peter Tarrant", written over a horizontal line.

Peter Tarrant
Town Clerk & Chief Executive

Distribution: Notice Boards
Committee Members:

Cllr M Knight (**Chair**)
Cllr G Fage (**Vice Chair**)
Cllr D Albone
Cllr I Bond
Cllr M North
Cllr R Pullinger
Cllr M Russell
Cllr D Strachan
Cllr C Thomas
Cllr J Woodhead

AGENDA

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To receive Statutory Declarations of Interests from Members in relation to:

- (a) Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item.
- (b) Non-Pecuniary interests in any agenda item.

3. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

To adjourn for a period of up to 15 minutes to allow Members of the public to put questions or to address the Council, through the Chairman, pertaining to matters listed on the Agenda.

Please register in advance for this webinar:

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_97F10VaASWuA22Sb6-D8SQ

Each Speaker will give their name to the Chairman, prior to speaking, which will be recorded in the minutes, unless that person requests otherwise. Each Speaker will be allowed (one) three-minute slot.

4. INVITED SPEAKER - None

5. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

- a. For Members to receive the minutes of the Town Centre Management meeting held on **Tuesday 11th March 2021** via Zoom Webinar hosted from the offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

6. MATTERS ARISING

- a. Minutes of the Town Centre Management meeting held on **Tuesday 11th March 2021**.

7. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

a. Market Feedback

For Members to consider a written report from Councillor M. Knight and Councillor G. Fage on feedback re the Market and any future recommendations. This to include consideration around the frequency of future Market Working Group meetings.

b. Welcome Back Fund

For Members to consider a written proposal from the Place Shaping Manager in relation to potential projects that might be sourced from the Welcome Back fund. The deadline for receipt of submissions being the 24th of May.

c. Union Flag

For Members to receive an oral update from the Town Clerk and Chief Executive.

d. Community Asset Grant Scheme

For Members to consider a written update from the Place Shaping Manager and oral update from the Town Clerk and Chief Executive. The deadline for receipt of submissions being the 1st of July.

8. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

a. Harris' Fun Fair

It has been agreed that Harris' fun-fair can run for one weekend in the second half of July (covid permitting).

b. Transport Interchange

For Members to receive an oral update from the Town Clerk and Chief Executive.

c. Century House

For Members to receive an oral update from the Town Clerk and Chief Executive.

d. Town Centre Benches

For Members to receive an oral update from the Deputy Public Realm Manager.

e. Hanging Baskets & Memorial Area

For Members to receive an oral update from the Deputy Public Realm Manager.

f. Footfall Monitoring – High Streets Task Force

For Members to receive an oral update from the Place Shaping Manager.

g. Summer Events Schedule

For Members to receive an oral update from the Place Shaping Manager.

9. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

To adjourn for a period of up to 15 minutes to allow Members of the public to put questions or to address the Council, through the Chairman, in respect of any other business of the Town Council.

Please register in advance for this webinar:

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_97F10VaASWuA22Sb6-D8SQ

Each Speaker will give their name to the Chairman prior to speaking, which will be recorded in the minutes, unless that person requests otherwise. Each Speaker will be allowed (one) three-minute slot.

10. EXEMPT ITEMS

The following resolution will be **moved** that is advisable in the public interest that the public and press are excluded whilst the following exempt item issue is discussed.

(11a. A Boards and Temporary Street Furniture)

Pursuant to section 1(2) of the public bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Council **resolve** to exclude the public and press by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted.



**MINUTES OF THE TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 11TH
MARCH 2020 AT 7.00PM VIA ZOOM WEBINAR**



PRESENT:

Cllr G Fage – Chairman
Cllr M Knight – Vice Chairman
Cllr D Albone
Cllr I Bond
Cllr Pullinger
Cllr D Strachan
Cllr C Thomas

Mr Peter Tarrant, BTC Town Clerk and Chief Executive
Mr Philip Truppin, BTC Assistant Town Clerk
Ms. Karen Saunders, BTC Meeting Administrator
Ms. Jackie Sadek, Chief Operating Officer, UK Regeneration
Mr Giles Heather, Director, Goldstein Heather
Ms Gill Marshall, Head of Stakeholder Engagement, UK Regeneration

Member of the public, Cllr F Foster

Meeting Formalities:

Following a reminder to meeting attendees, both panel and public, that this is a formal meeting, the Chairman advised that members of the public will be given an opportunity to speak during public open session but not at other times. The meeting is being filmed and by being present attendees are deemed to have agreed be filmed and to the use of those images and sound recordings. The Chairman advised that attendees should not disclose any personal information of individuals as this would infringe the Data Protection Rights of the individual. The Chairman asked everyone to mute their microphones when not speaking.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Russell, Cllr North, Cllr Woodhead, Simon Newton.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Statutory Declarations of Interests from Members in relation to:

- (a)** Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item – Cllr G Fage - Parking permits
- (b)** Non-Pecuniary interests in any agenda item – None.

3. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

There were no questions from members of the Public.

4. **INVITED SPEAKERS**

Ms Jackie Sadek from UK Regeneration, Mr Giles Heather from Goldstein Heather, and Ms. Gill Marshall presented to Members on plans for the New Inn Public House and the Red Lion Public House. Ms Sadek gave apologies for the absence of Simon Lyons who could not attend tonight.

Ms Sadek advised Members that the New Inn would be retained as a traditional pub offering craft ale, an extensive wine menu and good and affordable food with slides showing the interior decor, using traditional building materials in-keeping with the historical nature of the building and surrounding buildings. It will benefit from a complete interior transformation as well as a radical two storey extension at the rear with a transformed residential unit above, a sunken dining area outside and a bar area providing craft beers, a restaurant/kitchen area and a gin distillery.

Members discussed the homeless person who lives next to this property, UK Regeneration wishes to take guidance from the Town Council and the police on dealing with this matter.

Members were advised that there no plans for a tenant or partner. Due to COVID, the timescales indicate completion of the build towards Christmas of 2021.

Mr Heather gave a presentation on the Red Lion Public House, highlighting historical elements of the pub and the vision for the new offering, which includes 6 houses, 5 of which will be mews type. There will also be space for a farm shop, courtyard, orangery, restaurant and bar area.

Cllr Strachan stated the lack of parking at the Red Lion pub may cause servicing issues for the pub and it may deter the general public. Mr Heather advised there are other car parks close by and they are trying to enhance a social benefit by creating a social area which uses the space of a poorly used car park. The timescales would be confirmed as this is still at pre-application stage.

Cllr G Fage offered the services of Ward Councillors, particularly Cllr Bond, if there are any obstacles with the planning process. The Committee was keen to see meaningful progress to help the recovery of the Town Centre.

Cllr G Fage thanked the speakers for their time and for an informative presentation.

5. **MINUTES OF MEETING**

Members received and **APPROVED** the Minutes of the Town Centre Management Meeting held on **Tuesday 1st December 2020** via Zoom Webinar.

6. **MATTERS ARISING**

Matters arising from the Minutes of the Town Centre Management meeting held on **Tuesday 1st December 2020**.

Christmas Offering 8 (a)

Cllr Knight thanked Officers for their hard work in creating the Christmas grotto.

Parking Orders 8 (b)

Cllr G Fage stated that there is a draft signage package with the printers' but a final draft should be ready in the next few days and will be circulated to Members.

It was **RESOLVED** to move the parking permits matter to the exempt part of this meeting.

A-Boards 8 (d)

It was agreed that this item should be added to the next agenda.

Street Furniture 8 (e)

Cllr Knight stated that the benches that have been refurbished within the Town Centre look very nice and asked when the rest of the benches would be finished. The Town Clerk & Chief Executive informed Members there is a 6 to 7 week completion time on this project, however the bike stands are to be refurbished and will be stored in the new depot until a decision is made of where they should be located.

Public Conveniences 8 (f)

This item needs to be added to the next Agenda.

7. Items for Consideration

None.

8. Items for Information

a. Crime Working Group

Cllr Strachan updated Members on the Crime Working Group and welcomed Inspector Louise Bates who has been dealing with issues relating to the cemeteries and the installation of CCTV.

There are two CCTV contracts at present, one with Hertfordshire County Council and one with Central Bedfordshire Council. Central Bedfordshire Council have proposals to put forward about location and number of cameras, but these have not yet been received. Cllr Strachan wants to ensure the imagery and location of the CCTV cameras are of good quality.

