

28 May 2025

Time	Topic and Purpose	Presenter(s)	Format	Time allocated
11.15am	Annual Plan The purpose of this session is to provide an opportunity to discuss the deliberations report being presented at the following day's Council meeting, and for Elected Members to ask staff any questions they may have.	James Clarke	Open	30 Minutes
11.45am	Interim Review of the Community Grants Policy The purpose of this session is to provide an opportunity to discuss the review of the Community Grants Policy as it is set to be reviewed after the first year of implementation and allow for Elected Members to ask any questions they may have. A motion was passed at the 1 April Community Grants meeting to have an information session before the end of May 2025.	Philippa Clear, Janet Carson	Open	30 Minutes
SESSION ENDS				

DISCUSSION TOPIC SUMMARY

Topic: Feedback on the new Community Grants Policy implementation

Business Unit/Group: Partnerships, Communication and Māori

Key Staff Contact/s: Philippa Clear, Sandra Larsen

Direction Discussion recommended? Status: Information Session

PURPOSE OF TOPIC/INFORMATION

1. Elected Members requested the opportunity to give feedback on the Community Grants Policy after the first year of implementation.
2. Staff will inform Elected Members on community feedback received regarding the Community Grants Policy.
3. Staff request direction from Elected Members regarding: the suggested policy amendments, and the timing of any such amendments (specifically whether these should be made now or in 2026, following the Community Grants Policy three-year review scheduled for October 2026).

WHAT KEY THINGS SHOULD MEMBERS THINK ABOUT/ CONSIDER IN UNDERSTANDING THIS INFORMATION?

4. The current Community Grants Policy was developed in 2022/23 following a full review of the previous policy and the community grants landscape, with the support of an Elected Member Working Group.
5. The updated Policy was approved during the Community and Natural Environment Committee in October 2023.
6. The Sub-Committee subsequently requested staff feedback on the policy after the first year of its implementation, and ahead of the three-year review.
7. In providing this feedback, staff consulted with community groups, alongside consultation with Council staff involved in funding and Elected Members.
8. Accordingly, this is not a full review of the Policy, however it is an opportunity to make interim amendments to the Community Grants Policy should Elected Members wish to.
9. The suggested amendments arise from the consultation and discussion with community groups, staff and Elected Members.
10. Elected Members could consider the following regarding the impact of the Community Grants Policy:
 - a. The effectiveness of the Policy in meeting the needs and demands of community groups.
 - b. The current time invested by Elected Members in the Grants Sub-Committee allocation meetings.
 - c. The distribution of budget across the three grant categories.

KEY SUMMARY POINTS

11. A 'Have Your Say' survey was sent to community groups who applied for funding in the 2024 Community Partnership Grants and Community Services Grants round.

12. Council staff involved in the funding process and Elected Members were also given the opportunity to provide feedback through this survey.

13. A summary of the feedback is outlined below:

1. What works well from the community group perspective:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Friendly staff provided helpful support and advice. Smooth application process, easy to complete and liked the drop-in sessions. The process of establishing the partnership agreement was easy with good working relationships.
2. Community group suggested improvements:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More support and advice on funding criteria and types of funds available. More clarity on key performance indicators and report deadlines. Presentations for the Partnership Grants were stressful, with insufficient time to convey their organisation's purpose to the Community Grant Sub-committee. Elected members could be more informed prior to presentations for the Partnership Grants, and mindful of speaker's nerves at the meeting. More understanding on how decisions are made. Shorter timeline between application being submitted and grant being paid.
3. Collated internal feedback on changes to the Community Grants Policy and grant processes:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide clarity around process for transferring budget between grant streams. If Council continues with presentations as part of the Community Partnership Agreements process the timeframe for presentations should be longer (maybe over two days) or take presentations out of the process and return to a full written application. Prior to the presentations, a list of questions to be given to all groups to help prepare. More information on each applicant to be given to Elected Members prior to presentations. Create clearer distinction of the criteria between the different funding rounds. Policy to state priority to support local community groups, ahead of national or out of town groups. Remove the months rounds are open from the Policy to allow Council more flexibility regarding community need and Grants Sub-Committee availability. Consider whether one off capital costs should be included in the Community Services Grant. Add Charities Registration as a compulsory requirement for Communities Services Grants. Provide further clarification in the policy for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The eligibility of limited liability companies to apply The exclusion of grant support for fundraising, including prizes, cost of raffle goods or any associated costs. What constitutes "Religious Ministries" Schedules outlining and differentiating the focus of each funding type.

14. This interim review allows an understanding of possible amendments to the Policy, ahead of the formal review date in October 2026.

