



Implementing an External Funding Strategy

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- WDC has a good track record in applying for external grants with in excess of £14.6m awarded since 2016 – 2019 with some £2.4m currently applied for and awaiting outcome.
- Successful grant applications are spread across WDC Service Areas – with housing, infrastructure, sports and leisure attracting the biggest grant awards.
- A recent survey provided feedback from Council officers and gave a useful insight into the current status and issues related to the development of initiatives and funding applications.
- Officers are generally supportive of the need to source external grants – but highlighted the need for a clear project and bid preparation process and the importance of better resource allocation to encourage more bids and raise success levels.
- An online external funding information hub using the Council's intranet as a platform will keep officers up to date with external bid activities, raise awareness of grants available, and provide access to a resource toolkit.
- A Grant Resource Toolkit will include a grant preparation flowchart, a funding database, a project grant register, a data and evidence repository, project and bid templates.
- The Council should consider subscribing to one of the online grant databases, following a demonstration of usability and a trial which will assess value for money.
- Bid-writing requires a particular skill set and experience to ensure project bids are well-written, meet funding criteria, include necessary evidence, and are submitted within deadlines. In-service training should be offered to encourage staff development in this field.
- Where possible, projects should be 'grant-fed' rather than 'grant-led' to ensure that projects fit with Council and Service Area priorities and can be serviced with existing resources.
- External bid writers should be considered when short notice funding call deadlines are announced to avoid excessive short-term pressure on officers' busy schedules.
- Implementation of the External Funding Strategy will create a more cohesive and positive approach within the Council to funding, and also provide a framework to engage with and support partners to deliver externally funded projects.

2. PURPOSE OF AN EXTERNAL FUNDING STRATEGY

Warwick District Council - at councillor and officer level - is determined to go well beyond its legal responsibility for statutory provision. Instead it wishes to capitalise on the assets of mid-Warwickshire – its location, its environment, its history, its culture, its enterprise and above all its people and create a great place to live and work.

The main purpose of an External Funding Strategy is to lever additional revenue into the Council - which in turn will maintain and expand the public services offered for the benefit of residents and businesses across Warwick District and counterbalance the continuing reduction in central government funding. Grants will assist the Council to deliver its central 'Fit for the Future' vision amidst a challenging economic landscape. Grants can also be utilised to support innovative, discretionary services aimed at improving people's lives, their environment, health, well-being and prosperity.

To maximise externally-sourced revenues, it will be necessary to initiate a clear, informed and coordinated process for project development, grant prospects and external bid writing. An External Funding Strategy should identify the necessary resources – internal and external – that facilitate grant applications. It should provide the essential strategic and funding source information in a managed and accessible on-line format. It should provide access to an up-to-date funding database. It should establish and maintain a record of grant bidding and include feedback and lessons learnt. The External Funding Strategy should facilitate the development of strategic partnerships with local and regional organisations including community and business groups to maximise grant opportunities.

There will be circumstances e.g. when ad-hoc bid calls are announced, when the Council may decide to take an 'opportunistic' approach to project funding. However, in these less planned scenarios, bid applications should only progress with senior officer approval, care should be taken to ensure strong evidence of need, sufficient rigour with regard to risk and viability is applied, and additional resources allocated, as well as an acceptance of the impact on existing priorities.

A fully co-ordinated external funding approach should:

- raise awareness of available and suitable grants amongst teams
- support the development of creative and innovative projects
- encourage collaboration with other service areas and external partners
- facilitate the sharing of lessons learned from failed project bids
- enhance WDC officer capacity for project development and bid preparation
- build a much closer match between project initiatives and funding criteria
- provide a lead for community organisations in developing and accessing funding
- improve partnership working with other organisations outside of the Council
- deliver additional services to residents, businesses and local organisations

3. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Implementation of the External Funding Strategy will create a more cohesive and positive approach within the Council to funding, and provide a framework to engage with and support partners to deliver externally funded projects.

The outcomes from this Strategy should ensure:

- a co-ordinated, strategic and informed approach across the Council
- bids and services are complementing each other, and create better value
- a higher quality and standard of applications will be submitted to funders
- early identification of issues associated with Service Area proposals e.g. legal, procurement are raised ahead of bid application
- transparency and information sharing across Council Service Areas
- greater awareness amongst senior management, Executive and Members of project initiatives, funding bids, successful awards and project impact

4. BACKGROUND TO THE STRATEGY

Warwick District Council is strongly committed to providing the very best public services for its residents and businesses – and ensure that Warwick District remains one of the country's most desirable places to live, work and visit. To mitigate against further reductions in funding from central government and to ensure that public services are maintained and where possible improved, the Council has adopted an ambitious Fit for the Future (FFF) programme – funded largely via the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) along with local Section 106 contributions, the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and the New Home Bonus for one-off items.