Cllr Strachan stated that issues with the CCTV have moved on more quickly since Insp. Bates has been on board and the Town Clerk & Chief Executive agreed there is now a direct communication link with Insp. Louise Bates and any issues are quickly resolved.

It was agreed that the Town Clerk & Chief Executive would take point on raising any issues directly to Insp. Louise Bates, and Members should liaise with the Town Clerk & Chief Executive in the first instance. It was noted that issues should be logged and a crime number given as this has a direct impact on crime statistics. It was also noted that anything contentious would be both logged and brought up with Insp. Louise Bates.

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive gave an example of where people are parking on double yellow lines around the funeral directors, and photographs were taken and given to Insp. Louise Bates as this is becoming a big problem.

9. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

None.

10. **EXEMPT ITEMS**

The following resolution will be **moved** that is advisable in the public interest that the public and press are excluded whilst the following exempt item issue is discussed.

(11a - Market Strategy)

(11b - Parking permits policy)

Pursuant to section 1(2) of the public bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Council resolve to **exclude** the public and press by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted.

TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
MARKET TRANSFORMATION REPORT – 18TH MAY 2021
Cllr Grant Fage, Cllr Mark Knight

Introduction

At TCM on 11th March 2021, it was resolved to engage with the team from “Made In The Wade” to support the transformation of the Biggleswade market, helping to implement the emerging Market Strategy which was subsequently approved by the full Council. Our goal is to deliver a vibrant and enjoyable market experience that achieves a permanent increase in the number of market stalls and a permanent increase in shoppers benefiting all town centre retail.

The market welcomed back all traders on Saturday 17th April – this was a soft relaunch due to the Duke of Edinburgh’s funeral. The full welcome back market was held on 24th April.

Progress So Far

New branding was drafted by Meg and Hannah – this was approved by the working group in late March. Several banners have since been printed for display on the market itself and at the entrances to Biggleswade.

The Biggleswade Market Facebook page launched in early April and currently has over 1400 followers. An Instagram page was launched in late April, and this has over 300 followers. Both pages share images of our stalls and stallholders, promoting them throughout the week, reminding residents to come to the market on Saturday. There are also regular posts on the morning of the market, capturing the Saturday social media traffic, encouraging residents into town on the market day itself. So far £26 has been spent on Facebook advertisements against an initial budget of £45.

With a maximum capacity of 25 stalls (allowing adequate space for circulation during the pandemic), initial performance has been pleasing. Whilst there have been some no-show traders each week, more traders are now mailing the team in advance allowing Colin, Meg and Hannah to plan the layout – this becomes more crucial as the market reaches capacity. A lot of work has taken place behind the scenes to collect details of our traders and to understand approximately how often they wish to trade – again allowing the team to plan where there may be space to introduce new traders alongside our regulars. A temporary onboarding process has been established to help to manage new traders – this will need further refinement as it becomes part of BAU. A summary of weekly trader attendance is shown below.

	17TH APR	24TH APR	1ST MAY	8TH MAY
# OF TRADERS	18	20	21	11
NOTES	HRH Duke of Edinburgh’s funeral	Welcome Back market with a busker		Wet weather

The market is now seeing demand from new traders, with 8 attending the market for the first time. A number of these new traders have high-quality stalls with a unique offer that complements others in the town centre. Work is also underway to source even more new traders. Several enquiries have been made from those not set up to trade outside. The Council has several tables and gazebos, and it is planned to offer these for rental at £20/week (in addition to standard pitch fees), to new traders for an initial trial period. This will help to introduce new traders to the market before they choose to invest in their own gazebo and table. To minimize the burden on Council staff, this offer will be limited to a maximum of 2-3 stalls per week.

Having a consistent and professional way of communicating with both our regular traders and potential new traders, has been a big improvement. It is recommended that Council builds and maintains an email mailing list for all town centre businesses. This can be used to share news about the market and other events that are planned for the town centre.

Another important step forward has been to remove cars from the market square in time for set-up at 6 am each Saturday. On 10th April (when the market was on the paved area with essential traders only), there were 11 cars parked on Market Street. Following letters to residents and flyers on windscreens, the four weeks from 17th April have seen all cars moved. There is now professional signage attached to street furniture reminding residents not to park in town overnight on a Friday. To aid future communication with residents living in or near the town centre, it is recommended that Council provides residents with the opportunity to join a separate email mailing list for this purpose.

We would like to thank all of the traders, Council staff and contractors who have supported this transformation and without whom this progress could not have been achieved.

Next steps

With approximately 14 regular weekly traders, plus some who trade bi-weekly, and others who trade entirely casually, the market will hopefully get close to capacity most weeks. However, managing this rotation of traders and the layout is a big job that requires a lot of effort leading up to Saturday. Investment is still required to make the process less manual, so that staff are not spending hours chasing potential traders, risking gaps or having to turn traders away on the day.

To create a smooth onboarding process, an online booking form will be required, with payment taken once traders have been approved. This should be derived from the Market Policy, which is due to be redrafted in June. Once approved by the Council, requirements will be defined, and it is recommended that the Council's supplier is asked to provide a quotation for this work.

Meg and Hannah's services have been approved until the end of July. The next steps in the implementation of the market strategy will be to book more buskers, explore options around themed markets and create a quality promotional video for sponsorship on social media. Meg and Hannah have been supporting the process by planning weekly attendance, trader onboarding and online promotion. Their ongoing services will be required to keep the

momentum and ensure a smooth transition to BAU. It is recognised that the services provided by Meg and Hannah will need to transition to Council employees as soon as capacity allows.

The banners have helped to improve the feel of the market. However, several require resecuring to the barriers and sandbags should be used. The larger banner at the Dan Albane car park should be mounted to a wooden frame much like the “Buy Biggleswade” banner. A further large banner is needed for the south entrance to town / retail park, near the BP garage.

Further consideration is needed to identify measures that will encourage retail park shoppers to visit the town centre.

Recommendations

Retain services of Meg Green and Hannah Abel until the end of August 2021.

Review market strategy at the next TCM meeting on 17th August 2021.

Endorse the recommendations and next steps outlined in this report.

— END OF REPORT —

BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL

Report to Town Centre Management Meeting 18 May 2021 Government Welcome Back Fund

Implications of Recommendations

Corporate Strategy: None.

Finance: Grant of up to £32,000.00 allocated to BTC via Central Bedfordshire Council.

Equality: None.

Environment: None.

Community Safety: None.

Background

This report has been compiled to inform Members of the Government's Welcome Back Fund to enhance the reopening of High Streets. Central Bedfordshire Council has provisionally allocated £32,000.00 to Biggleswade to enhance the Town Council's support in reopening our Town Centre safely.

Introduction

The following is a list of potential ideas for Members to consider. This list is not exhaustive and it maybe that Members might have other suggestions.

Potential	Description	Meet the criteria
Summer food festival	This could be done in conjunction with Street Food Heroes. Spread over a weekend and could run through the day and into the evening.	Yes
Totally Locally/ Street Ambassador	This could compliment the 'Buy Biggleswade' campaign that would promote our independent businesses within the Town Centre. Embracing and advertising the independent offer within the Biggleswade. Advertised through social media and other promotional work. This could be added to the Town Council's website The funding for this could pay for a Full-time member of staff, on a fixed term contract, to liaise with businesses to ensure that the campaign is done in a safe way, providing Coronavirus information and guidance to ensure this is done.	Yes, partially
Market place lighting	Seasonal lighting to encourage night-time economy during the summer months in the attempt to 'kick-start' the night time economy within the Town Centre.	Yes
Hand sanitiser stations	These would be placed at strategic points around the Town centre with appropriate signage alongside. This would be additional to the stations used when the market operates, as well as the units in each of the public toilets.	Yes

Community Toilet Scheme	The idea is those Town Centre businesses with customer toilets to open them up to the public to extend toilet facilities that are currently in place at Century house. Businesses would need to meet a certain criteria to be able to do this. It would increase the availability of hand washing facilities around the town, and also means that toilet facilities would be available outside of the Century House opening times.	Yes
Lamp Column drop down signage	This would be placed on lamp columns on the four roads leading into Biggleswade Town Centre, advertising the businesses/markets. These could also be used for advertising events throughout the year. Similar to the signage that CBC uses in the Town Centre for advertising Adoption and Fostering service, but more recently about COVID-19.	Yes, partially
Gazebos	Pop up gazebos purchased to encourage new traders onto the market, this could also benefit town centre businesses who might want to try to bolster their presence within the town. These would be easier and quicker to put up than the umbrellas that we currently have for the market and events.	Yes
Phone App	Developed to work alongside our website to promote the Town Centre. It could also be used to inform users of events that are happening around Biggleswade.	Yes, partially
Planters	Temporary planters around the Town Centre in places to add further colour to the Town Centre. This would be done so that it does not counteract the de-cluttering exercise that has been done.	Yes

Summary

This list is not exhaustive, however when an application is put forward, the HMG and ERDF logos will need to be used, alongside any BTC logos. A template needs to be completed.

