Brighton & Hove
City Council

Brighton & Hove Discretionary Grant Programme
Vision, Criteria & Practical Examples

Vision

Brighton & Hove City Council recognises the value* of independent, not-for-profit community and voluntary sector organisations.

* Economic & Social Audit of the CV sector in B&H: Dialogue 50/50 Group

The discretionary grants programme demonstrates council commitments around delivery of open & effective leadership by investing in a vibrant third sector to help "citizens become more involved in their communities and participate in regular volunteering"*

* 'Our Corporate Plan 2008-11'

The vision is directly derived from "Our Corporate Plan 2008-11" and recognises the third sector's capacity to design & deliver high quality services efficiently & effectively (Economic & Social Audit of the CV sector in B&H: Dialogue 50/50 Group 2003 & draft 2008).

As such it embeds 'value for money' at the earliest stage of grant giving.

In addition the vision encompasses key cross-cutting themes for council around promotion of citizen participation through active volunteering (Local Area Agreement (LAA): Strengthening Communities 2008-11) alongside established & emerging priorities in terms of opportunity & engagement (Creating & City of Opportunities: 20/20 Community Strategy 2006-09 & Community Engagement Framework: Draft Sept 2008).

Brighton and Hove is the only authority in South East region to have adopted the 3 major LAA Strengthening Communities indicators NI 4: 'influencing decisions', NI 6: 'regular volunteering' & NI 7: 'thriving third sector'. The council is also one of only 18 Community Empowerment Champions nationally.

The vision acknowledges this status and seeks to ensure that council and our communities benefit from the opportunities ahead (An Action Plan for Community Empowerment: DCLG 2007).

Eligibility Criteria & Practical Examples

The vision for grants means that work of all organisations in receipt of discretionary grant aid will enable residents by promoting and supporting active engagement in community life. In addition there are four eligibility criteria that reflect key aspects of the council's corporate priorities. Successful grant applications must contribute towards at least one of the criteria:

(1) Protecting the environment while growing the economy

Preserving & improving our urban & natural environments, growing our economy & supporting people into work…

o   Improving the built or natural environment
o   Recycling / re-use projects, green fuel / affordable transport initiatives
o   Not-for-profit social / creative enterprise etc
o   Developing the skills of residents to enhance their employment prospects eg. volunteer training programmes or helping service users acquire new competencies or knowledge

Thereby prioritising actions to address, for example:
    o   Sustainability Strategy – Local Agenda 21
    o   Social Enterprise Strategy
    o   City Employment & Skills Plan
    o   Reducing Inequality Review

Criteria 1 enables activities that tackle poverty & address 'worklessness' by enabling those early, often low-level, interventions whereby the sector specialises in prevention of dependency and progression towards independence.

(2) Providing excellent cultural opportunities for all

"Promoting participation in cultural & sporting activities... expanding 'life chances', improving physical / mental health & enabling people to share in the city's life"

o   Community arts projects such as audience development workshops or performances
o   Community associations, centres & 'anchors'
o   Sports clubs, activity / recreational initiatives or social groups
o   Local history & heritage initiatives eg photo /oral archive, community museums / libraries etc

Thereby prioritising actions to address, for example:
    o   Active Living Strategy
    o   City Sports Strategy
    o   A Thriving Creative Ecology - A&CIU draft
    o   Community Development Commissioning Strategy

Criteria 2 is placed to maximise the sector's individual contribution to forthcoming 2012 Cultural Olympiad, LAA NI 11 "Engagement in the Arts", as well as new and emerging initiatives around asset transfer & community anchors.

(3) Making a city where people are safe & feel safe

"Encouraging 'responsibility'… delivering effective & accessible early interventions… involving communities in reducing crime & antisocial behaviour"

- o Responsible parenting, education or crime prevention initiatives
- o Provision of diversionary activities for those at risk of offending
- o Tackling domestic violence / substance misuse
- o Child protection awareness, supporting victims of crime etc

Thereby prioritising actions to address, for example:
- o Safe in the City - Community Safety, Crime Reduction & Drugs Safety
- o Youth Justice Team Action Plan
- o LGBT Strategic Action Plan
- o Neighbourhood Action Plans

Criteria 3 acknowledges targets identified in the Partnership Community Safety Team's Strategic Assessment and the sector's capacity to engage both communities of place and interest across the city in the delivery of effective interventions through diversionary activities etc.

(4) Reducing inequality by increasing opportunity

"Giving children the best start in life…providing excellent education for all, improving health …. working together to target the most vulnerable"

- o Pre-school / out of school activities, adventure pursuits for teenagers, health education & counselling support for young people
- o Social / support groups for communities of interest or identity eg. Black & minority ethnic, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender, younger, older or disabled people etc
- o Support for residents with physical or mental health difficulties
- o Advice services & centres

Thereby prioritising actions to address, for example
- o Children & Young Peoples Plan (currently under revision)
- o B&H Homelessness Strategy
- o Personalisation: Transforming Adult Social Care
- o Working Towards an Equal City: BHCC Equalities & Inclusion Policy

Criteria 4 recognises that deprivation can be widely dispersed across the city and that sector expertise can remove barriers by helping Brighton and Hove's diverse communities make their own different and valuable contributions to tackling disadvantage.