The Council recognises that additional sources of funding will be needed if it is to service and where possible extend the FFF ambitions. According to the Directory of Social Change¹, there are real opportunities for councils to access some of the £8bn of external funding available (2019) and specifically £2.4bn of funding from government sources.

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy define external funding within the local authority context as:

“Discretionary money not accounted for within the Formula Spending Share or equivalent, distributed by various UK and EU agencies on a business case and/or competitive basis requiring an application”

Whereas central funding is realised through a range of statutory processes, external funding is increasingly required to introduce innovation and infrastructure, improve the health and wellbeing of local residents and address some of the social inequalities which exist at local level.

¹ Funding Online ~ <https://www.dsc.org.uk/funding-websites/>

External funding is allocated on a predominantly competitive basis from European, national and regional bodies and requires a different approach by councils to raising revenue – one adopted successfully by universities as they too have had to adapt to a reduction in government funding. This requires councils to increase their activities for project generation and prepare robust bids in order to secure additional funds needed to finance local infrastructure, transport and community initiatives.

This is in the context of the financial challenges facing local councils in 2019 – balancing annual budgets, maintaining capital reserves and implementing savings. There are increasing reports of councils being forced to make cuts to ‘non-essential’ public services i.e. those over and above the legal obligations that councils must meet.

The Local Government Association reported recently² that by 2020 councils will have faced a reduction of core funding from the Government of nearly £16bn since 2010 - a loss of 60p in every £1. There are 168 councils, including Warwick District Council, who will receive no revenue support grant at all in 2019. A recent survey by the Local Government Information Unit (LGIU)³ suggested 95% of local authorities planned to increase council tax in the 2018-19 financial year with almost 66% having dipped into their capital reserves.

Warwick District Council intends to be in a strong position to take advantage of regional, national and (currently) European funding. It recognises in its Fit for the Future Programme⁴ the need to do things differently attract and attract additional income to meet those ambitions:

‘To balance the budget, operate efficiently and to make our assets work for us. It is important that our staff review the way we do things, find efficiencies, cost savings and generate income to help us to work within our budgets’.

To deliver this successfully, operational systems must be in place and council officers must be well-resourced, trained and incentivised. It should be acknowledged however that when internal resources are limited or when short notice calls from funding organisations are announced then the services of external bid writing specialists will be required to secure grants where resources allow.

5. OFFICER REVIEW AND FEEDBACK

Warwick District Council has a strong track record of being innovative and successful in attracting external funding (see Section 6) – even without a formal strategy. Such success is the result of the initiatives originating within Service Area and Senior Executive teams, and the hard work of its officers in developing successful bid applications.

² <https://www.local.gov.uk/moving-the-conversation-on/funding> July 2018

³ <https://www.lgiu.org.uk/news/2018-state-of-local-government-finance-release/> February 2018

⁴ Fit for the Future WDC~2010

One of the tasks undertaken when reviewing the Council's approach to external funding was to canvass responses from Council officers in order to gain a better understanding of the existing approach to external project preparation and bid writing. The key objectives of the survey were:

- to identify areas of good practice within service areas
- to determine the challenges officers experience
- to understand what support is required to improve performance

Responses from the questionnaire forms an important baseline for the External Funding Strategy. In summary, the officer questionnaire revealed:

- there was general agreement across Council service areas of the need for an external funding strategy to be designed, resourced and implemented
- a number of service areas already report a proactive approach and keep records of bids whether successful or otherwise
- bid applications are often complex: experience is often needed to interpret what information is required
- there is a need for training amongst officers for bid preparation and writing
- it would be beneficial to create an "External Funding Toolkit" including a checklist and flow chart which would help officers to follow a set process and easily access information
- access to a funding database would enable matching of projects with appropriate funding
- there is often a shortage of officer time available to commit to preparing funding applications, especially when there is a need to react with short notice to an application deadline
- a co-ordinated approach to external funding would avoid duplication of effort and enable officers to share opportunities, data and best practice
- the introduction of an external funding lead officer would assist greatly in identifying potential funds and putting together applications

This officer feedback reinforces the need for a clear strategy to be developed and implemented across the Council. This should identify a transparent project development process, develop a bid preparation toolkit, provide a database of external funds, establish an evidence repository, and highlight the resources needed to support robust project bids using internal and/or external inputs.

6. WDC EXTERNAL FUNDING TRACK RECORD

As part of the External Funding Strategy development, the WDC External Funding Lead Officer has opened a Project Grants Register (Appendix 2) which will align with the Council's annual revenue accounts. This Register will be monitored by the External Funding Group (EFG). It will record all successful grant awards and basic information about the grant and grant provider. It will also include bids that have been unsuccessful and those pending. The Register will be an important addition going forward. It will include reasons why bids failed and capture any important 'lessons learned'.

The summary below of external funding applications over the last three years (2016-19) showed that the Council has been active in bid submissions, achieving more than 60% of the total grant applied for.