Recommendations:

- For Members to consider the list above, reflect upon other options and to determine a preference. An application will then be submitted conscious that the deadline is 24th May.

Simon Newton

Place Shaping Manager



Peter Tarrant
Town Clerk & Chief Executive
Biggleswade Town Council

Our ref: CBC/TC/01
Date: 26th April 2021

Dear Mr Tarrant

Re: Welcome Back Fund

As our town centres gradually reopen, the Council is working very closely with both the Government and local partners to safely welcome back our residents and businesses. To this end, the Council has been allocated funding from the Government's Welcome Back Fund, for the purpose of encouraging shoppers and employees to return in a safe way, but also to ensure that economic activity returns as quickly as possible.

The Council is very keen to work with you on developing projects and activities that contribute to this aim. We are able to allocate WBF funding towards this purpose, should you wish to participate in this programme. The WBF funding is part of a legacy European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) scheme, for which the Council is the accountable body. The funding is intended for specific activities towards the safe opening of High Streets and town centres, as approved by the Government.

The WBF funding allocation has been determined based on precept levels and also the Local Plan designation for your town centre, so as to ensure funding is at a level appropriate to the size of the town centre and the challenges faced. A total of £32,000 has been allocated to Biggleswade Town Council towards the cost of eligible activities during the current financial year. A Service Level Agreement will be required, which recognises Biggleswade Town Council as a Delivery Partner to the Council. Any expenditure incurred by the Town Council, will be reclaimed from the Council on a defrayed basis.

I appreciate that managing grant funding such as this can be a complicated process, however, we will endeavour to simplify this as much as possible. Attached to this letter, you will find a form for setting out proposed activities, which we will use to confirm eligibility. This document will act as your Delivery Plan and will also form the basis for your Service Level Agreement.

The Government has issued a set of frequently asked questions (FAQ's) which can be viewed here: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/980130/Welcome_Back_Fund_FAQs.pdf. Further guidance regarding the Fund generally can be located at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/welcome-back-fund>.

In order to ensure we can start delivering schemes as quickly as possible, whilst recognising you will require sufficient time to consult with TC members, please submit your proposed Delivery Plan by Friday 28th May, by email to Sam Caldbeck samuel.caldbeck@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk. If you do not wish to utilise your allocation, please advise Sam as soon as possible and by Friday 28th May at the latest. Sam, (tel: 0300 300 4410) is a member of the Place Delivery team at the Council and is available to assist you in the preparation of your Delivery Plan and any other queries you may have.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin Collins".

Councillor Kevin Collins
Executive Member for Planning & Regeneration

Cc Ward Member's



Welcome Back Fund (WBF)

Frequently Asked Questions V1 – 23 April 2021

Please Note: These FAQs relate to the WBF Guidance Version 1 – 16 April 2021. These FAQs build on and replace the previously published Reopening High Streets Safely Fund (RHSSF) FAQs V.7. For any queries, please contact the central fund inbox at RHSSFund@communities.gov.uk.

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ELIGIBILITY

1. What are the WBF eligibility rules?

Answer: The scope of the WBF includes eligible activity from RHSSF (strands 1-4) along with two new strands of activity (5 + 6) as set out in the WBF Guidance. The same ERDF eligibility rules will apply as they did in RHSSF. In general activities should be eligible under the WBF if they are set out in a local authority's funding agreement with the CLGU team and:

- It is additional i.e. it must not substitute planned domestic expenditure.
- It is revenue expenditure, capital is excluded (see [ERDF Guidance](#)).
- It is not categorised as [State Aid](#).
- It is compliant with ERDF programme rules (see [branding](#) and [procurement requirements](#)).

For the avoidance of doubt, all activity considered eligible under strands 1-4 of the RHSSF can still be delivered through the WBF as part of your new, combined allocation in addition to the eligible activity outlined within this document.

Questions related to Strand 1 - Support to develop an action plan for how the local authority may begin to safely reopen their local economies.

2. We would like to procure a consultant to deliver WBF activity, is this eligible?

Answer: The procurement of consultants to deliver WBF activity is eligible, provided the procurement process is ERDF compliant and directly linked to the delivery of one of the strands of eligible activity, e.g. support to develop an action plan or to provide business-facing support. This could be a dedicated officer for the delivery of Covid-19 recovery projects and plans at the local level.

Questions related to Strand 2 - Communications and public information activity to ensure that reopening of local economies can be managed successfully and safely.

3. Are High Street Ambassadors/Wardens eligible?

Answer: The provision of roles to support delivery of a local authority High Street Strategy/ Action plan is permitted and is eligible under strand 2 of the WBF. Sometimes these roles have been described as 'High Street Ambassadors/Wardens'.

- This role is to provide information to the public on the High Street or Neighbourhood Shopping Area (NSA) on the measures in place to ensure the safe reopening.
- This could include:
 - advising the public on Covid-19 regulations such as social distancing and wearing a face covering.
 - directing the public to hygiene stations.
 - leafleting; advertising walker; verbal messaging.

- ensuring the public are aware of any temporary public realm changes in place to support the safe reopening of their High Street/Neighbourhood Shopping Area.
- A High Street Ambassador must be a new, paid, full-time equivalent (FTE) job on a fixed term contract, created from 1st June 2020 onwards.
- In claiming for the role, you will be required to provide evidence of the role and its purpose, this includes written confirmation of the post, start date, duration, and the number of hours per week. The letter must state the role is funded by ERDF as WBF activity and include both the HMG and ERDF logo.
- **WBF High Street Ambassadors have no enforcement powers.** However, they may be used to in addition to provide information to the public in the High Street or Neighbourhood Shopping area on the measures in place to ensure the safe reopening of these areas.
- Materials and tools needed for the role are eligible under the fund. Please ensure you follow ERDF regulations for this expenditure to be eligible.
- A Communication/ Information Officer, which is already eligible under the WBF, remit may be expanded to include the role of a High Street Ambassador.
- You should ensure you continue to follow ERDF regulations in relation to branding and publicity. This is set out on page 13 of the WBF Guidance.

Questions related to Strand 3 - Business-facing awareness raising activities to ensure that reopening of local economies can be managed successfully and safely.

4. *Can the WBF be used to support privately owned shopping centres or on privately owned land?*

Answer: Support for privately owned spaces is not within scope of the WBF. Local Authorities are encouraged to work in partnership with public sector landowners when implementing temporary public realm changes. Support for privately owned spaces is not within scope of the six types of eligible activity listed in the WBF Guidance

Questions related to Strand 4 - Temporary public realm changes to ensure that reopening of local economies can be managed successfully and safely.

5. *Is there any flexibility around physical interventions that might add value to the safety and appeal of our High Streets over a slightly longer period?*

Answer: As set out in the WBF Guidance on page 8, this is a revenue only funding project intended to help local authorities address the longer-term impact of Covid-19 on local economies. This can include activities that last as long as restrictive measures are in place as well as activities that help future proof High Streets.

Temporary measures mean interventions that are;

- revenue expenditure only;
- items/activity that are moveable; and
- directly or indirectly connected to the purpose of making high streets, neighbourhood shopping areas and public spaces more Covid-secure.



6. Are we able to work in partnership with Local Highway and Transport Authorities when planning and implementing areas of work within scope of the WBF?

