

Delegated Decision

15 May 2020

Area Action Partnerships COVID-19 Assistance Fund



Report of Corporate Management Team

**Alan Patrickson, Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and
Climate Change**

John Hewitt, Corporate Director of Resources

Gordon Elliott, Head of Partnerships and Community Engagement

**Councillor Brian Stephens, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for
Neighbourhoods and Local Partnerships**

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To outline the process to put in place the newly developed:
 - (a) guidance and process for Area Action Partnerships (AAPs) to respond to COVID-19 Project requests (Appendix 2)
 - (b) guidance and process for Members Neighbourhood Budget which allows revenue flexibility for members spend if directed towards COVID-19 Project requests (Appendix 3)

Executive summary

- 2 In order to provide a rapid response to support our communities through the current COVID-19 pandemic, we developed a process led by our AAPs to ensure funding was available to support VCS organisations impacted by Covid 19 and who were struggling to meet core costs as well as supporting projects, developed primarily but not exclusively by VCS organisations, to support residents impacted by Covid 19.
- 3 As provision of early support was essential, it was necessary to move at a rapid pace to ensure that Durham County Council (DCC) was providing the means by which to support our community infrastructure and our most vulnerable residents.

- 4 A specific COVID-19 funding process was developed in order to provide a fast tracked response to community need.

Recommendation

- 5 Note the reasoning and process involved in the delegated decision to establish COVID-19 Response funds.

Background

- 6 From the 25th March AAP staff were working full time establishing and servicing the newly developed Community Hubs. Concurrently, Gordon Elliott, Head of Partnerships and Community Engagement and John Hewitt, Corporate Director of Resources were developing an appropriate process to ensure provision of a rapid response to support our communities through the COVID-19 pandemic. Extensive consultation on the funding proposals was carried out between John Hewitt, the Leader and Deputy leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Community Partnerships.
- 7 AAPs were the natural mechanism for providing this response so specific guidance and application forms were developed in order to provide a fast tracked process to respond to our communities' needs.
- 8 On 1st April 2020 Durham County Council launched its' COVID-19 Assistance Fund for AAP Area Budget and Elected Members Neighbourhood Budget. Each AAP was allocated an additional £100,000 for Covid projects and each Elected Member was permitted to allocate all of their Neighbourhood Budget ((£19,400) on revenue projects if they were related to Covid 19. This represents a change from previously agreed spend arrangements where the allocation is split £14,000 capital and £5,400 revenue. In addition to this funding being made available, a revised, simplified form was also developed for Covid projects in order to help ensure projects could be supported urgently.
- 9 Due to the unprecedented nature of COVID-19 it was necessary to respond immediately and develop the means by which to provide additional support to our communities who were being severely affected by the Government lockdown and self-isolation.
- 10 Following the initial implementation of the funding schemes, refinements were made to the funding procedures, these were primarily to clarify that salary costs could be met for projects established to support residents deal with the impact of the crisis and the establishment of an additional fund of £100,000 to support countywide projects. Consultation on these refinements was carried out with cabinet members and introduced on 30 April 2020.

Conclusion

- 11 The urgency of the situation required us to develop a fast, appropriate process by which to respond to the ensuing community crisis.
- 12 Within this context, decisions had to be made quickly in order to provide the support urgently needed by our communities
- 13 Although established as a matter of urgency, detailed guidance for the funds were developed in consultation with Cabinet members and are attached to this report for information.

Background papers

- Guidance and process for Area Action Partnerships (AAPs) to respond to COVID-19 Project requests – including the fund for cross county projects (Appendix 2)
- guidance and process for Members Neighbourhood Budget which allows revenue flexibility for members spend if directed towards COVID-19 Project requests (Appendix 3)

Other useful documents

- None

Author(s)

Gordon Elliott

Tel: 03000 263 605

Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

Not applicable

Finance

The additional funds to the 14 AAPs and the countywide schemes funds total £1.5 million. If members allocated all of their Neighbourhood Budget on covid revenue projects, this would require an additional £1,764,000 revenue funding, however this would be offset by a corresponding saving in capital spend. These increased revenue costs will hopefully be met from the additional funding allocated to the council to deal with the impact of Covid 19 by central government. If there are insufficient funds allocated via the government, the costs will be met by a combination of the funds previously set aside for Town and Village Centre Regeneration and Council Reserves.

