



Principles and Processes

1 Introduction

- 1.1 In February 2016 the Council resolved to replace the Community Grant scheme with a system of Member Awarded Funding (MAF). Under this system, Members are individually responsible for their decisions and the allocation of their MAF budget. In support of this, a number of basic principles have been agreed to provide a transparent, accountable, consistent and legal process to be adhered to. These are laid out below.

2 Funding

- 2.1 All South Gloucestershire Council Members have an equal revenue amount of MAF. There is no guarantee that the same (or any) budget provision will be available in subsequent years.
- 2.2 Members can opt to award all their annual MAF budget to one scheme/purpose or divide it amongst a number of schemes/purposes.
- 2.3 The minimum level of award is £250.
- 2.4 Members can combine their individual MAF budget with other Members at their discretion in order to provide greater support to a particular scheme/purpose in a given year.
- 2.5 Members can agree to fund a scheme/purpose for a year; and may indicate an intention to fund it on a recurring basis for more than one year. However, all involved parties must be aware that future funding cannot be guaranteed and is subject to the Council's annual budget decisions.
- 2.6 It is not permissible to carry forward uncommitted MAF amounts into the next financial year.

3 Exclusions and restrictions

- 3.1 The following exclusions and restrictions apply to the MAF scheme:
- 3.1.1 awards cannot be made during election or purdah periods
- 3.1.2 following an election, funds will be released after the confirmation of election results, and completion of enrolment (including induction); and will be subject to confirmation of the continuing availability of the MAF budget for that year.

- 3.1.3 where the election is as a result of a bye election, only the remaining balance of the Member's allocation for that seat for that financial year will be available to the incoming Member.
- 3.1.4 awards cannot be made to individuals.
- 3.1.5 awards cannot be made for political purposes or gain.
- 3.1.6 awards cannot be made that fuel or support any radicalisation/terrorist activity or to any proscribed organisations.
- 3.1.7 awards cannot be made retrospectively.
- 3.1.8 the spend of money awarded will be subject to audit.
- 3.1.9 if a scheme 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.

4 Use of Member Awarded Funding

- 4.1 MAF can be used in the following ways:
 - 4.1.1 to secure local delivery of additional non-recurring Council services where there is a localism element to delivery standards (ie to top up service provision for the current year), or to fund services during the year from other public bodies.
 - 4.1.2 as a contribution to, or as match funding for, local projects.
 - 4.1.3 as a non-recurring grant to voluntary, community or social enterprise (VCSE) groups or town and parish councils (reference principle 2.5).
- 4.2 For Members wishing to secure local delivery of a Council or public sector service (see 4.1.1) an authorisation form will be completed by the Member(s) with details of the service to be funded; justification; Council strategies; and whether Members are acting as a collective. This award will be published in the same way as funding awarded to any external group.

5 Applying for funding

- 5.1 All organisations must be registered to the Grants on-line system with approval received where appropriate; Members have access to this.
- 5.2 It is the responsibility of the organisation to maintain its registration details
- 5.3 Town and Parish Councils, public bodies, registered charities and South Gloucestershire Council services are deemed to be automatically approved for registration purposes unless specifically identified as not meeting appropriate standards of financial stability and probity.
- 5.4 Organisations seeking funding must contact/liaise with a Ward Member(s) in the first instance. If a Member agrees in principle to support a particular scheme the MAF on-line application form can then be completed by the organisation. The supporting Member's details (name and ward) must be given by the organisation as part of their application.

- 5.5 Schemes/purposes must demonstrate how they contribute to the priorities and aims within the Council Plan 2016/20.
- 5.6 Applications can be received at any point during the year and awards will be subject to the availability of MAF budgets.
- 5.7 Completed authorisation forms will be countersigned by the Ward Member(s) justifying approval (or rejection), for recording and processing purposes. If Members agree to combine their individual funds, an endorsement from all involved Members must be submitted to the Council's grants team in support.

6 Decision making

- 6.1 The South Gloucestershire Code of Conduct applies to Members when they act in their capacity as a councillor, and this includes 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.
- 6.2 There will be no process for appealing against a Member's decision.

7 Public record keeping

- 7.1 Information on approved or rejected applications by each Member will be published on the Council's website in order to meet the Council's legal obligations under the Local Government Transparency Code. This will include Members' justification of the award and any disclosable pecuniary or personal interest.

8 Payment

- 8.1 MAF payments will be made in advance of service delivery and within five to ten working days of the award notification, but are subject to:
- 8.1.1 if the money is match-funding for a larger project, proof of availability of the other funding must be supplied by the applicant to the Grants Team in advance of the award release.
- 8.1.2 if Members wish to allocate funding to an organisation which has not registered and received approval (where appropriate); the award will not be paid until the registration requirements have been met by the organisation.
- 8.2 the above two circumstances will be a condition of award.

9 Monitoring of delivery

- 9.1 Monitoring of service delivery will be undertaken by the Council's Grants Team on an annual basis.
- 9.2 The MAF process will be reviewed initially after a twelve month period and thereafter as appropriate with any changes identified and implemented as required.