Answer: As per the WBF Guidance, councils in receipt of WBF funds are encouraged to work in partnership with relevant organisations when developing and delivering activities in scope of the WBF, this includes Local Highway and Transport Authorities. Subject to the terms included within the Grant Funding Agreement, Delivery Partnerships can be created with such organisations where there is a need for the defrayal of financial costs to deliver eligible activity – please see question 33 for more information.

7. Can we fund hand sanitiser stations on the High Street/Neighbourhood Shopping Areas?

Answer: The provision of hand sanitiser stations on the street in supported areas would be an eligible cost under strand 4 of the WBF. As per question 13, this activity must not replace already committed expenditure.

8. We would like to purchase planters to act as barriers on designated High Streets and Neighbourhood Shopping Areas. Is this eligible for WBF Funding?

Answer: The purchase or installation of planters capable of being removed is eligible for funding under the WBF fund. As set out in the WBF Guidance page 8, this is a revenue only funding project and permanent changes are not permitted.

In addition:

- Planters must not be located on privately owned land and not directly benefit only a single business within the locality.
- The cost of purchasing planters should be reasonable and demonstrate value for money.

Additionally, the maintenance of planters are in scope of the WBF, although staffing costs must adhere to the staffing principles as set out on page 16 of these FAQs. Local authorities can also undertake procurement of a provider to maintain the planters for the period of use. All procurements must follow full ERDF Procurement [rules and guidance](#).

[Questions related to Strand 5 - Support to promote a safe public environment for a local area's visitor economy.](#)

9. Can the WBF be used to support events?

Answer: The WBF can be used to support and promote safe events under strand 5. All activity undertaken should respect the most recent social distancing guidelines as per the [Safer Public Places guidance](#) and the [Guidance for managing beaches, the countryside](#), and need to be part of the local authority's Covid-19 recovery plans. Activities of a celebratory nature or town relaunch for example are eligible, this is not exhaustive. This activity must be additional and procured in line with the ERDF Procurement Guidance – internal recharges are not eligible and state aid considerations should also be taken into account.

Please note that this funding cannot support activities which provide direct revenue generation for local authorities as income/payments for the creation/running/maintenance of events. Activity is limited to public space (land in public ownership).

10. Are Marshals eligible?

Answer: The provision of Marshals is eligible under strand 5 of the WBF. This role is to provide support to the public in public spaces and is not limited specifically to activity on High Streets. The roles may be put in place to serve an on-going need or a short term need to support specific events. Several roles fall under this job title including but not limited to:

- Helping control the flow of people, footfall and traffic as well as support to ensure social distancing guidelines are adhered to.
- Support public space cleaning and maintenance including litter picking, graffiti removal and toilet provision.

Marshals should not be used to directly support revenue generating car parks.

In addition:

- Similar to Ambassadors/Wardens, a High Street Marshal must be a new, paid, full-time equivalent (FTE) job on a fixed term contract.
- In claiming for the role, you will be required to provide evidence of the role and its purpose, this includes written confirmation of the post, start date, duration, and the number of hours per week. The letter must state the role is funding by ERDF as WBF activity and include both the HMG and ERDF logo.
- Necessary materials and tools needed for the role are eligible under the fund. Please ensure you follow ERDF regulations for this expenditure to be eligible.

Local authorities should look to agree spending plans on Marshals before recruiting to ensure the activity is eligible.

11. Are we able to fund market stall coverings, or new gazebos to enable more businesses to trade outdoors?

Answer: This is eligible under strand 5 of the WBF. The material should only be deployed in public spaces on public land and must not be located on privately owned land. All eligible activities are to be delivered in a way that does not result in State Aid. For example, the provision should be available to all and at no cost. The material includes gazebos, marquees and stall coverings though this is not an exhaustive list. In addition:

- Where activity is to be located adjacent to businesses, it should benefit more than one business.
- The cost of purchasing gazebos or stall coverings should be reasonable and demonstrate value for money.

12. We want to fund public space maintenance and improvements, for example signage/lights/benches/bunting. Is this eligible and how can we demonstrate additionality?

Answer: These activities are eligible as per strand 5 of the WBF Guidance which allows for beautification activities to boost the look and feel of High Streets.



The WBF is intended to be additional it should not be replacing source funding for already committed expenditure and must provide additional value through the intervention.

13. *Can we spend funds outside our core town centre, i.e. neighbourhood/district centres, precincts etc?*

Answer: As per the WBF Guidance, the temporary public realm Covid-19 adaptations can be made across High Streets or Neighbourhood Shopping Areas. These are not restricted to your core town centre; however, they should be within the boundaries of your local authority area. The WBF allows a more flexible approach supporting public space, it does not necessarily need to be adjacent to commercial areas, making it easier to support for example promenades and other public areas.

14. *Can WBF funding be utilised to support the changes required to enable the reopening of public toilets?*

Answer: Under strand 5 temporary changes to toilets are eligible for funding. This could include:

- Additional toilet provision such as portable toilets.
- Repairs and maintenance associated with temporary changes to toilets.
- Cleaning regimes, consumables and staffing arrangements (staffing costs must adhere to the staffing principles as set out on page 16 of these FAQs).

This activity is limited to public space (land in public ownership). Privately owned facilities, for example toilets in privately owned shopping centres, are not eligible for cleaning/cleansing.

15. *Can we fund seating areas and greener, more attractive/accessible public spaces?*

Answer: The purchase, improvement or installation of moveable seating and the provision/improvement of green and accessible public spaces is eligible for funding under strand 5 of the WBF fund.

In addition:

- Seating/new spaces must not be located on privately owned land.
- Where activity is to be located near to businesses and there is more than one business in the locality, the benefit must be to more than one business.
- The cost of purchasing seating or setting up new green spaces should be reasonable and demonstrate value for money.

16. *Can we make changes to parking bays directly on High Streets or identified Neighbourhood Areas?*

Answer: The WBF can be used to make temporary changes resulting in the removal of pre-existing parking bays on identified High Streets and neighbourhoods to allow for social distancing on pavements.

Parklets and the erection of seating within parking bays and publicly owned car parks is also within scope of strand 5 of the WBF fund. No WBF activity should directly result in State Aid.



17. Are we able to claim the costs of the revenue lost through maintaining paid carparking spaces as free spaces to encourage people back to the High Street?

Answer: Loss of carparking revenue cannot be claimed under the WBF.

18. Can we fund new cycle lanes, paths and cycle storage?

Answer: Temporary changes to pre-existing cycle paths/lanes which are located on identified High Streets and Neighbourhood Areas and directly linked to the changes to footpaths for social distancing are within the scope of WBF funding under strand 4.

The funding of new cycle paths or lanes is not within the scope of the WBF fund and cannot be claimed. Furthermore, activity under strand 5 can be undertaken in public areas that are not adjacent to commercial areas, for example, promenades or other public areas.

As long as they are removable, the provision of storage for bicycles such as racks is within scope of the strand 5 of the WBF. As set out in the WBF Guidance page 8, this is a revenue only funding project and permanent changes are therefore not permitted.

19. Can the fund be used to create/develop websites/apps?

Answer: This is within scope strand 5 of the WBF. The production of websites would need to be directly in line with scope of the WBF fund and focused on the provision of information relating to the creation and promotion of a safe environment for local trade and tourism. This includes but is not limited to Click and Collect /Virtual High Streets and websites promoting safe celebration events.

Full [ERDF branding](#) and [procurement](#) requirements must be adhered to.

[Questions related to Strand 6 - Support local authorities to develop plans for responding to the medium-term impact of Covid-19 including trialling new ideas particularly where these relate to the High Street.](#)

20. What do you mean by activities that help to future proof High Streets?

Answer: Local authorities can use the WBF to support the development of local plans to ensure the medium to long-term success of your local economy. This could build on an existing short-term recovery plan, but it's important to consider long-term strategic and operational aspects local authorities need to put in place now.

The High Streets Task Force has published a [Transformation Route Map](#) which helps place leaders to identify priorities from four strategic approaches to renewal:

- Restructuring (building the capacity and partnerships to deliver change);
- Repositioning (using data to develop an inspiring vision);
- Rebranding (establishing an identity and sense of place); and
- Reinventing (activating and animating your place with diverse activities).

Local authorities may wish to use the WBF to finance a new position or a secondment (from either within the local authority or another relevant organisation, such as a Town Council or



Business Improvement District) to develop such a plan or route map, as well as coordinate some specific development processes such as local engagement.