Consultation

Although AAP Boards are unable to meet at this time, Board members are regularly informed of the approved projects and regular press releases produced to inform the public of the schemes. Those providing support for the public are also requested to promote their schemes on the council's Locate website.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Not applicable

Climate Change

Not applicable

Human Rights

Not applicable

Crime and Disorder

Not applicable

Staffing

The allocation of the funds will be carried out by the existing AAP teams. The AAP's ability to allocate their other outstanding non-covid resources will be monitored over the next few months, and if additional resources are required

out with the Partnerships and Community Engagement service, in a first instance a request will be made for seconded staff from the Council's volunteer pool.

Accommodation

Not applicable

Risk

Although the application process has been expedited to react to the unprecedented circumstances, the AAP Funding Team will appraise the applications and oversee the monitoring process of schemes set out in the attached guidance.

Procurement

Not applicable



A Guide to Covid-19 Financial Assistance Funding Additional AAP Covid-19 Revenue Funding

1. What local financial support is available for COVID-19?

Funds are being made available through AAP Area budgets to provide assistance to organisations across County Durham at a local level. Applications for funding will be made through a streamlined appraisal and approval process. Application forms will be issued to the AAP teams and members of the AAP. For the purposes of COVID-19, AAP coordinators are key links to the virtual hubs that have been established and therefore will coordinate and assist with any COVID-19 funding applications that are made through this process and will liaise with AAP boards as necessary.

2. How Much Funding is available?

For 2020/21, each Area Action Partnership is being allocated an **additional £100,000** revenue funding to help organisations with financial issues caused by COVID-19.

3. How do we identify where funding is needed?

AAP co-ordinators will play a lead role in helping to direct and manage funding applications. AAP Staff will link with staff in the newly established Covid-19 community hubs to identify the types of support that are most needed in an area. AAP staff can also:

- Talk to local community & voluntary groups & organisations
- Use their own local knowledge.
- Approach Elected Members and AAP Board members for project proposals

4. What can the Funding be used for?

It is anticipated that applications for AAP funding will fall into **two categories**:

(i) Supporting the Community and Voluntary Sector through COVID-19

Existing organisations - where their income has been negatively impacted by COVID-19 and who require assistance with **urgent expenses** such as utility bills, insurance costs and urgent repairs for an initial period of up to 3 months, up to a maximum of £10,000. Where an organisation has sufficient unrestricted reserves, these should be used to cover any immediate shortfalls to allow the Council to help those most in need.

Organisations eligible to receive funding under this category

Fully Constituted Voluntary and community organisations are eligible

(ii) **Supporting Covid-19 Help Initiatives**

Help for **existing and new organisations** to provide support to individuals who are impacted by Covid-19. Examples of expenditure include assistance with food, transport, associated utility costs, volunteer expenses and telephony. To help identify gaps in provision within their areas, AAP co-ordinators will actively engage with the Community Hubs.

Organisations eligible to receive funding under this category

Not for profit constituted organisations are eligible to receive funding. Such organisations can include:

- Voluntary and Community Sector organisations
- Statutory bodies including Parish and Town Councils
- In exceptional circumstances and in recognition of the growth of the number of new un-constituted groups established in response to Covid-19, and only where it has not been possible to link groups with a fully constituted organisation, such groups will be considered for funding if they can evidence they are working towards becoming constituted and are seeking advice on appropriate governance. They should also demonstrate that they will be delivering an effective community service and are linked with one of the Community Hubs
- Applications from private sector organisations may be considered in exceptional circumstances where funding is clearly being targeted at Covid-19 issues, the scheme is based on a not for profit, charitable ethos and if at all possible, it can be demonstrated that they will be delivering an effective community service and will link with one of the Community Hubs.