Total successful funding requests ₁	£14,597,640
Total unsuccessful funding requests ₂	£ 7,039,701
Total pending funding requests (2019)	£ 2,339,166
Total external funds applied for	£23,976,507

It should be noted that:

1. The figure for successful grant applications includes £9.591m grant from the Housing Infrastructure Fund in 2017 i.e. 66%. This demonstrates the importance of the Council engaging in large grant schemes as the cost of project preparation and bid writing can be better justified.
2. This figure includes an unsuccessful bid for £5.5m to DCMS Cultural Development Fund for the Creative Quarter in 2017. This demonstrates the impact that this can have on planned project delivery – and should be used as a case study to suggest why the bid failed.

The detailed analysis (Appendix 2) shows a spread of funding applications across all Service Areas – although actual award amounts differ in that grants are often unevenly applicable and the size of grants is dependent upon government priorities, funding criteria and project demands.

7. TOOLS AND RESOURCES

A more co-ordinated approach, by utilising the internal resources that the Council already has, would ensure bids align with our priorities and objectives. It would also mitigate the risk of duplicating bids and minimise the negative impact of one bid on other Departments.

Having an External Funding Strategy provides a background, justification and process for increasing the external revenues to the Council. However it will be important to ensure that WDC Officers have the tools available to deliver the Strategy. An external funding toolkit should be made accessible via the online External Funding Information Hub.

This will be a vital component of the Strategy and encourage information sharing and partnership working across Council service areas. It will be based on the Council's online intranet platform - and managed by the External Funding Lead Officer. This will enable the sharing of best practice, mitigate the risk of bid duplication and encourage cross-Council cooperation. The online Information Hub will include:

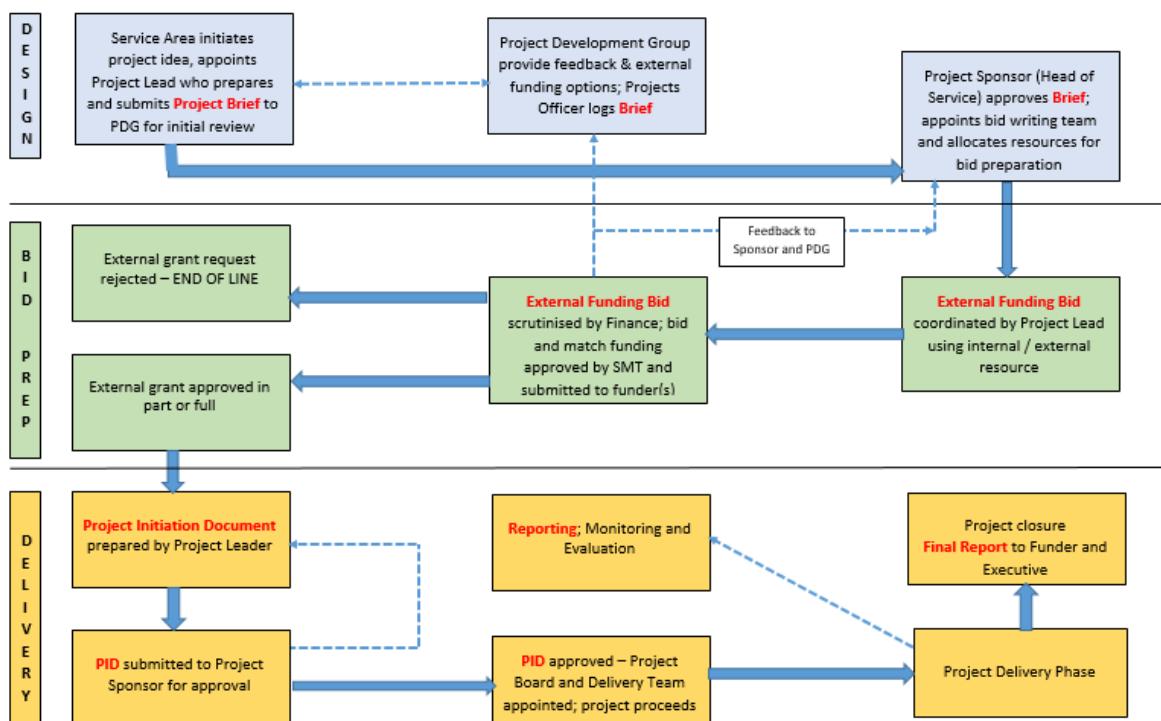
- **Flowchart** – a visual protocol to identify the process from project idea, sourcing of suitable grant sources, preparation of a funding application, gaining internal approval, securing match funding, project delivery and reporting (see Section 8 below).