As part of this, the WBF could also support:

- Work to establish local partnerships and networks.
- Sector-specific engagement and support.
- Place-based capacity building exercises to support place managers and leaders.
- Capacity building (i.e. training) for local place managers and leaders to respond adequately to future economic shocks.
- Piloting activities to test how events and High Street offers can be restarted and maintained safely.
- New positions or secondments (from either within the local authority or another relevant organisation, such as a Town Council or Business Improvement District).
- Coordination of local plans or projects for recovery.

21. *Are all of the interventions listed in the Safer Public Spaces Guidance (section 4.2) and the Guidance for Managing Beaches, the Countryside and Coastal Areas eligible?*

Answer: The WBF is not intended to fund all of the interventions listed in the [Safer Public Spaces guidance](#) and the [Guidance for Managing Beaches, the Countryside and Coastal Areas](#). The six strands of eligible activity under this fund are defined in the WBF Guidance and this FAQ document.



EXPENDITURE AND REQUIREMENTS:

22. How long can activities to be delivered through the Welcome Back Fund last?

Answer: The financial completion date for the WBF is 31 March 2022. We expect activity to end by 31 March 2022 however there is potential for activity to extend beyond 31 March 2022 in certain circumstances.

For example:

- If you have a contract for a supplier to install, maintain and then remove barriers, then as long as it's started before 31 March 2022 (both defrayed and barriers installed), the activity could be delivered beyond this date as long as it's been procured as one contract and the standard terms are to pay for it all up front.
- The same would apply for a footfall supplier contracted prior to 31 March 2022 (where the standard terms are for a one-year contract or subscription).
- We would not be able to fund salaries or other accruals after 31 March 2022.

23. Strand 6 of eligible activity refers to 'responding to the medium-term impact of Covid-19.' What does this mean?

Answer: This strand is complementary to strand 1 but recognises that the impact of Covid-19 on local economies will be significant beyond the immediate reopening of High Streets and town centres.

The High Streets Task Force defines medium term activities that range between 3-5 years. Therefore, in addition to the development of reactive action plans to ensure a safe and successful reopening under strand 1, and strand 6 local authorities are able to develop plans to address the medium-term, ongoing impacts of Covid-19.

This could include, but is not limited to:

- Research to inform the development of a local strategic plan over a longer term.
- Development of pilot projects and strategic responses to address and reverse the long-term impacts of Covid-19 on local economies, particularly where they relate to the High Street.
- Strategies to assess and evaluate the impact of current activity being delivered to manage the local economy post-reopening safely and successfully.
- The development of datasets including footfall, vacancy rates and sentiment data.

24. As this funding is an expansion to the RHSSF, are we required to resubmit a Grant Action Plan or Grant Funding Agreement (GFA)?

Answer: MHCLG will issue a WBF Activity Form to identify and agree local authority proposals in response to the WBF.

Local authorities with existing GFAs will then need to enter into an agreement to vary current GFAs. Local authorities without a GFA currently in place will need to enter into a new GFA.

Once GFAs have been varied or created and new activities have been agreed with Contract Managers through a Welcome Back Fund Activity Form, we will be able to reimburse expenditure through the quarterly claims process.



Speak with your Contract Manager to confirm eligibility of new activity before spending at risk. Additionally, as outlined within the WBF Guidance, all existing activity under the RHSSF remains eligible, remaining unspent allocations can be rolled over and combined with RHSSF/WBF allocation.

25. We would like to extend an existing contract, i.e. footfall or consultancy services to continue up to 31 March 2022 but are concerned that the new contract amount will exceed the minimum procurement threshold. What are the implications of this?

Answer: The final date for WBF project delivery is 31 March 2022. This can include contracted activities and services, though extensions to activities will need to be within the scope of any existing procurements/contracts. If you are considering extending an existing contract, you will also need to ensure that all aspects of the procurement remain compliant with ERDF guidance.

For example, if the original contract value is below the threshold of £25,000 and an extension of the contract (which, as a rule of thumb, can be up to 50% on top of the original contract value) takes the overall value above £25,000 then the contract must then be advertised in accordance with the ERDF Procurement Guidance. Consideration should also be given as to whether this is a new contract due to unforeseen circumstances or an extension of an existing contract.

26. Will the 4% management costs from the RHSS funding still be available in the WBF?

Answer: The amount available to you under the 4% Management and Administration allocation will increase commensurately with your funding allocation.

27. Can we still claim 15% Flat Rate Indirect Costs (FRIC) for direct staff costs?

Answer: 15% FRIC can be claimed for eligible, direct staff costs. Please speak to your Contract Manager if you have any queries about staffing or the submission of claims.



CONTRACT MANAGEMENT AND CLAIMS:

28. How is the money going to be awarded?

Answer: Once GFAs have been varied or created and new activities (under strands 5 and 6) have been agreed, funding can be reimbursed from MHCLG in arrears through a quarterly claims process.

29. When can we start to spend our new allocation?

Answer: As the WBF Guidance has now been published local authorities can spend WBF allocations at risk however we encourage local authorities to agree proposals with MHCLG as early as possible.

30. Does the initial RHSS funding still need to be spent by 30 June 2021, or can we now use it with the new funding to spend before 31 March 2022?

Answer: The WBF is an extension to the original RHSSF project. This means that original allocations under the RHSSF can be rolled over and combined with new WBF allocations until March 2022.

31. Can we combine our allocation with another local authority?

Answer: Two local authorities may combine their WBF allocations if they wish.

- One council would be designated the lead local authority who would enter in the GFA with MHCLG, the other local authority would enter into a delivery partner agreement with the lead principle local authority.
- This would then be treated as one allocation, with the two local authorities able to split funding across the combined geography as agreed between them.
- Both local authorities would need to be in the same ESIF Category of Region in order for this to be considered. Category of Region listings can be found [here](#).
- We would need written confirmation from both parties that both are content to enter into such an arrangement. This should evidence that it has been considered at the appropriate level within each council and confirm who will be the lead local authority.
- This is in addition to the existing option for local authorities to enter into delivery partner agreements with other tiers of local authority who do not have an WBF allocation, (for example parish councils).

If you wish to pursue this as an option, please contact the WBF mailbox in the first instance. RHSSFund@communities.gov.uk.

32. Can we access the Welcome Back Fund if we didn't originally access the RHSSF?

Answer: WBF allocations (including previous RHSSF allocations) are available to all local authorities. Local authorities without a GFA currently in place will need to enter into a GFA. Please contact MHCLG via the inbox at RHSSFund@communities.gov.uk if you are interested in taking up this funding.



33. *What are the expectations and requirements for Delivery Partnerships under the Welcome Back Fund?*

In delivering this funding we expect to see engagement with businesses, business organisations, lower tier authorities (such as town and parish councils) and other relevant stakeholders as part of the development of Welcome Back Fund plans. However, we understand that different areas will prioritise different activities according to local need it is for local authorities to determine the best delivery mechanism by which to do this.

If you identify another organisation (such as a Town/Parish Council, Business Improvement District or other relevant stakeholder) as the most appropriate provider for any eligible activity you can deliver said activity through a Delivery Partner arrangement subject to the terms included within the GFA.

An ERDF Delivery Partnership is a financial arrangement where the other organisation can defray costs themselves in the same way that the lead local authority with an WBF allocation can. This means that the lower tier would also need to adhere to the same ERDF rules on procurement, branding, and publicity and so on. Please note all ERDF Delivery Partnership arrangements will require a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the identified Delivery Partner (we are not able to provide a template SLA).

Any Delivery Partner will need to adhere to the requirements set out in the WBF Guidance and ensure compliance with ERDF rules on procurement, branding, and publicity. At the claims stage the principle local authority will need to ensure that the Delivery Partner has the appropriate systems in place and evidence to support financial claims for reimbursement of funding from MHCLG.

34. *Who can be a Delivery Partner?*

Answer: If identified as the most appropriate provider, eligible activities can be delivered through Delivery Partnership arrangements with organisations such as, but not limited to:

- Town/Parish Councils.
- Country Councils.
- Local Highways or Transport Authorities.
- Business Improvement Districts, Chambers of Commerce (or other relevant Business Representative Organisations).
- Destination Management Organisations.

Please note that whilst the above list is not exhaustive, you should speak to your Contract Manager when identifying any potential Delivery Partner.