5. What COVID-19 Funding cannot be spent on

AAP Covid-19 funding cannot be spent on the following:

- **Projects that are not COVID-19 related**
- Projects that do not start within 3 months of the date of the offer of funding.
- Projects that will lead to future operating cost difficulties for the recipient organisation.
- Support for a single person – projects should support a number of people
- Support profit-making initiatives.
- Religious projects that are deemed denominational, although faith-based organisations can be supported where the project is aimed at combating the implications of the Covid-19 crisis.
- Political activities.
- Purchase of alcohol
- Salary costs – organisations are encouraged to access the government employee support scheme.
- Costs associated with gambling

Updated 30/03/20

- Projects that should be paid from mainstream budgets of the Authority or of an external agency.
- VAT that the recipient organisation can recover.
- Loans and interest payments
- Payments to employees of the organisation arising from claims of unfair dismissal or redundancy.

6. Is there a limit on how much can be awarded to a project?

The minimum amount of funding that can be awarded to a project is £500. Non-constituted groups can apply for a maximum grant of £2,000, which will be paid in £500 instalments on production of eligible receipts. Allocations to constituted organisations for help with **urgent expenses** are limited to £10,000 in total.

7. What if an application is not approved?

If an application is not approved because it does not meet the criteria, it duplicates alternative provision or issues identified during appraisal cannot be addressed you can resubmit the application if you can provide additional information that shows that the problems identified in the original application have been addressed.

8. How long will the process take?

These projects will be prioritised, and it is hoped that applicants will receive funding within a maximum of 5 working days of the application being submitted unless significant issues are identified that could result in the process taking longer.

9. How will Projects be monitored?

The aim is to monitor all projects where the Council contribution is over £5,000. Projects valued under £5,000 will be monitored on a sample basis. The monitoring arrangements will be streamlined to comply with the new application process. All expenditure is subject to internal and external audit review and therefore at all times a clear rationale for expenditure must be included on the application.

10. The Grant Award and Approval Process

AAP Coordinators and their teams will work with applicants to complete application forms.

Projects under £5,000 will be signed off by the AAP co-ordinator or a neighbouring coordinator if the application is completed by the AAP coordinator in the first instance. Projects over £5,000 will be signed off by the Head of Partnerships and Community Engagement or a Head of Finance. All successful project recipients will receive a formal Offer of Grant once considered by the AAP Co-Ordinator or Head of Service as set out above

AAP applications will not be approved at AAP Boards, however regular updates on AAP funded projects will be circulated to Boards for information

Electronic signatures or emailed confirmations will be accepted in place of physical signatures

11. Where do elected members go for more information?

The AAP Coordinators and their teams will be pleased to answer any queries and help elected members to consult with the community to identify suitable projects and support the development of projects. Contact details for all AAP's can be found at

Updated 30/03/20

www.durham.gov.uk/AAPs if your local AAP coordinator is unavailable neighbouring AAP teams can be contacted for help.

Advice on the application, appraisal and payment process can be obtained from the TAP Funding Team @ stephanie.morgan@durham.gov.uk or Donna.cook@durham.gov.uk



Durham County Council
COVID-19 Assistance Fund
Area Budget



AAP	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Funding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SECTION 1 – To be completed by the applicant (Please complete all sections)

AAP Area			
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PROJECT NAME :			
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Name of Organisation:			
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Contact Address			
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Contact Name		Telephone No.	
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Email address			
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Please provide a copy of a bank statement and a signed governing document (if applicable)

What type of organisation are you?

Voluntary or Community Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Registered Charity/CIO	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parish or Town Council	<input type="checkbox"/>
CIC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other – (please give details) Eg Statutory Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>

Brief Description of project to be funded and how the money will be spent.			
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How many people will benefit from this funding?		Office Use	
		PI Ref	

Start Date		End Date	
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Total Amount Requested	£	Total Project Cost	£
Capital Costs	£	Do any of the costs Include VAT?	
Revenue Costs (see attached sheet)	£	Are you VAT registered?	

Do you have a safeguarding policy in place? Yes No

Do you have a risk assessment in place that covers this project? Yes No

Please tick this box to confirm that government guidelines regarding COVID-19 will be followed when delivering this project

Please read the following declaration and the attached terms and conditions you should only sign this form if you agree to the content:

- I confirm that I am authorised to sign this declaration on behalf of the applicant organisation.
- I confirm that the information given in this application is true.
- I confirm that the organisation will not use this grant to pay for any spending commitments it has made before the date of this application.
- I confirm that the grant will be used for the purposes detailed within this application and that where costs incurred are less than the grant offered the organisation will return any unspent grant to the Council when requested unless permission is granted for it to be used by the applicant for an acceptable purpose.
- The organisation shall ensure that all parties involved with the project comply with their legal obligations. (We reserve the right to request evidence of this if necessary).
- I agree to the attached terms and conditions.

