

CRITERIA FOR APPLICATIONS TO THE KINCARDINE AND MEARN'S AREA COMMITTEE BUDGET 2026/27

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY BEFORE COMPLETING YOUR APPLICATION

1. All proposals must be in line with the **Local Community Planning priorities** (summary below with full details on the OurAberdeenshire website: [Kincardine and Mearns Priorities – Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership](#))

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

Communities are empowered and supported to be resilient. They can influence decisions and cope with challenges, and build community capacity and wealth.

TRANSPORT

Communities can access reliable, affordable local transport. Enabling people to travel for work, education, health care appointments and for social connection.

EDUCATION AND LEARNING

People are encouraged to continue learning throughout their lives and to contribute to society.

K&M LOCAL AREA PLAN

Community Planning is about joining up the efforts and resources of Community Planning Partners to effectively deliver services that meet the needs of local people.

We support communities to envision and plan their way ahead through appropriate community led plans guided by Aberdeenshire Place Strategy.

MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH

With equal access to services and early intervention and preventative measures in place. We will encourage active lifestyles and combat social isolation.

We will work with 3rd sector and other partners to identify and fill gaps in provision and avoid duplication.

TACKLING POVERTY AND INEQUALITY

We look for innovative solutions and adopt a rights-based approach. Access to fresh affordable food and support for community growing is available to all. We will work to reduce the stigma associated with poverty and support all to live well within their communities.

THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Working in partnership we will inform and support communities to move towards a just transition and adopt relevant climate adaptation measure that will make them more resilient to climate change.

The budget should be used to enable the Kincardine and Mearns Area Committee to respond to local needs by supporting projects within its Area. Projects will be favourably considered if they have clear evidence of fit to the Community Planning priorities (above), or take cognisance of:

- Community Action Plans
 - Local Place Plans
 - Town Centre First approach
 - Council's Strategic Priorities: [Aberdeenshire Council Plan 2024 to 2029](#)
2. Under normal circumstances the maximum payment for any one project or initiative is **£2,000.00**.

3. The Area Committee Budget should, in normal circumstances, only be used as part of the wider funding package with a maximum contribution normally being (50%).

In-kind contributions may make up to 25% of a project's overall cost and should be included as a cost in your application. In some cases, calculating the value of in-kind contributions can be relatively simple, for example if it is the contribution of a piece of equipment. Other costs could be a little more difficult, for example, the value of volunteer time. Below is a table that indicates the standard rates, which should be used to calculate volunteer time.

| Type of voluntary/in-kind contribution | Per Hour | Per Day |
|---|-----------------|----------------|
| General, unskilled labour (for example, supervised scrub clearance, ditch-digging, planting, basic administrative support) | £13.45* | £107.60 |
| Specialist, skilled, trained labour (for example, operations for which certificated training is a requirement, such as operating dangerous equipment, driving off-road vehicles, using chemicals) | £18.75 | £150.00 |
| Specialist services, (for example, supervising, training labour teams, surveys, counts, trapping, ringing, diving, printing, designing, photography) | £31.25 | £250.00 |
| Professional services (for example, consultants, lawyers, planners, engineers, accountants, auditors) | £50.00 | £350.00 |

*The Real Living Wage in Scotland (from 1st April 2026)

4. The use of the Area Committee Budget is open to Council Services and constituted groups who can prove that a funding package is being assembled and cannot be met from normal budgets. Applications which are solely, or substantially, for individual benefit will not be considered.
5. The applicant must demonstrate that this is the final part of a wider funding package, and that the money will be spent and invoices provided by the end of February to allow for payment before the end of the financial year (31 March). This would not preclude an agreement in principle, earlier in the process, if that is of assistance to the applicant in attracting other funding. **Please do not apply for Area Committee Funding unless you are confident that you can work within this timescale.**
6. The Area Committee Budget may **not** be used to directly fund a continuation of a service or a grant which has been stopped or reduced as a result of budget savings agreed by the Council. It can, however, be used to facilitate the transfer of such service delivery or facility to the community or other third sector partner.

7. Funding for core activities such as staffing or overheads will not be eligible.
8. The Area Committee Budget will not commit the Council to recurring expenditure. Any proposal that has an implication on a Council revenue or capital budget will have this clearly identified.
9. Recurring annual costs of a group or event will not be supported. The following costs will be considered on a case-by-case basis:
 - a. Developmental costs of a new group that is being established with aims consistent with Council objectives - see (i) below
 - b. Setting up costs of a new event - see (i) below
 - c. Costs of a one-off event which is consistent with Council objectives
 - d. Event costs due to circumstances which could reasonably be considered as unforeseen – see (ii) and (iii)
 - i. An application would have to provide evidence of longer-term financial sustainability.
 - ii. Excludes cancellation, weather, poor planning and retrospective applications.
 - iii. An application would have to provide evidence that all other avenues have been exhausted.
10. All money awarded should be spent within the Kincardine and Mearns area though consideration will be given to projects based out with the area if they can demonstrate that they primarily benefit Kincardine and Mearns residents.
11. The Fund will close at the end of February to enable the end of year financial process to progress.
12. All applications must be agreed by the Area Committee, unless exceptional or time critical circumstances apply when the Area Manager may use delegated powers in agreement with the Chair and Vice Chair.
13. The Council is required to ensure that there is proper accountability for public funds used in delivering services. Therefore, in order to comply with the “Following the Public Pound” procedures applicants will be required to submit a copy of their most recent, independently examined set of accounts, a copy of their three most recent bank statements, and provide detailed information on any funds which have been ring-fenced for other projects. All information received may be considered in the decision-making process.
14. Payment will be made retrospectively on receipt of invoices or other confirmation that the money has been spent in accordance with the proposals applied for. Payment will be made by BACS transfer to a group’s bank account. Groups will be added to the BACS system, if not already included, on the award of any grant funding.

15. Grants should be claimed **within 6 months of award** and before the end of the financial year in which they are awarded. If out with this timescale a further application will be required if funding still available. A key factor in assessing applications as the financial year progresses will be the likelihood of funding being used.
16. Whilst groups can apply year on year for separate / different projects, where groups have been regular recipients of grant funds over a number of years, Officers may take this into account when considering an award.
17. Groups will be expected to provide regular feedback on progress to the Area Manager's Office, when requested. Successful applicants will require to complete a short feedback form on the project by no later than 31st March 2027.