35. *We do not wish to create a financial Delivery Partnership arrangement but still want to demonstrate engagement with local stakeholders. How can we do this?*

Answer: ERDF Delivery Partner arrangements may not be suitable in every case where a lower tier of authority does not necessarily require the ability to defray financial costs, i.e. a town council may wish to contribute ideas and feedback on local priorities and the delivery impact of activities whilst not directly spending a WBF allocation. Local authorities can in this instance, demonstrate engagement and consultation with local partners by providing a



summary of an outline of engagement activities proposed or undertaken. This will be initially reviewed through the WBF Activity Form and through quarterly progress monitoring reports.



BRANDING AND PUBLICITY:

36. Are we required to comply with ERDF Branding and Publicity?

Answer: Local authorities are required to fully comply with the ERDF Branding and Publicity Guidelines for all activity including the temporary installation of planters. Please read the Branding FAQ for further information and follow the ERDF Branding and Publicity Guidance.

37. What are the requirements for the use branding logos?

Answer: Local authorities are required to use the HMG and ERDF logos as this is a national project. You may choose to use regional logos in addition if you wish.

If you have previously used a regional logo alongside the ERDF logo, we would not consider this ineligible. However, moving forward, as set out in the WBF, the HMG logo should be used alongside the ERDF logo.

38. Are the branding and logos required to be printed on every piece of signage, pavement sticker or temporary public realm adaptation, for example?

Answer: Local authorities are required to ensure that all activity funded by the WBF is compliant with the ERDF Branding and Publicity Guidance and the WBF Guidance which states:

‘Display of at least one poster of minimum A3 size, readily visible to the public (e.g. the entrance area of a public building) at the location of the activities being implemented and containing information on the work being delivered’

Posters or display boards will need to be located prominently in at least one location for each Highstreet or neighbourhood area where WBF activity is in place.



PROCUREMENT:

39. We have followed our council's procurement guidelines on expenditure at risk and this differs from ERDF guidelines. Does this matter?

Answer: All procurement that you wish to claim through the WBF must have been undertaken following the [ERDF Procurement Guidance](#).

40. Can we use Existing Suppliers for WBF activity?

Answer: Local authorities may use existing frameworks where they have been compliantly procured (e.g. correct procurement route, Official Journal of the European Union -OJEU- requirements have been met), in which case the framework documentation would not need the ERDF/HMG logos. However, call offs from that framework to be used for the WBF project would need to be compliant with both ESIF procurement and branding requirements. Existing contracts, which have now expired, are not a basis for direct awards.

41. Can we use Single Tender Justification Forms?

Answer: Where there is only one possible supplier, you would need to retain evidence of such and complete the Single Tender Justification Form. We are unable to approve these, but you will need to submit them to your Contract Manager. There are very few instances where a sole provider of a service or item can be adequately evidenced.

42. Can we use the Extreme Urgency Route set out in Regulation 32 of the Project Change Request?

Answer: The EU Commission are very unlikely to consider any procurement or activity undertaken for the WBF to constitute 'Extreme Urgency' and therefore the use of the Extreme Urgency Route is not recommended for any procurement associated with the WBF.

For both OJEU and sub-OJEU contracts using the Extreme Urgency Route set out in regulation 32 of the PCR is increasingly risky. Any Grant Recipient claiming to be able to make a direct award under that route will have to provide very clear and irrefutable evidence that they meet every limb of the tests set out in that regulation.

43. What are the VAT requirements?

Answer: As per page 29 of the [ESIF Procurement Requirements](#), threshold values are exclusive of VAT.

44. What if we are not able to obtain 3 quotes for relevant procurements?

Answer: It is considered very unlikely that 3 quotes would not be obtainable for the activities eligible within the WBF. Should the activity be of such a unique nature that not more than two companies can be found or provide quotes, this would need to be evidenced to demonstrate that 3 quotes have been attempted and the rationale as to why they could not be secured.



45. *Is there any flexibility on deviating from the ERDF procurement process?*

Answer: We are unable to 'sign off' local authority deviations from the processes set out in the Procurement Requirements. If extenuation circumstances exist as set out in the ERDF procurement guidance, local authorities would need to complete Annex 2 or 3 of the Guidance as applicable and submit to their Contract Manager for consideration.

46. *Can we procure at risk before WBF Plans are agreed?*

Answer: Procurement can be undertaken at risk during the pre- contracting period. The actual final details of each procurement will be captured at claims and reviewed for compliance with [ERDF Procurement Guidance](#).

STAFFING:

47. What are the Staffing Key Principles for the WBF?

Answer:

- WBF should not be replacing the source for already committed expenditure.
- WBF can't be used to pay for sunk costs.

If the local authority has a member of staff who could write the Action Plan or undertake the public facing communications activity for example, within their existing, normal hours, then the local authority could not claim their hours as an WBF eligible cost.

If the local authority has a works department or design team that could do the work in their existing hours, then that would not be an eligible cost. If those staff have no spare capacity, then overtime is eligible as long as the tasks are additional to the pre-existing tasks and the underlying activity is eligible in itself under the WBF guidance. The local authority would need to be able to evidence and justify the use of overtime in this scenario. Hourly rates would be required and would be based on the basic annual salary (see ERDF Eligibility Guidance for details). No overtime premiums would be claimable.

Where the local authority does not have current staff employed to carry out the activity, you may employ new staff to do so as long as the underlying activity is eligible in itself under the WBF Guidance. It must be directly aligned with one of the four strands of activity. For the avoidance of doubt, project administration or project management staff costs are only claimable within the 4% Management and Administration allowance (within your total WBF allocation).

Where local authorities have staff within their employment who do not currently work full time or they are not currently employed to undertake the broad type of work within scope, their hours may be increased with an appropriate HR letter and following ERDF Eligibility Guidance to enable them to undertake the necessary activity. Staff time will be claimed using either hourly rate (timesheets) or fixed percentage methodology, set out within the ERDF Eligibility Guidance.

Staff could in principle be re-deployed to undertake an eligible activity as an alternative to employing additional staff or procuring contract staff, but if so, Value-for-Money would need to be evidenced. The re-deployed staff member's costs could only be claimed at the salary rate appropriate for that role, and not at the staff member's existing rate. It would also be necessary to show the costs of the re-deployed staff member were not a sunk cost for the local authority. Thus, a staff member currently at 0.5 FTE who increases that to 0.75FTE to be re-deployed to undertake a WBF activity during the extra 0.25 FTE, could claim the additional 0.25 FTE cost. However, a staff member not currently employed to undertake a RHSS activity and who is not increasing the hours they work at the local authority, is likely to be a sunk cost to the local authority – the local authority has to pay that employee's costs anyway, so if they are re-deployed to WBF work there is no marginal cost to the local authority and so the cost could not be claimed.

Union flag to be flown on UK Government buildings every day

New guidance published today by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) will see the Union flag flown on UK Government buildings every day.

From:

[Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport](#), [Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government](#), and [The Rt Hon Oliver Dowden CBE MP](#)

Published

24 March 2021



- New rules surrounding flying of the Union Flag published
- Culture Secretary hails change as “a proud reminder of our history and the ties that bind us”

Currently, Union flags are only required to be flown on all UK Government buildings on designated days. The [guidance](#) will ask for the flag to be flown all year round, unless another flag is being flown – such as another national flag of the UK, or a county flag, or other flags to mark civic pride.

The Union Flag is the National Flag of the United Kingdom, and it is so called because it embodies the emblems of the constituent nations united under one Sovereign - the Kingdoms of England and Wales, of Scotland and of Northern Ireland.

The Union flag dates back to 1606 when King James VI of Scotland became King James I of England and it was decided that the union of the two countries should be represented symbolically by a new flag. In

1801 following the Act of Union of Ireland with England, Wales and Scotland, the Cross of St Patrick was included on the design creating the flag as we know it today.

Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden said:

The Union flag unites us as a nation and people rightly expect it to be flown above UK Government buildings. This guidance will ensure that happens every day, unless another flag is being flown, as a proud reminder of our history and the ties that bind us.

Local Government Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said:

Our nation's flag is a symbol of liberty, unity and freedom that creates a shared sense of civic pride. People rightly expect to see the Union Flag flying high on civic and Government buildings up and down the country, as a sign of our local and national identity.