Signed (on behalf of organisation)	Signature		Date
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If you are unable to provide an original or electronic signature, please provide an email with the following wording in the body of the email:

I confirm that the information given in this application is true. - I understand that any Offer of Grant will be subject to terms and conditions and I confirm that the organisation has the power to accept this grant if the application is successful and to repay the grant if the conditions are not met. - I confirm that I am authorised to sign this declaration on behalf of the applicant organisation. - I understand that if I make any seriously misleading statements (whether deliberate or accidental) at any stage during the application process or if I knowingly withhold any information, this could make our application invalid and the organisation will be liable to repay any funds.

SECTION 2 – AAP Co-ordinator Signature

AAP Co-ordinator Signature		Date	Declaration of Interest
			Yes/no

Declaration of Interest

(A declaration of interest is required by law. If you are in doubt as to whether you should declare an interest please contact Head of Democratic and Legal Services on 03000 269729 for advice)

If you, a member of your family, a business partner or close friend will benefit financially or otherwise from this expenditure please give details below:

Data Protection Act 2018

Durham County Council complies with all relevant statutory obligations. Personal information processed by the Council will be handled in accordance with the Council's privacy statement, which can be accessed here www.durham.gov.uk/dataprivacy.

If you have any concerns about how your data is handled, please contact either the Data Protection Officer at DPO@durham.gov.uk or the Information Commissioner's Office casework@ico.org.uk.



Durham County Council
COVID-19 Countywide Funding



AAP	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Funding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SECTION 1 – To be completed by the applicant (Please complete all sections)

AAP Area		
PROJECT NAME :		
Name of Organisation:		
Contact Address		
Contact Name		Telephone No.
Email address		

Please provide a copy of a bank statement and a signed governing document (if applicable)

What type of organisation are you?

Voluntary or Community Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Registered Charity/CIO	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parish or Town Council	<input type="checkbox"/>
CIC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other – (please give details) Eg Statutory Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>

Brief Description of project to be funded and how the money will be spent.			
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How many people will benefit from this funding?		Office Use	
		PI Ref	

Start Date		End Date	
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Total Amount Requested	£	Total Project Cost	£
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Capital Costs	£	Do any of the costs Include VAT?	
Revenue Costs (see attached sheet)	£	Are you VAT registered?	

Do you have a safeguarding policy in place? Yes No

Do you have a risk assessment in place that covers this project? Yes No

Please tick this box to confirm that government guidelines regarding COVID-19 will be followed when delivering this project

Please read the following declaration and the attached terms and conditions you should only sign this form if you agree to the content:

- I confirm that I am authorised to sign this declaration on behalf of the applicant organisation.
- I confirm that the information given in this application is true.
- I confirm that the organisation will not use this grant to pay for any spending commitments it has made before the date of this application.
- I confirm that the grant will be used for the purposes detailed within this application and that where costs incurred are less than the grant offered the organisation will return any unspent grant to the Council when requested unless permission is granted for it to be used by the applicant for an acceptable purpose.
- The organisation shall ensure that all parties involved with the project comply with their legal obligations. (We reserve the right to request evidence of this if necessary).
- I agree to the attached terms and conditions.

Signed (on behalf of organisation)	Signature	Date
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If you are unable to provide an original or electronic signature, please provide an email with the following wording in the body of the email:

I confirm that the information given in this application is true. - I understand that any Offer of Grant will be subject to terms and conditions and I confirm that the organisation has the power to accept this grant if the application is successful and to repay the grant if the conditions are not met. - I confirm that I am authorised to sign this declaration on behalf of the applicant organisation. - I understand that if I make any seriously misleading statements (whether deliberate or accidental) at any stage during the application process or if I knowingly withhold any information, this could make our application invalid and the organisation will be liable to repay any funds.

