

# Councillor Discretionary Funds

## Guideline

Local governments can include funds in their budgets for the discretionary allocation by councillors for community purposes. These funds are called “councillor discretionary funds”.

### Notification of Discretionary Budget

Within 20 days of adopting a budget, local governments must publish on their website, and display in a visible place in their public office, a notice advising:

- the total amount of councillor discretionary funds budgeted for the financial year
- the amount of councillor discretionary funds allocated to each councillor for the year
- that community organisations may apply for allocation of the funds
- how community organisations can apply for funds.

### Use of Discretionary Funds

Councillors may use their discretionary funds in any of the following ways:

- to spend on a community purpose
- to allocate for capital works by the local government that are for a community purpose
- to allocate to a community organisation (a group or individual whose primary object is not to make a profit) for a community purpose.

Where a councillor wants to allocate some of their discretionary funds to a community organisation, the councillor must do so only for organisations that have applied as required by the availability notice and in accordance with the requirements of the local government’s community grants policy.

### Capital Works

Where a councillor intends to allocate some of their discretionary funds for capital works, the councillor must seek the approval of the mayor and the chief executive officer (CEO). Mayors must seek approval from the deputy mayor and the CEO.

When considering whether to approve a proposal to allocate councillor discretionary funds for capital works, the mayor, deputy mayor and CEO must consider how the proposal fits in with the local government’s corporate plan, long term asset management plan and annual budget.

### Local Government Elections

During the period starting on 1 January 2024 and ending at the conclusion of the local government quadrennial election, councillors must not allocate money from a councillor discretionary fund to a community organisation for a community purpose, or for another community purpose.

Councillors, can, however, allocate their discretionary funds for capital works of the local government that are for a community purpose in the period starting on 1 January 2024 to the conclusion of the 2024 election.

Discretionary funds that were allocated before 1 January 2024 in accordance with legislative requirements may be distributed during the period starting on 1 January 2024 to the conclusion of the 2024 election.

### **Reporting to the Community**

Within seven days after an amount has been allocated from a councillor's discretionary fund, the councillor must give the CEO a notice stating the amount, date and purpose for which the money was allocated, and the name of the person or organisation receiving the allocation. The CEO must publish the notice on the local government's website within seven business days of receiving the notice from the councillor.

The local government is also required to list details of all grants to community organisations from councillor discretionary funds in its annual report for the financial year.

### **More Information**

For more information contact your regional office of the Department by phone on 13 QGOV (13 74 68).