CRITERIA FOR APPLICATIONS TO THE BANFF AND BUCHAN AREA COMMITTEE BUDGET 2026-2027

This document sets out the criteria against which applications to the Banff and Buchan Area Committee Budget 2026-2027 will be assessed. The budget is intended to support projects which provide a clear and demonstrable benefit to communities within the Banff and Buchan Area and which are consistent with the Committee's agreed themes, the Council's priorities and the principles of the Place Strategy. Applicants are therefore required to demonstrate that proposals respond to an identified need, will deliver achievable outcomes and represent value for money.

1. Projects must be aligned to **one (or more)** of the following Themes:

- Improving the appearance and maintenance of towns and villages within Banff and Buchan (for example but not limited to; community clean-up and maintenance initiatives, town centre enhancement, asset restoration or greenspace improvements)
- Stronger communities (for example but not limited to; volunteering opportunities or projects, community hubs, intergenerational activities, community activities or engagement work.
- Safer communities (for example but not limited to; improvements to public spaces, community-led safety initiatives, positive youth activity projects or improving community resilience)
- Supporting health and active communities (for example but not limited to; enhancement of walking or cycling routes, improvements to sport or recreational facilities, outdoor activity space and activity accessibility programming.)
- Tackling poverty and inequality (for example but not limited to; projects that improve access to food, address digital exclusion, employability & skills-based improvements, support access to essential services or improve support for vulnerable groups.

Projects must also be aligned to **at least one** of the Council Priorities (below) and support the delivery of the Place Strategy, contributing positively to the Place and Wellbeing Outcomes also listed below:

Council Priorities:

Pillar	Priority
Connected Communities	The project will work with communities and partners to enhance the sense of connection among places. This includes supporting communities to come up with innovative solutions to ensure our places are resilient and vibrant.
Living Well	The project will encourage and support residents to lead healthy and active lives, to contribute meaningfully to their communities and will be reflective of the needs of the ageing population.
A Sustainable economy	The project will support a strong and diverse economy by attracting people of working age to the region, complementing the highly skilled local workforce.

Place and Wellbeing Outcomes:

2. Groups can apply for projects that will improve the amenity or maintain the appearance of the village/town/community to which they are awarded. Broadly speaking maintenance covers such activities as:

   - Grass cutting, improving green spaces or other ongoing maintenance work, including that contracted out; or
   - Equipment for the undertaking of the same, including paint, or other materials for repairs.

3. The budget will contribute 100% of the first £1,000 with 80% of the remaining project costs up to a maximum of £2,500.

4. All money awarded must be spent within the Banff and Buchan Area.

5. Funding for core activities such as staffing, or overheads will **not** be eligible.

6. 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 "Follow the Public Pound" procedures applicants will be required to submit:

   - a copy of their Constitution or Memorandum and Articles
   - a copy of their most recent, independently examined set of accounts
   - a copy of their three most recent bank statements
   - evidence that the bank account has a minimum of two signatories
   - provide detailed information on any funds which have been ring-fenced for other projects
   - quotations for proposed works or goods
   - Insurance certificate

   All information received may be considered in the decision-making process.

7. Applicants will be required to provide information on related funding applications, whether they have been successful and, if so, how much funding they have received.

8. Groups are required to be properly constituted and submit a copy of their Constitution or Memorandum and Articles and any necessary and relevant qualifications, affiliations, and insurances.

9. Applications which are solely or substantially for individual benefit will **not** be considered.

10. Groups must be able to provide assurance that they will be able to complete their projects have receipts before **15 March 2027.**

    PLEASE DO NOT APPLY FOR FUNDING UNLESS YOU ARE CONFIDENT THAT YOU CAN WORK WITHIN THIS TIMESCALE.

    Groups will be expected to provide regular feedback on progress, to the Area Manager's Office, when requested.

11. Payment will be made retrospectively on the provision of invoices, receipts 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.

12. Applications for supporting core Council services will **not** be supported.

13. The use of the budget must **not** commit the Council to recurring expenditure or maintenance.

14. Successful applicants will be required to provide a short progress report after the funding has been received and the project is completed or well underway by **19 July 2027.**

The Committee will consider each individual application on its own merits, and Members may wish to consider applications which do not accord completely with the above guidelines. For example:

- Certain groups may not have been constituted for a long enough period to be able to provide copies of their accounts but, with the agreement of the internal auditor, may be able to be considered.

- Members may choose not to consider applications from groups who have had previous, recent funding from the budget, even although their project complies with the above criteria.