SECTION 2 – AAP Co-ordinator Signature

AAP Co-ordinator Signature	Date	Declaration of Interest
		Yes/no

Declaration of Interest

(A declaration of interest is required by law. If you are in doubt as to whether you should declare an interest please contact Head of Democratic and Legal Services on 03000 269729 for advice)

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If you have any concerns about how your data is handled, please contact either the Data Protection Officer at DPO@durham.gov.uk or the Information Commissioner's Office casework@ico.org.uk.



A Guide to Covid-19 Financial Assistance Funding County Wide Covid-19 Funding

1. What county-wide financial support is available for COVID-19?

Funds are being made available through AAP Area budgets to provide assistance to organisations across County Durham. Applications for funding will be made through a streamlined appraisal and approval process. Application forms will be issued to the AAP teams and members of the AAP. For the purposes of COVID-19, AAP coordinators are key links to the virtual hubs that have been established and therefore will coordinate and assist with any COVID-19 funding applications that are made through this process and will liaise with AAP boards as necessary.

2. How Much Funding is available?

For 2020/21, an **additional £100,000** revenue funding to help organisations that operate county-wide with financial issues caused by COVID-19.

3. How do we identify where funding is needed?

AAP co-ordinators will play a lead role in helping to direct and manage funding applications. AAP Staff will link with staff in the newly established Covid-19 community hubs to identify the types of support that are most needed in an area. AAP staff can also:

- Talk to local community & voluntary groups & organisations
- Use their own local knowledge.
- Approach Elected Members and AAP Board members for project proposals

There are a number of funding programmes available to support Covid related projects, AAPs will work with applicants to determine if there are any alternative funds that may be available to help to support the initiative. Details of these funds can be found on the Durham4Communities website and, wherever possible applicants should explore these alternatives as part of their bid preparation.

4. What can the Funding be used for?

It is anticipated that applications for AAP funding will fall into **two categories**:

(i) Supporting the Community and Voluntary Sector through COVID-19

Existing organisations - where their income has been negatively impacted by COVID-19 and who require assistance with **urgent and essential expenses** such as utility bills, insurance costs and urgent repairs for an initial period of up to 3 months, up to a maximum of £10,000. Where an organisation has sufficient unrestricted reserves (12 months or more), these should be used to cover any immediate shortfalls to allow the Council to help those most in need. In calculating the need for urgent and essential expenses, the Council will also take

Updated 27/04/2020

into account the level of resources secured from other COVID-19 funding sources.

Organisations eligible to receive funding under this category

Fully Constituted Voluntary and community organisations are eligible

(ii) Supporting Covid-19 Help Initiatives

Help for **existing and new organisations** to provide support to individuals who are impacted by Covid-19. Examples of expenditure include assistance with food, transport, associated utility costs, volunteer expenses, salary costs and telephony. The purchase of food will be permitted where there is need, however opportunities to secure this from subsidised sources should be explored. Similarly, in terms of salary costs, the opportunity to fulfil this need through use of volunteers should be considered with advice from the Covid-19 Volunteering Unit. To help identify gaps in provision within their areas, AAP co-ordinators will also actively engage with the Community Hubs. Given the uncertainty regarding the impact of Covid-19, whilst a scheme may be approved for a period exceeding 3 months, funds will be issued for a maximum period of 3 months at which point a review will be undertaken prior to releasing any remaining costs.

Organisations eligible to receive funding under this category

Not for profit constituted organisations are eligible to receive funding. Such organisations can include:

- Voluntary and Community Sector organisations
- Statutory bodies including Parish and Town Councils
- In exceptional circumstances and in recognition of the growth of the number of new un-constituted groups established in response to Covid-19, and only where it has not been possible to link groups with a fully constituted organisation, such groups will be considered for funding if they can evidence they are working towards becoming constituted and are seeking advice on appropriate governance. They should also demonstrate that they will be delivering an effective community service and are linked with one of the Community Hubs
- Applications from private sector organisations may be considered in exceptional circumstances where funding is clearly being targeted at Covid-19 issues, the scheme is based on a not for profit, charitable ethos and if at all possible, it can be demonstrated that they will be delivering an effective community service and will link with one of the Community Hubs.