- **Funding database** – providing access to external funds both through a regular monthly update of key funding opportunities by online alerts through the Information Hub, and via access to a commercial funding database.
- **Project grant register** – a listing of projects with funding organisations applied to, grant requested, bid results, feedback from funders, lessons learned. This can serve as a project tracker and be used to inform Key Performance Indicators and create reports.
- **Information and data repository** – an easy access resource base to include WDC and other key strategy documents and bid templates along with evidence and data required for project applications.
- **Capacity building opportunity** – notification of staff development opportunities (including online learning) to develop skills in project initiation, evidence gathering and bid preparation leading to increased confidence and capacity within Service Areas.

8. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND BID PROCESS

One of the repeated feedback comments from WDC officers was that they would find it beneficial to have access to a checklist and flow chart that would enable officers to follow a formal process from project development through to bid preparation and leading to successful project delivery.

The project development flowchart below (and Appendix 1) has been proposed to clarify the process for WDC Service Area teams to follow when they wish to promote a new initiative that requires an external funding contribution. The flowchart refers to a number of steps, documents and gateways taking the project from an initial idea through stages of bid development, delivery and completion.



Step 1 – Project ideas will come from WDC Service Areas as they seek to develop their priorities, add value to existing services or create innovative, discretionary services. Ideas for projects should come forward at regular Service Area monthly meetings. Other project priorities will be generated by the Senior Management Team (SMT). For each initiative requiring an external funding contribution, a Project Brief should be prepared and submitted to the External Funding Group (EFG) by the Project Sponsor (usually Head of Service). The EFG will provide feedback and suggestions of suitable funding organisations and schemes.

Step 2 – The Project Sponsor will appoint a Project Lead and support team and will allocate resources for writing the application (internal and/or external).

Step 3 - The Project Brief moves into the bid writing stage responding to the application criteria issued by relevant funding organisation(s). Most funders provide an application template – either as a 2-stage process (Expression of Interest followed by Full Application) for larger bid requests, or straight to a full application for smaller projects. The bid writing may be carried out by the Project Lead and service area colleagues or external bid writing services may be contracted.

Step 4 – Prior to submission, the Project Sponsor submits the grant application to the Senior Management Team for financial scrutiny, allocation of match funding and ‘sign off’ with approval to submit to the funding organisation. The grant application may be returned to the Project Sponsor and Project Lead for adjustment if/as required.

Step 5 – Many funding organisations will indicate the time they will require to make a decision on the application. Project bids will be approved or rejected: it is uncommon for bids to be returned for re-working due largely to the time required and over-demand for grants. If the bid is rejected then the Project Lead should request feedback from the funder where this is possible.

Step 6 – Once approved, the project moves into its delivery stage. The Project Sponsor will establish a Project Board and the Project Lead becomes responsible for preparing the Project Initiation Document (PID summary – see Appendix 3). A Project Manager and delivery team is appointed.

Step 7 - The Project Manager will report regularly to the Project Board who will in turn inform the Council Executive of progress, risks, issues and outcomes. The project culminates in a Final Report with achieved outputs and outcomes delivered both to the funding organisation and Executive.

9. EUROPEAN UNION FUNDING

Despite the uncertainty related to Brexit and the likelihood that the UK will at some future date be leaving the EU, councils and other organisations will still be eligible to apply to European funding programmes until it officially leaves the EU. According to the Local Government Association (LGA), £8.4 billion was allocated to councils through the European structural funds for the period 2014-2020.

To mitigate against this loss of EU regeneration funding, the UK Government has promised to set up a UK Shared Prosperity Fund⁵ to replace the European Structural Investment Funds (ESIF). After

⁵ <https://www.ippr.org/research/publications/regional-funding-after-brexit>

Brexit, the UK will need to continue to give targeted support and investment into regions with lower levels of growth and higher levels of poverty, or it risks worsening the geographical divide. There is a great deal of uncertainty however as to how and when such replacement funds will become available – nor whether this will be accessible for Tier 2 councils such as WDC. The External Funding Group will need to maintain a close watch on developments, and provide regular updates via the Income Maximisation Board to the SMT.

10. RISKS

Deployment and delivery of a successful External Funding Strategy can bring significant benefits to the Council and to the residents, community organisation and businesses across the District. However, the Council should be aware of the risks and pitfalls that can appear as a result of deploying the Strategy. These are not intended to deter such a programme – merely to highlight that project development and bid writing is not straightforward and has consequences! The main risks and mitigations are:

Risk	Mitigation
External funding applications can divert resources from delivering the core business of the Council.	Funding bids should focus upon projects that are in line with Council strategies and Service Area priorities.
Increased funding activity can create unrealistic expectations amongst Councillors, officers and the public.	Only those project initiatives that meet grant criteria and match Council priorities should be pursued. Communicate and inform regularly.
Opportunities for funding can ‘tempt’ bids that are over-ambitious or unrealistic to deliver.	External Funding Group can provide oversight / advice to Project Sponsors. Gateways should be in place to halt unsuitable bidding.
Non-compliance with funding organisation terms and conditions – and especially those projects involving EU regulations and guidance - can lead to further work to rectify issues.	Early and regular communication with the grant funding organisation to establish reporting and grant claim protocol. Close scrutiny by Council legal advisers prior to grant acceptance.
Claiming and monitoring mechanisms and processes can be bureaucratic and complex.	Good project management procedures in place. Involvement of WDC finance and procurement officers within project delivery teams.
Funding organisations sometimes insist on higher or more expensive standards that do not reflect local need or priorities.	Careful review of grant criteria and expectations ahead of bid application and submission. Review of contract ahead of grant acceptance.
Time and resources can be wasted on unsuccessful bids.	Match grant to initiative, not the other way around! Invest in building internal staff capacity to ensure quality of grant applications.

Accessing external funding is demanding in terms of staff skills and resources especially where short term bid windows are presented.	Employ specialist bid writers where Council resources are limited, or where application deadlines are tight.
Projects can fail! There is a risk that in such cases, funds can be clawed back if the project fails to achieve its objectives, or does not meet its agreed delivery schedule.	Appoint Project Manager who is aware of expected outputs, outcomes and delivery schedules, is able to maintain records, risk and issue registers and can communicate effectively with grant funders and project stakeholders.

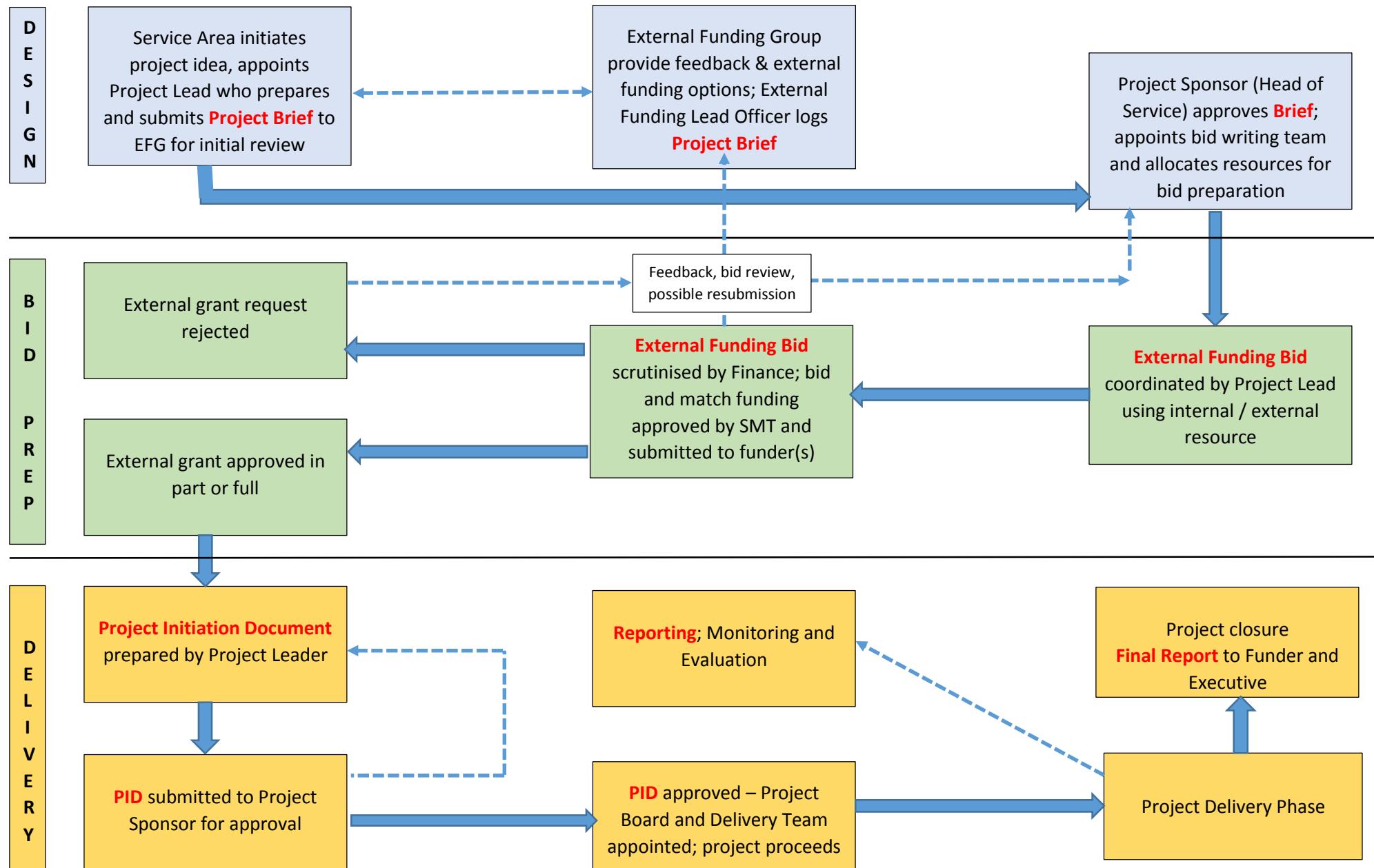
11. CONCLUSION

Warwick District Council has been successful over recent years in attracting significant revenue streams via external funding (Appendix 2). This is in spite of the lack of a formal External Funding Strategy. However, it is reasonable to challenge whether more could be achieved by asking some key questions:

- Have grant funding opportunities been missed – and if so, how can this be avoided in future?
- Do officers have the opportunity to share good ideas, access grant information and cooperate in developing projects and funding bids?
- How can the standard and quality of the Council's grant funding applications be improved and resourced to achieve a good success rate?
- Should the Council build internal bid-writing capacity through officer training – or is this best contracted out?
- Can more be learnt from unsuccessful bids via feedback from funders and sharing of lessons learnt?
- Do grant applications ensure that project delivery costs e.g. staff time, are built in to the budget and can be recovered?
- Are the consequences of successful bidding accounted for within financial, legal, procurement and administrative schedules to avoid hold ups or grant return?
- Are elected members aware and informed of the Council's success in attracting grants and their value and impact upon the delivery of Council services?

The implementation of a formal External Funding Strategy will respond to the questions above, and provide Council officers and members with a structure and process designed to increase the level of external grant funding available.

APPENDIX 1 – PROJECT DEVELOPMENT FLOWCHART



APPENDIX 2 – WDC GRANT REGISTER 2016-19

Successful Project Bids										
Service Area	Fund	Funder type	Amount	Purpose of grant	WDC sponsor	Date grant approved	Application in file?	Partner in bid?	Money received	Notes
Green Spaces	Friends of Czech Fountain		£12,500	Donation towards refurbishment of fountain	D Anderson					
Green Spaces	HLF lottery funding	National Charity	£995,600	Refurbishment of Pump Room Gardens including bandstand						Grant expiry date is 31/03/20
Sports	Sport England		£2,000,000	Phase 1 Leisure Centre refurbishment (Newbold Comyn and St Nicholas)	P Herlihy			No		£12million cost total project - this funding was a contribution
Arts	Paul Mellon	National Charity	£24,000	Art related support for Royal Pump Rooms						
Housing	Housing Advisers programme		£28,000	Developing a student housing strategy	K Bruno	2017/18	No	No	Yes	
Housing	MHCLG	Govt	£772,907	Rough sleeping initiative 18-20	C Lancaster	May-18	No	No	Yes	Money to be paid yearly
Housing	MHCLG	Govt	£1,323	Cold weather funding	C Lancaster	May-19	No	No	Yes	

Successful Project Bids										
Service Area	Fund	Funder type	Amount	Purpose of grant	WDC sponsor	Date grant approved	Application in file?	Partner in bid?	Money received	Notes
Economic Development	HS2 Business & Local Economy Fund	Govt	£74,500	KTC for the 'Kenilworth is Open for Business' programme of works to mitigate against the impact of HS	S Laxton					
Development Services	Homes England : Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) – Marginal Viability Fund	Govt	£9,591,000	Kenilworth Education & Growth. Contribution towards new £51m, 2,200 pupil Kenilworth School to release the school's 2 existing sites for housing and help deliver the Local Plan and Development Brief for Kenilworth	A Cornfoot	Aug-17			Successful (but 1 year, 8 months later WDC does not yet have receipt of any of the money)	
Development Services	LGA Experts programme		£7,000	Consultancy procurement for an income generation/savings project	E Hirons	Jan-18	Yes	Yes		

Successful Project Bids										
Service Area	Fund	Funder type	Amount	Purpose of grant	WDC sponsor	Date grant approved	Application in file?	Partner in bid?	Money received	Notes
HCP	Food Standards Agency	Govt		Funding to support health authorities	L Hudson	Dec-18	No	No	Yes	Timelines for invoice and internal finance arrangements not compatible
HCP	Armed Forces Day Fund	Govt	£810	Armed Forces Day Fund	B Allen	Apr-19	No	No	No	To be claimed on completion
Neighbourhood Services	HLF lottery funding	National Charity	£1,000,000	Restoration of the Pump Room Gardens	R Poulton	2015	No	No	Ongoing	Complexity of process and level of support documentation required
Neighbourhood Services	SUEZ Communities Trust	Private	£30,000	Rejuvenation of Avonside Play Area	R Poulton	2016	No	No	Yes	
Neighbourhood Services	SUEZ Communities Trust	Private	£60,000	Save Our Skatepark project (Victoria Park)	R Poulton	2016	No	No	Yes	Time paperwork required for size of projects
TOTAL 2016 - 2019			£14,597,640							