15. In addition to considering the necessity of the suggested amendments, Elected Members may also wish to consider whether staff should: a) start the process this year or b) delay amendments until the scheduled review in October 2026, allowing staff to complete a fuller review, and the inclusion of wider community and internal Council feedback.

16. It should be noted that some of the suggested amendments could be temporarily managed without Policy amendments, by adjusting communication with community groups/applicants, and providing additional information in internal reporting as required.
17. Amendments to the Policy can be made outside of the review date, with a requirement for staff to present the proposed changes to the Community and Natural Environment Committee for approval. The decision would then need to be ratified at a Council Meeting.
18. Possible amendments have been developed based on feedback received, with changes relating to the overall criteria and to the individual grant schedules as below:

Suggested changes to overall criteria in the Community Grants Policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include the requirement for the Grants Sub-Committee to approve by resolution any recommendations regarding budget transfers across grant streams • Clarify priority given to funding local groups • Add further information clarification of what constitutes costs associated with fundraising • Clarify what constitutes religious ministry as per Charities definition

Suggested changes to the grant schedules within the Community Grants Policy		
Community Partnership Grant	Community Services Grant	Community Initiatives Grant
Increase clarity to schedule regarding criteria and purpose of each fund		
Add further clarification regarding whether limited liability companies are eligible to apply.		
In 2026/27 either allow more time for group presentations or revert to a full application process for allocation.	Change schedule to note round is open once per year, remove month noted	Change schedule to remove months that the rounds will be open
	Amend to clarify capital project funding for one year only.	
	Amend to include applicant groups are required to have Charities Services registration.	

WHERE CAN MEMBERS FIND MORE INFORMATION?

19. [Community Grants Policy](#)
20. [HCC Community Funding webpage](#)
21. [Related Strategies and Plans](#)

WHAT DIRECTION/FEEDBACK/INPUT DO YOU NEED FROM ELECTED MEMBERS

22. Staff are requesting direction from Elected Members regarding:
 - a. Presenting amendments to the Community and Natural Environment Committee for enacting in 2025; or
 - b. Delaying any amendments until the planned review in October 2026

23. If Elected Members are requesting amendments are presented prior to the planned review, staff would like to know if there are other amendments that Members would like considered.

19 March 2025

Community Grants Policy Amendments



Purpose of Briefing

- Provide Elected Members with a summary of feedback received following the first year delivering the current Community Grants Policy
- Present possible Policy amendments that could be considered
- Seek feedback from Members regarding the timeline of considering the possible amendments



Community Grants Policy

- In 2022/23 the HCC Community Assistance Policy was reviewed.
- An updated Community Grants Policy was developed and adopted by Council in October 2023.
- The Community Grants Sub-Committee requested feedback be sought from stakeholders after the first year of implementation (ahead of the scheduled October 2026 three year review).
- Staff developed a survey and invited 69 relevant community stakeholders and 13 internal stakeholders to give feedback over a two-week period.
- Twenty-four community responses were received plus three responses from internal stakeholders.



Key points from Community Feedback:

- HCC staff provided helpful support and advice.
- Application process was smooth, easy to complete.
- More clarity was needed on reporting regarding key performance indicators and deadlines.
- Presentations to the sub-committee were stressful due to time restrictions.
- Additional information could be provided to Members prior to the presentations.
- Better understanding on how decisions are made would be of value.
- A shorter timeline between application being submitted and grant payment is requested.



Key points from Internal Feedback:

- Clarity is required regarding the transfer of funds between grant streams.
- If presentations continue as part of the Community Partnership Agreement (CPA) allocation process:
 - Allow more time for the presentations
 - Have a pre-set list of questions for all groups presenting
 - Give Members more information on each applicant prior to presentations
- Return to a full application process for CPA applications.
- Create more clarity between the types of HCC funding available.
- Adjust the policy to allow Council more flexibility regarding dates for funding rounds.
- Clarify some criteria within the Policy to better support applicants understanding.
- Consider including one-off small capital requests in the Community Services Grants (CSG).



Possible Amendments to Overall Policy Criteria:

Clarify:

- Priority to local groups
- Exclusion of fundraising costs
- What constitutes religious ministry

Add:

- Requirement to include in reporting to the Grants Sub-Committee recommendations regarding budget transfers across grant streams

Possible Amendments to Grant Schedules:

Clarify across all schedules:

- Criteria and purpose of each fund
- Eligibility of Limited Liability Companies

Community Partnerships Grants:

- Extend time allowed for presentations or remove from assessment process

Community Initiatives Grant:

- Remove months round is open

Community Services Grants:

- Remove months round is open
- Change to one round per year
- Clarify capital project funding
- Add Charity Services registration as a requirement



Next Steps

What additional amendments should staff be considering?

Should the amendments be made prior to the October 2026 review date?