



Frequently asked questions

1 What is a Member?

South Gloucestershire Councillors are also referred to as Members.

2 Where can I get a Member Awarded Funding (MAF) application form?

You will need to discuss your project proposal with a Councillor who may invite you to apply to the scheme. You can find [contact details for councillors](#) on the [Member Awarded Funding](#) webpage. Your councillor can issue you with a MAF Combined Application and Authorisation form to complete or they may direct you to the Grants Helpline, 01454 865865, or grants@southglos.gov.uk to request one. Currently the form is available as a Word document and we would ask you to complete it in this format and not to convert it to a pdf document.

3 Can I apply for more than £3,000?

Yes, if your application is being presented to more than one Member.

4 Can Members combine their funds within a ward area?

Yes, they can as long as they are all in agreement.

5 Can more than one Member across ward boundaries support the same project?

Yes, if the project brings local community benefits to their residents.

6 Can a Member make an award to an organisation in which they have a formal role or sit on the management board?

Yes, but the South Gloucestershire Code of Conduct applies to Members when they act in their capacity as a councillor, including when taking MAF decisions. If any Member believes they may have a prejudicial interest in awarding funding to a particular body they should seek advice from Legal Services before doing so.

7 Can awards be made for more than one financial year?

Members can agree to fund a project for a year and may indicate an intention to fund the project for more than one year, but future funding cannot be guaranteed and is subject to the Council's annual budget decisions.

8 Can the funding be forwarded directly to the Town or Parish Council for award instead of being allocated to ward Members?

No, for two reasons. The first is that such an arrangement would not be legal as Councils cannot delegate decisions over the allocation of public money in this way. The second is that many of the purposes for which Members can allocate their funds would involve supporting activities provided by bodies other than the Town or Parish Council.

9 As MAF is a revenue budget can capital items be purchased?

Yes, capital items can be purchased up to £10,000.

10 Is there an appeals process?

No, there is no process for appealing against a Member's decision.

11 Can Members who are also Town or Parish Councillors give grants to their own Town or Parish council?

Yes, but the South Gloucestershire Code of Conduct applies to Members when they act in their capacity as a councillor, including when taking MAF decisions. If any Member believes they may have a prejudicial interest in awarding funding to a particular body they should seek advice from Legal Services before doing so.

12 Can a Member transfer their MAF budget to another Member to award on their behalf?

No, MAF awards are the individual responsibility of each Member. Members can combine their awards. When completing the authorisation form, the amounts to be deducted from each MAF budget must be clearly identified and endorsed by each contributing Member.

13 Is the MAF information available in other formats?

Yes, it is available in other formats, on request from the Grants Helpline.

14 Can MAF awards be used as the 10% contribution to secure funding from the Landfill Communities Fund?

Yes, if the project brings local community benefits and this can be evidenced by the organisation and justified by the awarding Member.

15 Are awards made under this scheme publically available?

Yes, all awards from 2013 under the schemes of Community Grants, New Homes Bonus, Positive Activities Subsidy (to 2015/16), 3 Year Grants and Area Wide Grants are published on the [Open Data webpage](#)

16 When do organisations need to register?

Registration to the Grants On-Line System can be done at any point. We ask that all organisations register with the system for payment purposes. If the organisation is not a Town or Parish Council or a registered charity, it will need to receive approval from the Grants Team of its registration before the award will be released. Members have access to the registration details via their read-only access to the on-line system, as registration details may support their award decisions.

17 Can projects be funded retrospectively?

No, projects cannot be funded retrospectively; refer to Restrictions and Exclusions within the Principles and Processes document.

18 What happens if an award is made but the organisation doesn't spend it or spends it on something else?

If a project does not go ahead, or the money is used for a purpose other than that originally agreed, the funding will need to be repaid by the organisation to the Council.

19 Where can I find out about Area Wide Grants?

Information is available on the [Area Wide Grants webpage](#).

20 Will organisations be able to see which Members have MAF funds available?

Yes, available MAF amounts for each Member are published on the [Member Awarded Funding webpage](#).

21 Are organisations obliged to identify how much cash they have as reserves?

Information on cash reserve amounts must be made available. For charities registered with the Charity Commission, reserve amounts must be published as part of their submission of annual report/accounts.

22 Can unspent MAF budgets be carried over or, if not, will they be lost?

Unspent revenue funds cannot be carried forward and will be returned to the Council budget.

23 Can Members fund an organisation that their children or family members attend eg Scouts or Youth group or community lunch club?

Yes, if the project is for the wider benefit of the organisation and not just for the specific needs and use of their children or family member.

24 Would the Council be able to give guidance to organisations on purchasing goods?

Organisations are responsible for the acquisition/purchasing of goods that are being funded under the MAF scheme. Some organisations may have a purchasing/acquisitions policy which they should be advised to follow. It is not the responsibility of the Council to advise organisations on the purchasing of goods.

25 Can Members fund schools?

No, because a school is not a voluntary, community or social enterprise group or a Town or Parish Council. However, awards may be made to a school's Friends' group or PTA as long as the Member does not have a formal role or sit on the management board of the organisation.

26 Can an organisation be paid even if they haven't been able to provide evidence of match-funding before the end of the financial year?

The award will be committed against the Member's MAF budget until evidence of match-funding is provided and before payment is made to the organisation.

27 Can Members award funds to a new organisation to help them get started?

Yes, but any new organisation would need to have set up a bank account to receive payment. The bank account must be in the name of the organisation. A personal bank account cannot be accepted. Organisations can request guidance from [CVS South Gloucestershire](#) on governance and policy development. Template policy documents for equality and diversity, and safeguarding are also available on request via the Grants Helpline. Also, approval of the organisations registration to the Grants On-Line System must be gained before payment can be processed.

28 Can Members set their own deadlines for the receipt of applications so that they can better review the needs of their ward?

Yes, Members can put in place their own management processes for the MAF scheme but any adopted management process must be in line with the Principles and Processes of the programme.

29 Can Members make MAF awards to an organisation/charity that another ward Member is a Trustee of?

Yes, but if there are family relationships between the Members, advice must be sought from Legal Services before a financial commitment is made. The Councillor's Code of Conduct applies to all MAF decisions.

30 Can Members award funds to a young person to undertake a particular type of training or challenge?

No. Members cannot fund individuals.

31 Can Members award funds to a Town or Parish Council which would then fund an independent Young Carers' organisation?

No, if the organisation was independent and the Town or Parish Council was making an application with an intention to then award the funding to the organisation this would not be permissible; Members cannot delegate decisions over the allocation of public money. If the organisation as a voluntary, community or social enterprise it could apply

directly to the Member for their project. However, if the Town or Parish Council manages/is responsible for the organisation, an application could be put forward by the Town or Parish Council for consideration.

32 Can an award be made if a Parish Council, outside of a Member's Ward, applies for MAF?

Yes, but the Member must be able to justify that the proposal will benefit residents in their own Ward.

33 Can an award made in one financial year be spent in the following financial year?

Yes, MAF awards made in the current financial year can be spent by the organisation in the following financial year as long as the award is spent within 12 months of payment, in line with the Terms and Conditions of award.

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