

## **Summary of Q&A Element of Funding Information Session**

**Held online on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> January**

### **Local Enhancement Programme (LEP) & Community Awards Scheme (CAS) 2026**

This document highlights the key points and clarifications arising from the Q&A session on the Local Enhancement Programme (LEP) and the Community Awards Scheme (CAS).

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#### **General Principles (Wicklow County Council)**

- Wicklow County Council (WCC) aims, where possible, to provide some level of funding to all eligible applications.
  - Receipts, photos, declarations must be submitted in a timely manner as if not groups will be precluded for grants in 2027. 2025 applicants with outstanding documents will be precluded from 2026 LEP grant.
  - Groups may apply to LEP & CAS schemes and any other grant schemes, but double funding is not permitted for the same project element. Different aspects of a project may be applied for under different schemes e.g. cannot be paid twice for the one item.
  - Groups are encouraged to engage early with Wicklow County Council, submit complete applications, and seek support where needed to maximise their chances of securing funding.
  - Groups without access to a computer or word processing software can use local library facilities for applications.
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#### **Local Enhancement Programme (LEP)**

**Important clarification regarding the timing of equipment purchases under the LEP:**

**Q. Is it permissible to apply for funding for projects that were completed or equipment that was purchased prior to the Department announcing successful projects under LEP 2026?**

**A.** No. Costs incurred prior to the Department announcing the list of successful projects are not eligible for payment under the Programme. This includes works that were completed or equipment that was bought where the invoice date pre-dates DRCDG's announcement of successful projects.

**Overview**

- **Capital funding only** (e.g. equipment, facilities, physical assets please see guidelines on line)
- **Maximum grant:** No max or minimum grant.
- **Total fund for County Wicklow:** €199,043.66
- **Closing Date:** Friday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2026

**Application Process**

- **Applications should be submitted early to allow time for validation.**
- Validation requires a fully completed application with all relevant documentation.
- If an application is validated, the group should secure funding, although the amount is not guaranteed.
- Grant amounts depend on:
  - Number of applications received
  - Amounts requested
- The Government must approve the distribution before grant allocations are announced. Items to be funded under the grant can not be purchased before the Department announcing the list of successful applications.

**Project Planning & Priorities**

- Groups are encouraged to break applications into smaller, prioritised items.

- Priorities should be clearly listed on the application form.
- If funding allows, WCC may fund second or subsequent priorities.
- If a grant only partially covers the cost of an item, the group must have additional funding in place to complete the purchase and be able to claim the grant as receipt and photo is required.

### **Disadvantage Criteria**

- The definition of disadvantage is broad.
- Communities may be supporting different forms of disadvantage depending on local context.

### **Quotes & Purchasing**

- Three quotes are required.
- If three quotes cannot be obtained, one or two quotes required or written proof that quotes were sought from one or two suppliers must be provided.
- Quotes can be sourced online, by email, or via websites.

### **Administration & Contact Details**

- A bank account is required (cheques will no longer be issued; EFT only) if you have a post office account please ensure they can accept an eft and if not a bank account will be required.
- Postal address must be active and capable of receiving deliveries e.g. post box.
- Email address must be regularly checked and emails need to be replied to.
- Save phone number 0404 20100 as Wicklow County Council to avoid scam concerns.
- Groups will receive reminders if documentation (e.g. quotes) is missing if no response received you will be precluded from the next grant scheme.

### **WCC LEP Contact Details:**

- Email: lep@wicklowcoco.ie

- Phone: 0404 20208

### **Support Sessions**

- **Arklow form-filling support session** on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> January in Arklow library from 5 – 7.30pm. Booking is helpful and drop ins are welcome. This is a valuable opportunity to receive assistance and ensure applications are complete.
  - Groups may also make appointments to meet the team at the County Buildings ring 0404-20208 for an appointment.
  - Use contacts details above for the LEP team
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### **Community Awards Scheme (CAS)**

**Further details on this Scheme will be circulated in the coming weeks.**

### **Overview**

- Capital and current/running costs are eligible
- Maximum grant: €1,000
- Due to the expected high number of applications, individual grant amounts are likely to be lower.
- Quotes are required for capital element same as LEP is applying for current expenditure make contact with WCC if quotes are required before applying.

### **Application Window**

- **Open:** Mid-February
- **Close:** Mid-March

### **Administration Requirements**

- A bank account is required to accept eft payments for payment of grants.
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