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**FOOD POVERTY FUND 2023 – 2024**

**Guidelines**

1. **About the Food Poverty Fund:**

Two Welsh Government funds, the Household Support Fund and the Direct Food Support Award, have been allocated, via the Welsh Local Government Association, to all Local Authorities in Wales. These funds are offered and administered by Neath Port Talbot Council as food poverty funding. Funds are distributed, via an application process, in order to assist those in our communities who are vulnerable and struggling with food poverty and insecurity. Applications are considered by a Fund Assessment Panel. The panel’s decision on applications is final and there is no appeal process.

1. **What is the grant funding criteria?**

To support people facing food poverty by:

* Strengthening/developing community food initiatives/schemes.
* Supporting activities that focus on addressing the root causes of food poverty.
* Underpinning the requirements of the Local Authority’s Wellbeing Policy, in particular with regard to supporting children at risk, focussing on vulnerable people and helping people age well.
* Helping to develop activities by local community groups, voluntary organisations and housing associations etc. to start up projects like social supermarkets, community cafes, lunch clubs and cookery classes.
* To develop and/or strengthen food partnerships with a view to creating sustainable local food schemes that could tackle food insecurity.
* To provide support for outreach work and volunteer training (around community food provision).
* To develop hubs, built around community food provision, in order to share a range of support services – debt, housing advice, holiday hunger schemes etc.
* To support community food organisations that are experiencing difficulties in operating effectively. This may relate to, for example but not limited to, expenses such as overhead costs, volunteer expenses or support to meet additional costs incurred as a result of increased demand such as those relating to additional deliveries.
* To provide organisations with some capital funding to spend on items such as, but not limited to, fridges, freezers and cooking equipment.

Local Authorities are encouraged to work collaboratively with a number of organisations across the sectors in order to maximise the impact of this funding for a sustainable, long term approach to community food resilience.

1. **Who is eligible to apply for the Fund?**
* All voluntary/community organisations that are constituted with a bank account in the name of that organisation (requiring at least two authorised signatures to access funds).
* Local charities and not for private profit organisations can apply.
* The Fund will not support statutory activity that should be financed by statutory agencies. Non-statutory activity, based on the prevention or alleviation of food poverty, however, is eligible for funding.
* Grants will not be awarded to private individuals.
* Schools will be eligible to apply for activities supporting the prevention or alleviation of food poverty.
1. **How much funding is available?**

The Household Support Fund plus the Direct Food Support Award allocated to Neath Port Talbot Council for 2023/2024 comes to £56,015. Within that total is an amount of £5,263 allocated for capital expenditure. The remaining amount is revenue expenditure.

The overall grant amount necessitates a cap being placed on individual funding awards and, as the year progresses, the capped amount may change depending on the remaining funds available.

Larger amounts of funding may be available where multiple organisations are looking to work together across different sectors or Local Authorities in order to develop and strengthen food partnerships with a view to creating sustainable food systems that help tackle food insecurity.

All details regarding funding amounts and how to apply will be advertised on Neath Port Talbot Council’s Website and promoted through NPT’s Social Media channels.

1. **What can and cannot be funded:**

Examples of eligible spend includes but are not limited to:

* Purchasing additional supplies of food and essential goods;
* Fareshare membership fees;
* Community growing/cooking projects where the aim is to tackle food poverty;
* Additional costs incurred as a result of increased demand;
* Costs incurred as a result of additional outreach work required, especially to reach the most vulnerable;
* Training for volunteers;
* Support for organisations that are experiencing difficulties in operating effectively. This may relate to, for example but not limited to, some overhead costs, volunteer expenses or support to meet additional costs incurred as a result of increased demand such as those relating to additional deliveries.
* Start-up costs for developing services around community food provision, such as:
* social supermarkets;
* community cafes;
* lunch clubs;
* advice services and hubs built around community food provision and/or signposting to agencies that can help with issues leading to food poverty;
* food partnerships, with a view to creating local food schemes that help tackle food insecurity.

Ineligible spend: this grant is unable to cover an organisation’s annual running costs and costs associated with its normal everyday business aims and objectives eg. staff costs, utility bills, insurance costs etc**.**

1. **Emergency funding:**

There is provision for grants to be made, in exceptional circumstances, on the grounds of urgency. The additional conditions a request must meet:

* The applicant must be able to demonstrate the urgent nature of the request and why it is not possible to use the normal application process;
* That emergency funding is able to be deployed in quick measure;
* That the emergency funding request is not something that was unsuccessful from a previous application.

Evidence of spend is still required to be provided and all monies not spent or accounted for will have to be returned to the Fund. Organisations will only be able to apply for urgent funding once, and no formal application is required but any request setting out how it clearly meets the criteria for this fund, as well as the additional conditions under the emergency funding procedure will need to be emailed to communityfoodconnections@npt.gov.uk however discussion with the Food Legacy Coordinator in the first instance is required.

Each request will be assessed on a case by case basis and emergency funding may cease at any time, depending on remaining funds available. The decision to award funding under the emergency procedure is entirely at the discretion of the Funding Assessment Panel.

1. **Application process:**
* Information regarding the fund will be announced via NPTC’s social media channels and advertised on NPTC’s website. Applicants can apply at any time. Emergency funding will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances (see point 6).
* Application forms can be downloaded from the NPTC website or are available by emailing communityfoodconnections@npt.gov.uk.
* Organisations can apply more than once as long as submissions are for different or complementary activities.
* Potential applicants are encouraged to discuss applications, prior to submission, with the NPT Food Legacy Coordinator communityfoodconnections@npt.gov.uk.
* All questions on the application form need to be answered and all supporting documentation that has been requested needs to be provided. Incomplete submissions will not be considered.
* The applicant has to declare that, to the best of their knowledge, the information contained in the application is correct and the person signing off the application is authorised to do so.
* Applications will be evaluated by an assessment panel. The panel’s decision is final and there is no appeal process.
* The applicant will receive the outcome of the assessment in writing via an email to the contact supplied on the application form.
* If successful, the applicant will be required to sign and agree Terms and Conditions which constitute an offer of funding, prior to initiating any expenditure.
* If the information offered in the application changes, the applicant must inform the Fund immediately.
* If funding is awarded, it is to be used only for the purposes stipulated in the offer letter. The Fund reserves the right to recover grant aid that is inappropriately used.
* The applicant will abide by the Terms and Conditions of the Fund. Any deviations to this agreement must be agreed with the Food Poverty Coordinator.
* All successful applicants will be required to complete a Funding Completion Report. This must be completed as soon as the grant has been spent. A blank Funding Completion Report will accompany the letter of acceptance and is also available to download on-line.
* Successful applicants will be required to provide evidence of their expenditure, all monies not spent or accounted for will have to be returned to the Fund.
* Each application will be assessed on its merits and fit with the funding criteria or an identified food poverty need.
* These Guidelines and the application form are available in Welsh.
* Successful applicants will need to spend their allocated funding by 31 March 2024.