5. What COVID-19 Funding cannot be spent on

AAP Covid-19 funding cannot be spent on the following:

- **Projects that are not COVID-19 related**
- Projects that do not start within 3 months of the date of the offer of funding.

Updated 27/04/2020

- Projects that will lead to future operating cost difficulties for the recipient organisation.
- Support for a single person – projects should support a number of people
- Support profit-making initiatives.
- Religious projects that are deemed denominational, although faith-based organisations can be supported where the project is aimed at combating the implications of the Covid-19 crisis.
- Political activities.
- Purchase of alcohol
- Salary costs where staff have been (or should be) furloughed under the governments job retention scheme
- Costs associated with gambling
- Projects that should be paid from mainstream budgets of the Authority or of an external agency.
- VAT that the recipient organisation can recover.
- Loans and interest payments
- Payments to employees of the organisation arising from claims of unfair dismissal or redundancy.

6. Is there a limit on how much can be awarded to a project?

The minimum amount of funding that can be awarded to a project is £500. Non-constituted groups can apply for a maximum grant of £2,000, which will be paid in £500 instalments on production of eligible receipts. Allocations to constituted organisations for help with **urgent expenses** are limited to £10,000 in total.

7. What if an application is not approved?

If an application is not approved because it does not meet the criteria, it duplicates alternative provision or issues identified during appraisal cannot be addressed you can resubmit the application if you can provide additional information that shows that the problems identified in the original application have been addressed.

8. How long will the process take?

These projects will be prioritised, and it is hoped that approved applicants will receive funding within a maximum of 5 working days of the application being submitted unless significant issues are identified that could result in the process taking longer or time is required to explore alternative funding sources.

9. How will Projects be monitored?

The aim is to monitor all projects where the Council contribution is over £5,000. Projects valued under £5,000 will be monitored on a sample basis. The monitoring arrangements will be streamlined to comply with the new application process. All expenditure is subject to internal and external audit review and therefore at all times a clear rationale for expenditure must be included on the application.

10. The Grant Award and Approval Process

AAP Coordinators and their teams will work with applicants to complete application forms.

Projects will be signed off by the Head of Partnerships and Community Engagement or a Head of Finance. All successful project recipients will receive a formal Offer of Grant once considered by the Head of Service as set out above

Updated 27/04/2020

AAP applications will not be approved at AAP Boards, however regular updates on AAP funded projects will be circulated to Boards for information

Advice on the application, appraisal and payment process can be obtained from the TAP Funding Team @ stephanie.morgan@durham.gov.uk or Donna.cook@durham.gov.uk



Covid-19 Neighbourhood Budget Financial Assistance Funding

1. Financial support available for COVID-19 - Member Neighbourhood budgets

Flexibility is being provided through Member's Neighbourhood budgets where capital funding can be swapped for revenue funding for 2020/21 for COVID-19 expenditure. Applications for funding will be through a streamlined appraisal and approval process. Application forms will be issued to elected members and AAP coordinators. For the purposes of COVID-19, AAP coordinators are key links to the virtual hubs that have been established and therefore will coordinate and assist with any COVID-19 funding applications that are made through this process.

2. How Much Funding is available?

Elected members have an individual Neighbourhood Budget allocation of £19,400, consisting of £14,000 for capital projects and £5,400 for revenue projects. To provide more flexibility for members to support organisations through the COVID-19 crisis, for 2020/21 budgets only, flexibility will be provided to swap capital funding for revenue funding where expenditure is related to the coronavirus.

3. How will elected members know where funding is needed?

AAP co-ordinators will play a lead role in helping to direct and manage funding applications. Members should discuss funding proposals with their AAP co-ordinator or with AAP Staff who will link with staff in the newly established Covid-19 community hubs to identify the types of support that are most needed in an area. Members can also:

- talk to local community & voluntary groups & organisations
- Use their own local knowledge.

4. What can the Funding be used for?

It is anticipated that applications for funding from members neighbourhood budgets will fall into two broad categories:

(i) Supporting the Community and Voluntary Sector through COVID-19

Existing organisations - where their income has been negatively impacted by COVID-19 and who require assistance with **urgent expenses** such as utility bills, insurance costs and urgent repairs for an initial period of up to 3 months, up to a maximum of £10,000. Where an organisation has sufficient unrestricted reserves, these should be used to cover any immediate shortfalls to allow the Council to help those most in need.