Bids in Progress / Pending 2019							
Service Area	Fund	Amount	Purpose of grant	WDC sponsor	Date grant approved	Application in file?	Notes
Cultural Services	CWLEP	£2,269,161	Improvement works to the bowling greens in Victoria Park for the Commonwealth Games, and improvements to the wider park area	Paddy Herilhy	TBC	n/a	External bid writer contracted
HCP	Armed Forces Covenant	£70,000	Positive Pathway Project	Bernie Allen	TBC		
TOTAL PENDING 2019		£2,339,161					

Unsuccessful Grant Applications								
Service Area	Fund	Amount	Purpose of grant	WDC sponsor	Grant rejected	On file?	Partner in bid?	Notes
HCP	DEFRA Air Quality Grant	£128,500	To fund 4 air quality projects and a project manager for 2yrs	M Rolfe	Mar-19	yes		Bid qualified for panel review but not approved at this stage
Projects	Channel 4	EOI stage	Channel 4 relocation programme for a Creative Hub for Leamington.	G Collier	May-18	yes		
Projects	CWLEP	£1,200,000	Court St development (Over the Line) as part of the Creative Quarter programme.	G Collier	Aug-18	yes	No	
Projects	DCMS Cultural Development Fund	£5,400,000	Deliver capital and revenue projects across the Creative Quarter	G Collier	Aug-18	yes		Need for more effective engagement with funders and more focused approach with greater detail prepared.
Economic Development	CWLEP	£100,000	Supporting contribution to WCC's Bid to CWLEP Open Call for station forecourt / underpass/ wayfinding	S Laxton	Aug-18			Needed to link back the criteria more strongly/in greater detail. Provide more match funding.
Development Services	DCLG Planning Delivery - Design Quality Fund	£50,000	Grant money sought to commission specialist design guidance to be included within the East of Kenilworth Development Brief SPD.	A Cornfoot	Jan-18	No		Also, required to fund master planning work on the two Kenilworth School sites
Housing	MHCLG	£111,201	Private sector rented access	C Lancaster	Dec-18	No	SDC	
Housing	LGA	£50,000	Building council homes programme	C Lancaster	Jan-19	No		
Housing	MHCLG	?	Rapid Rehousing	C Lancaster	Mar-19	No	SDC	
TOTAL		£7,039,701						

APPENDIX 3 – INCOME MAXIMISATION PROGRAMME

A 3-year Income Maximisation Programme (IMP) has been set up by the Council to deliver the objective of raising revenue outside of central government and council tax mechanisms. External grant funding forms a key part of the Programme – and the development of an External Funding Strategy will encourage Council activity and success in what is becoming a more competitive bid market for external funds.

The objectives of the Programme are:

- to identify new methods of generating income for the Council
- to ensure that these methods align with the Council's corporate priorities
- to allow the Council to consider how it wishes to change service delivery in light of opportunities that will generate new types of income
- to establish the level of resource and financial implications needed for delivery of the programme

Senior Management Team

To ensure an increase in successful external funding bids, SMT will need to:

- acknowledge the risks and responsibilities when taking on commitments with external funders and include within a Projects Risk Register as appropriate
- ensure sufficient capacity within Service Area teams to develop project outlines via the Council's project initiation process – PID
- decide when there is the internal capacity available for bid writing – or whether it is necessary to contract and fund an external bid writing specialist to meet tight deadlines
- receive and scrutinise grant applications (justification; strategic fit; business case) prior to confirming match funding and approving bid submission

Service Area Teams

These teams are critical to the flow of ideas and initiatives that target improvements within their respective service areas. Teams will:

- identify priority areas which would benefit by or be achievable through additional funding
- allocate responsibilities including the Project Sponsor, Project Lead and project delivery team to progress each initiative
- provide outline briefs for selected projects through their respective representative on the External Funding Group

External Funding Group (formerly Project Development Group)

The EFG has been brought together to provide a mechanism that will improve and facilitate externally funded projects. Chaired by the Council's External Funding Lead Officer, the EFG contains a representative from each Service Area, including Finance.

Other officers e.g. IT, procurement, planning, will be invited on an ad-hoc basis where their engagement is helpful to a particular project or bid proposed. There may be times when representatives of organisations from outside the Council may be invited when a partnership project and bid has been put forward.