That's why I am calling on all local councils to fly the Union Flag on their buildings – and today's guidance will enable them to do that. We've also cut red tape, allowing councils to also fly their county flag at the same time.

The Government has also cut red tape to allow dual flagging – where two flags can be flown on one pole. Where organisations have two flag poles, they can fly the Union flag alongside another flag. This will allow organisations to highlight their local identity alongside their national identities, for example by flying a Middlesex county flag alongside the Union flag in London, or the Saltire alongside the Union flag in Scotland. Other flags may also be flown on non-designated days including a Saint's Day or county day. Planning regulations in England that were introduced in 2007 to allow the EU flag to be flown on public buildings without acquiring planning permission will also be removed following the UK's departure from the European Union. Instead, new 'deemed consent' will be granted for the NHS flags. This will allow for the NHS flags to be flown, without planning permission – alongside the Union flag. DCMS publishes guidance each year on flag flying, however from this year, the department will ask that all UK Government buildings in England, Wales and Scotland fly the Union flag every day.

Today the Local Government Secretary Robert Jenrick has written to all councils in England to raise awareness of the guidance and encourage them to fly Union flags on their buildings.

Other authorities, institutions and individuals may fly any flag at any time so long as it complies with planning requirements. The flying of national flags, including the Union flag, is deregulated in England, Wales and Scotland. This update is guidance only and will apply from the summer.

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

- In Northern Ireland there is specific legislation setting out the arrangements for the flying of flags from government buildings.
- In England and Wales, the flying of flags is controlled through advertisement control regulations, but national flags and their flagpoles are exempt from the need for express consent
- In Scotland, there are no controls on the flying of national flags, but planning permission may be required for a new flagpole

Flag Flying on Government buildings in other countries

- In the US, the Flag of the United States of America is flown all year round especially on significant public holidays such as Inauguration Day. On a day-to-day basis, the flag is flown on or near to main administration buildings of every public institution, in or near polling places on election day, and is displayed in or near to every school.
- In Australia, the Australian National Flag is flown over federal and state parliaments and can be flown every day of the year. There are protocols governing its use, and also the Flag Act 1953, which outline the design and its precedence in relation to other Australian and national flags.

BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL

Report to Town Centre Management Meeting 18 May 2021 Community Asset Grant Scheme

Implications of Recommendations

Corporate Strategy: None.

Finance: Grant of between £2,000 and £25,000.

Equality: None.

Environment: None.

Community Safety: None.

Background

This report has been written to inform Members of the Community Assets Grant Scheme that has been advertised by Central Bedfordshire Council. This is now open for application, with a closing date of 5pm 1st July 2021.

Introduction

The Community Assets grant scheme is designed to:

- help local voluntary and community organisations to deliver their ambitions with access grant funding to support community infrastructure improvements in their communities.
- encourage and lever contributions from other sources to raise 50% of the total costs of schemes.
- enable investment in community assets (such as community buildings / community facilities/community infrastructure) which support the social wellbeing of the local community.
- improve community facilities; or
- create new community facilities that will benefit local residents and encourage community cohesion.

How much is available?

£200,000 capital funding is available to allocate as grants during bidding round 3 (April 29th to July 1st).

Any unallocated monies will be rolled forward into a further bidding round in 2021/2022.

The minimum grant amount is £2,000 and the maximum individual grant amount is £25,000 and a group cannot receive more than one grant from this scheme in a period of 2 years, subject to continuation of the grant scheme.

The grant criteria and what the grant scheme can support

- External improvements such as a new roof.
- Extensions such as additional toilet facilities or storage.
- Internal refurbishment and improvements.
- Improvements to water/heating systems, lighting, access, or security.
- Improvements to accessibility - installation of a hearing loop or other similar improvements.

- Improvements to play areas/ outdoor and indoor sports facilities/open space areas with public access.
- Feasibility studies associated with a planned improvement (provided that improvement is funded and takes place).

Additional criteria

- Geographic allocation– In order to ensure that the Community Asset Grant Scheme benefits the whole area of Central Bedfordshire, no more than one project will be funded per ward area.
- Demonstrable financial support- in addition to the 50% match funding requirement, evidence of additional investment from other sources (leverage) will be taken into account.

Summary

This grant is not limited to just the Town Centre. It opens the application to areas further afield such as replacing some of our play equipment in our open spaces.

Recommendations:

- For Members to discuss potential projects that would benefit from capital match funding.

Simon Newton

Place Shaping Manager



Community Asset Grant Scheme

Guidance for Applicants

Updated April 2021

 www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/grants

A great place to live and work.



Community Assets Grant Scheme

Applicant Guidance notes and Application Form

Community Assets Grant Scheme - What it is ..

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- enable investment in community assets (such as community buildings / community facilities/community infrastructure) which support the social wellbeing of the local community.
 - improve community facilities; or
 - create new community facilities that will benefit local residents and encourage community cohesion.

Speak to your Ward Councillor

Before completing an application form, discuss your idea with your local Central Bedfordshire Ward Councillor.

Find Your Ward Councillor

You will need to be able to explain how your idea or project will make a difference and deliver positive benefits to their communities.

Ward Cllr will be consulted on applications received for their ward

Community Benefit

Applicants must explain the community benefit they aim to achieve with a Community Assets Grant

How much is available?

£200,000 capital funding is available to allocate as grants during bidding round 3 (April 29th to July 1st). Any unallocated monies will be rolled forward into a further bidding round in 2021/2022.

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The grant criteria and what the grant scheme can support
External improvements such as a new roof
Extensions such as additional toilet facilities or storage;
Internal refurbishment and improvements,
Improvements to water/heating systems, lighting, access or security.
Improvements to accessibility - installation of a hearing loop or other similar improvements.
Improvements to play areas/ outdoor and indoor sports facilities/open space areas with public access.
Feasibility studies associated with a planned improvement (provided that improvement is funded and takes place).
Additional criteria <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Geographic allocation– In order to ensure that the Community Asset Grant Scheme benefits the whole area of Central Bedfordshire, no more than one project will be funded per ward area. Demonstrable financial support- in addition to the 50% match funding requirement, evidence of additional investment from other sources (leverage) will be taken into account.

What the grant will NOT fund
<p>Funding is not available to individuals for personal benefit or for the delivery of any statutory functions, or organisations with no local connection. Support will not be given to the same organisation on more than two occasions in the rolling period of four years without strong and justifiable reasons for doing so.</p> <p>The funding is <u>capital funding</u> and cannot fund revenue costs such as venue hire, professional training, political activities, registered formal personal care. Funding cannot be used to settle debts or contributions to the operation of organisational offices or hinder the activities of the Ward Councillor or Central Bedfordshire Council.</p>

Match Funding
<p>For all applicants at least 50% of the total costs of the project must come from other sources. Other sources of eligible match funding might include Lottery, private donations, Charitable Trusts. A link to sources of external funding is here</p> <p>Volunteer time in kind <u>cannot</u> be used as match funding.</p>

Who can apply
<p>A wide range of local groups voluntary and community organisations can apply they must have a Central Bedfordshire focus and connection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voluntary and community groups with a constitution Not for profit organisations Parish or Town Councils Schools / Parent Associations (in relation to their wider community role)

- Formally Constituted Groups
- Community Groups/Associations
- Social Enterprises
- Community Interest Companies
- Community Benefit Societies.
- Faith Organisations (in relation to their wider community role)

Applicants must have a UK bank account. This can be an account for an organisation, community group, charity or specifically set up for the scheme being applied for. It cannot be a personal bank account used for personal finances. Town wide bids are also eligible.

When can I apply ?

Funds will be released through a series of bidding rounds to ensure wide access to the scheme.

Bidding Round	Opens	Closes
1. Spring	April 29 th 2021	5pm July 1 st 2021

How can I apply?

Once you have read these Guidance Notes use the link to the application e-form at [Community Grants](#) on our website. Make sure you read through the form first before completing it to ensure you have all the information you need to complete the form.

Where can I get help?

You can contact the Partnerships and Community Engagement Team for help about the application process. For advice and information about aspects of your project and completing the application form, contact

Community and Voluntary Service

43 Bromham Road
Bedford
MK40 2 AA
info@cvsbeds.org.uk

How will my application be assessed ?