Organisations eligible to receive funding under this category

Fully Constituted Voluntary and community organisations are eligible

(ii) **Supporting Covid-19 Help Initiatives**

Help for **existing and new organisations** to provide support to individuals who are impacted by Covid-19. Examples of expenditure include assistance with food, transport, associated utility costs, volunteer expenses and telephony. To help identify gaps in provision within their areas, AAP co-ordinators will actively engage with the Community Hubs

Organisations eligible to receive funding under this category

Not for profit constituted organisations are eligible to receive funding. Such organisations can include:

- Voluntary and Community Sector organisations
- Statutory bodies including Parish and Town Councils
- In exceptional circumstances and in recognition of the growth of the number of new un-constituted groups established in response to Covid-19, and only where it has not been possible to link groups with a fully constituted organisation, such groups will be considered for funding if they can evidence they are working towards becoming constituted and are seeking advice on appropriate governance. They should also demonstrate that they will be delivering an effective community service and are linked with one of the Community Hubs
- Applications from private sector organisations may be considered in exceptional circumstances where funding is clearly being targeted at Covid-19 issues, the scheme is based on a not for profit, charitable ethos and if at all possible, it can be demonstrated that they will be delivering an effective community service and will link with one of the Community Hubs.

5. What COVID-19 Funding cannot be spent on

AAP Covid-19 funding cannot be spent on the following:

- **Projects that are not COVID-19 related**
- Projects that do not start within 3 months of the date of the offer of funding.
- Projects that will lead to future operating cost difficulties for the recipient organisation.
- Support for a single person – projects should support a number of people
- Support profit-making initiatives.
- Religious projects that are deemed denominational, although faith-based organisations can be supported where the project is aimed at combating the implications of the Covid-19 crisis.
- Political activities.
- Purchase of alcohol
- Salary costs – organisations are encouraged to access the government employee support scheme.
- Costs associated with gambling
- Projects that should be paid from mainstream budgets of the Authority or of an external agency.

- VAT that the recipient organisation can recover
- Loans and interest payments
- Payments to employees of the organisation arising from claims of unfair dismissal or redundancy.

6. Is there a limit on how much can be awarded to a project?

The minimum amount of funding that can be awarded to a project is £500. Non-constituted groups can apply for a maximum grant of £2,000, which will be paid in £500 instalments on production of eligible receipts. Allocations to constituted organisations for help with **urgent expenses** are limited to £10,000 in total.

7. Can elected members use their NB to support Covid-19 related projects outside of their electoral division?

Yes, elected members can fund a project outside of their electoral division, but the application must demonstrate that the majority of beneficiaries are from their own division. Where this is not the case then elected members will be encouraged to consider a grant amount based on the proportion of beneficiaries from their area.

8. Can elected members support a project where they have a personal or prejudicial interest?

An elected member is regarded as having a personal interest in any business which may affect the well-being (financial or otherwise) of a body of which he/she is a member. A similar rule applies if you are on the management committee. Any question of advancing money to that organisation would normally give rise to a prejudicial interest. If an elected member wants to support an organisation in which they have an interest, they should confirm this on the application form.

9. What if my application is not approved?

If your application is not approved because it does not meet the criteria, it duplicates alternative provision or issues identified during appraisal cannot be addressed you can resubmit the application if you can provide additional information that shows that the problems identified in the original application have been addressed.

10. How long will the process take?

These projects will be prioritised, and it is hoped that applicants will receive funding within a maximum of 5 working days of the application being submitted unless significant issues are identified that could result in the process taking longer.

11. How will Projects be monitored?

The aim is to monitor all projects where the Council contribution is over £5,000. Projects valued under £5,000 will be monitored on a sample basis. The monitoring arrangements will be streamlined to comply with the new application process. All expenditure is subject to internal and external audit review and therefore at all times a clear rationale for expenditure must be included on the application.