The EFG will:

- assist service area colleagues in the identification of future projects
- provide timely and regular signposting when new funding opportunities arise
- advise SMT when and if ad-hoc funding calls are realistic and achievable to ensure only high quality applications, which meet Council priorities, are submitted
- recommend when and where external bid writing support may be required

External Funding Lead Officer

The External Funding Lead Officer has been appointed to coordinate and deliver the Income Maximisation Programme, and will oversee the External Funding Strategy. In addition she/he will:

- maintain an external funding database and signpost new funds
- maintain a project activity record and report back
- regularly update the online project funding site
- co-ordinate the External Funding Group

APPENDIX 4 - PROJECT BRIEF (TEMPLATE)**Outline Project Proposal Sheet for External Funding**

Project Title:	
WDC Service Area:	
Project Sponsor:	
Project Lead (PL):	
PL Contact email:	
PL Contact phone:	
Date of Submission:	
Project Title:	
Project Description: (100 words max)	
Main project objectives: (3 max)	
WDC Priorities / Strategies: Include Fit for the Future Table of Impact (attached)	
Estimated Project Cost (capital):	
Estimated Project Cost (revenue):	
Funds available - internal WDC (amount and source):	
Funds required - external (amount and source):	
WDC External Funding Lead Officer - Ref and Action:	

APPENDIX 5 - FIT FOR THE FUTURE TABLE OF IMPACT (TEMPLATE)

WDC Fit for the Future Strands		
People	Services	Money
External		
Health, Homes, Communities	Green, Clean, Safe	Infrastructure, Enterprise, Employment
Intended outcomes:	Intended outcomes:	Intended outcomes:
Impacts of Proposal		
Internal		
Effective Staff	Maintain or Improve Services	Firm Financial Footing over the Longer Term
Intended outcomes:	Intended outcomes:	Intended outcomes:
Impacts of Proposal		

APPENDIX 6 - PROJECT INITIATION SUMMARY

Project Initiation Document – part of the Toolkit!

A document that:

- defines the project and its scope
- provides justification for the project
- identifies fit with Council and other regional and national strategies
- outlines the benefits and beneficiaries
- confirms internal / external funding sources
- defines roles and responsibilities
- provides an activity schedule for delivery
- sets milestones and gateways
- determines the ‘What? Why? Who? How? When?’



Project Initiation Document - Sections

Stable	Dynamic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background • Relationship to Corporate Strategy • Project Definition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Project Objectives ◦ Desired Outcomes ◦ Defined Method of Approach ◦ Project Scope ◦ Project Deliverables ◦ Exclusions and Constraints ◦ Relationships with other projects ◦ Assumptions ◦ Success Criteria ◦ Project Controls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Case • Project Plan • Risk Register • Issue Log • Project Quality Plan • Communication Plan • Project Organisation Structure



Note: Reference should be made to the full WDC Project Initiation Document Template which should be completed and submitted to the Project Board for approval, once funding has been secured. Project mobilisation and delivery follows this approval.

APPENDIX 7 – BID WRITING TIPS

The Bid Writing Challenge – developing a process

1. Prepare a Project Brief with focus upon priority addressed
2. Determine the need for the project
3. Engage with stakeholders and beneficiaries
4. Develop the evidence base and a needs analysis
5. Identify suitable funders
6. Gain approval to progress the bid
7. Follow the bid rules and criteria
8. Identify outputs, outcomes and impacts required
9. Calculate Return on Investment (financial / social)
10. Monitor bid submission deadlines
11. Check, double check, submit, evaluate



Winning the Bid – 10 Checks

1. Is the bid written assertively – and uses confident words?
2. Does the bid ‘stand out’ amongst others received?
3. Is the proposal imaginative / original / innovative?
4. Does the bid include a strong business case?
5. Does the bid take account of local, regional, national strategies?
6. Has simple and clear language been used; jargon and buzz words avoided?
7. Has the application marking scheme been checked?
8. Will the final draft of the bid be proof read and scored internally?
9. Has the submission deadline been double checked – and met?
10. Have all necessary documents been attached or enclosed?



APPENDIX 8 - EXTERNAL FUNDING SOURCES SUMMARY

The External Grant Environment 2019

- **Lottery grants** e.g. National Lottery; Peoples Postcode Lottery
- **Government schemes** e.g. Better Homes; DCLG; DCMS.
- **Community grants** e.g. Landfill Trusts and charitable trusts
- **Economic and Business Growth** e.g. Local Enterprise Partnership / Growth Fund
- **EU programmes** e.g. ESIF, ERDF
- **Special events** e.g. Commonwealth Games; Coventry City of Culture; HS2
- **Heritage and Tourism** e.g. Heritage Lottery Fund
- **Arts and Creative Industries** e.g. Arts Council
- **Transport and Environment** e.g. OLEV; HS2
- **Health and Well-Being** e.g. Sport England; Health Lottery



Other project finance routes - loans and contributions



- **Developer contributions** e.g. Section 106; Community Infrastructure Levy.
- **Company sponsorship** – direct or through business organisations e.g. Chambers of Commerce; Business Improvement Districts (BIDS); Business in the Community (BIC).
- **Loans** – increasing sources of Government or commercially supported finance e.g. PWLB; Big Society Capital; Charity Bank.
- **Crowd Funding** – pledge-based funding schemes e.g. SpaceHive community



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