Each eligible application will be scored against the following criteria:

Criteria	Scoring
Criteria 1 Project Description and Contribution to CBC priorities Demonstrating that the project is supporting at least one of our strategic priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enhancing Central Bedfordshire • great resident services • improving education and skills • protecting the vulnerable and improving wellbeing 	8

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> creating stronger communities 	
Criteria 2 Evidence of community benefit outcomes Applicants should demonstrate how the asset to be improved or enhanced provides a clear community benefit. Evidence of planned consultation with residents, if applicable.	10
Criteria 3 Evidence of meeting a local need Applicants should demonstrate how they are meeting a local need such as a deficit in community infrastructure.	10
Criteria 4 Collaboration Evidence of local partnership and community involvement	8
Criteria 5 Risk Management Applicants must demonstrate a good understanding of risks to delivery and how these can be managed.	8
Criteria 6 Leverage Evidence that <u>more than</u> the 50% match funding has been secured 0 – No additional match funding (over eligibility requirement of 50%) 3 – 51%-55% match funding 5 – 56%-60% match funding 8 – 61% or above match funding	8
Criteria 7 Value for Money Projects should demonstrate they have achieved best price and value for money with no ongoing funding requirements for Central Bedfordshire Council.	8
Criteria 8 Governance arrangements Applicants must demonstrate a robust governance framework with all personal liabilities covered.	8
Criteria 9 Deliverability Applicants must have all project delivery elements in place, or it should be evident that, it can be delivered within the time frame outlined. There should be well-planned timetables for achieving short-term and medium-term deliverables. There should be sufficient delivery capability in place.	10
Ward Councillor Views	Yes/No
Total	78

Minimum Threshold	50
Decision Making	
<p>Once the application has been assessed and scored by officers against the criteria, the application will be passed to the Director of Resources for a decision on behalf of the Council who will also consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geographic allocation– in order to ensure that the Community Asset Grant Scheme benefits the whole area. • Feedback will be given to unsuccessful applicants. The Council’s decision will be final and not subject to appeal, but the applicant may re-apply if the reasons for rejection can be resolved. 	
Grant Agreement	
<p>Approved projects will receive an Offer Letter confirming the grant award subject to signing a legally enforceable Grant Agreement.</p> <p>Work cannot proceed until you have received formal notification of the grant.</p>	
Procurement Compliance	
<p>When applying for grants of £2,000 or above, we will require you to request 3 quotes against the works you are seeking to complete and provide evidence of these alongside your application.</p>	
Monitoring and accountability	
<p>The applicant must provide monitoring reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress against delivery milestones identified in the application. • Evidence that the funding is devoted to the specific areas proposed in the application. • Information on local community benefit. • An end of project report demonstrating how the grant has been spent and the community benefit achieved. <p>Frequency of reporting progress will be agreed with the grant recipient.</p>	
Additional information	
<p>Successful applicants will be required to sign up to terms and conditions to receive the grant funding. These will be set out in the legally enforceable Grant Agreement. The terms and conditions will be proportionate to the value of the grant and cover the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full bank account details will be required and must be submitted on the organisation’s headed paper and signed by the Chair or Treasurer. • The Community Engagement Team must be notified if the organisation in receipt of the grant ceases to trade or the project funded by the grant ceases. • Central Bedfordshire Council reserve the right to recover grant funding where it is not being used for the purpose stated in the application. • Any unspent grant funding must be returned at the end of the grant period. 	

- Grant recipients will be responsible for arranging appropriate insurance cover for their project. This might include public liability insurance, employee liability insurance and public indemnity insurance.
- Grant recipients will allow their project to be used for Central Bedfordshire Council promotional and publicity purposes where appropriate
- Grant recipients will agree to submit financial details for their scheme where this is requested.
- All projects in receipt of a Community Asset grant will be expected to acknowledge grant funding from Central Bedfordshire Council in all publicity associated with the project.

If you have any questions or require support regarding your application form and the process, contact the [Community Engagement Team](#)

Community Asset Grant Scheme

Application Form

1. Applicant's details

Name of Applicant:	
Name of Organisation / Group	
Email address:	
Address (including postcode):	
Preferred telephone number:	
Name of project:	

2. About your Community Asset project

a) Which criteria fits your project	Criteria	Tick
	External improvements such as a new roof	
	Extensions such as additional toilet facilities or storage;	
	Internal refurbishment and improvements,	
	Improvements to water/heating systems, lighting, access or security.	
	Improvements to accessibility – installation of a hearing loop or other similar improvements.	
	Improvements to play areas/ outdoor and indoor sports facilities/open space areas with public access.	
	Feasibility studies associated with a planned improvement (provided that improvement is funded and takes place).	
b) The Project		
i) Location, description and, ownership of asset		
ii) Description of your project		
Please give a full description of the project for which funding is sought.		
Scoring criteria 1		

<p>c) Community Benefit</p> <p><i>Please describe how your project will benefit the community including vulnerable groups. Please include, if required your consultation process with local residents.</i></p> <p>Scoring Criteria 2</p>			
<p>d) How does this meet the local need?</p>			
<p>e) Milestones and timescale <i>(Please set out a timeline for starting / completing the project, including key dates and milestones)</i></p> <p>Scoring Criteria 9</p>	Key Date & Timeline	Milestone	How it will be achieved
<p>f) Partnership and collaboration</p> <p><i>Please identify any other organisations who will be working with you to deliver this project.</i></p> <p>Scoring Criteria 3</p>			
<p>g) Project Organisation</p> <p><i>Is planning permission required / sought / secured.</i></p> <p><i>Do you have land / asset owners permission.</i></p> <p>Scoring Criteria 9</p>			
<p>h) Risk Management</p> <p><i>(please identify the risks associated with your project</i></p>			

<p>and how these will be mitigated / managed)</p> <p>Scoring Criteria 4</p>				
<p>i) Implementation</p> <p>Please describe your arrangements for managing the delivery and implementation of your project.</p> <p>Scoring Criteria 9</p>				
<p>j) Outcomes</p> <p>What outcomes do you propose to achieve as a result of delivering your project.</p> <p>Scoring Criteria 2</p>				
3. Funding				
a) Preferred bidding round	Bidding Round	Opens	Closes	Tick
	1. Spring	April 29 th 2021	5pm July 1 st 2021	
<p>b) How much is required from the Community Asset grant scheme?</p> <p>(Please provide the total cost of the project and a breakdown of how the money will be spent. The minimum grant amount is £2,000 and the maximum is £25,000)</p>	Total cost of project (including match funding):			£
	Total amount required from CAG:			£
	Item	Amount £	CAG £	Match Funding £
c). Match Funding	Source of match funding		How much £	Confirmed

Scoring criteria 6			
d) Please explain how the project provides value for money. Scoring criteria 7			
Governance			
a). Governance <i>(Please state the number of people who are currently on your governing body or committee and attach your constitution if appropriate or other governing document)</i> Scoring criteria 8			
8. Account <i>(Please confirm you have full bank account details and attach the last years accounts)</i>			
Insurance			
a) Please give details of the insurances you hold and the level of cover this provides.			

Declaration Please sign this form to confirm that: The information supplied is full and correct to the best of our knowledge; we have read, understood and complied with the conditions of funding; we understand that Central Bedfordshire Council reserve the right to reclaim the grant in the event of it being used for purposes other than permitted by this scheme, or the organisation ceases to operate. Note: by signing this form you acknowledge and agree to comply with the conditions of funding and agree to repay the grant if any of the conditions are not met.

Signed:
Name:
Position:
Date:

Submit your form

Online: https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/42/stronger_communities/678/community_grants/3

Email: community.grants@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018 replaced the Data Protection Act 1998 on 25 May 2018.

The new regulations are very much focused on protecting you and how your data is handled and here at Central Bedfordshire Council we want to keep you in the picture as to how we do that.

The information you supply us with is used to validate and process your nomination form.

The information you have submitted to us will be stored securely on the Council's BOX Cloud System and is only accessible by the Partnerships & Community Engagement Team.

Your data will only be held for as long as is necessary or as governed by other statutory regulations and will be disposed of securely.

If you have any questions contact the [information governance team](#)

You can find out more about how data is managed at Central Bedfordshire Council by [clicking here](#)

**Central
Bedfordshire**

Central Bedfordshire in contact