12. The Grant Award and Approval Process

AAP Coordinators and their teams will work with members and applicants to complete application forms for COVID-19 projects. Projects under £5,000 will be signed off by the AAP co-ordinator or a neighbouring coordinator if the application is completed by the AAP coordinator in the first instance. Projects over £5,000 will be signed off by the Head of Partnerships and Community Engagement or a Head of Finance

All successful project recipients will receive a formal Offer of Grant once considered by the AAP Co-Ordinator or Head of Service as set out above.

Electronic signatures or emailed confirmations will be accepted in place of physical signatures

13. Where do elected members go for more information?

The AAP Coordinators and their teams will be pleased to answer any queries and help elected members to consult with the community to identify suitable projects and support the development of projects. Contact details for all AAP's can be found at www.durham.gov.uk/AAPs if your local AAP coordinator is unavailable neighbouring AAP teams can be contacted for help.

Advice on the application, appraisal and payment process can be obtained from the TAP Funding Team stephanie.morgan@durham.gov.uk or donna.cook@durham.gov.uk



Durham County Council
COVID-19 Assistance Fund
Neighbourhood Budget



AAP	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Funding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SECTION 1 – To be completed by the applicant (Please complete all sections)

AAP Area			
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PROJECT NAME :			
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Name of Organisation:			
-----------------------	--	--	--

Contact Address			
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Contact Name		Telephone No.	
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Email address			
---------------	--	--	--

Please provide a copy of a bank statement and a signed governing document

What type of organisation are you?

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| Voluntary or Community Organisation | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Registered Charity/CIO | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Parish or Town Council | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| CIC | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other – (please give details)
Eg Statutory Organisation | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Brief Description of project to be funded and how the money will be spent.			
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How many people will benefit from this funding?		Office Use	
		PI Ref	

Start Date		End Date	
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Total Amount Requested	£	Total Project Cost	£
Capital Costs	£	Do any of the costs Include VAT?	
Revenue Costs	£	Are you VAT registered?	

Do you have a safeguarding policy in place? Yes No

Do you have a risk assessment in place that covers this project? Yes No

Please tick this box to confirm that government guidelines regarding COVID-19 will be followed when delivering this project

Please read the following declaration and the attached terms and conditions you should only sign this form if you agree to the content

- I confirm that I am authorised to sign this declaration on behalf of the applicant organisation.
- I confirm that the information given in this application is true.
- I confirm that the organisation will not use this grant to pay for any spending commitments it has made before the date of this application.
- I confirm that the grant will be used for the purposes detailed within this application and that where costs incurred are less than the grant offered the organisation will return any unspent grant to the Council when requested unless permission is granted for it to be used by the applicant for an acceptable purpose.
- The organisation shall ensure that all parties involved with the project comply with their legal obligations. (We reserve the right to request evidence of this if necessary).
- I agree to the attached terms and conditions.

Signed (on behalf of organisation)	Signature		Date
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If you are unable to provide an original or electronic signature, please provide an email with the following wording in the body of the email:

I confirm that the information given in this application is true. - I understand that any Offer of Grant will be subject to terms and conditions and I confirm that the organisation has the power to accept this grant if the application is successful and to repay the grant if the conditions are not met. - I confirm that I am authorised to sign this declaration on behalf of the applicant organisation. - I understand that if I make any seriously misleading statements (whether deliberate or accidental) at any stage during the application process or if I knowingly withhold any information, this could make our application invalid and the organisation will be liable to repay any funds.

SECTION 2 – Application approval - to be completed by the Councillor(s)

Councillor Name	Councillor Signature	Date	Declaration	Amount
			Yes/no	
			Yes/No	
			Yes/No	
			Yes/No	

Declaration of Interest

(A declaration of interest is required by law. If you are in doubt as to whether you should declare an interest please contact Head of Democratic and Legal Services on 03000 269729 for advice)

If you, a member of your family, a business partner or close friend will benefit financially or otherwise from this expenditure please give details below:

AAP Co-ordinator Signature

Date

Data Protection Act 2018

Durham County Council complies with all relevant statutory obligations. Personal information processed by the Council will be handled in accordance with the Council's privacy statement, which can be accessed here www.durham.gov.uk/dataprivacy.

If you have any concerns about how your data is handled, please contact either the Data Protection Officer at DPO@durham.gov.uk or the Information Commissioner's Office casework@ico.org.uk.