

TITLE: Local Infrastructure Fund and Inclusive Play and Open Spaces Grant Fund Criteria

Committee: Finance and Assets Committee

Date: 26 March 2026

Author: Community Infrastructure Manager

Report number: AA170

Contact officer: Lucy Flintham

Community Infrastructure Manager

Lucy.flintham@eastcambs.gov.uk, 01353 616303, Room 11, The Grange, Ely

1.0 Issue

- 1.1. To consider the eligibility and scoring criteria for two new CIL grant funding schemes.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1. Members are requested to:

- i) Approve the scheme eligibility criteria for the Local Infrastructure Fund in Appendix 1.
- ii) Approve the scheme eligibility criteria for the Inclusive Plan and Open Spaces Fund in Appendix 2.
- iii) Agree that the funding schemes will open on 13 April 2026 with no close date set at this time, however projects will need to be completed by March 2028.

3.0 Background/Options

- 3.1. The funds have been set up following Council approval at its meeting on 24 February 2026. The funds are targeting local infrastructure and inclusive play and open space projects that could be finding the current eligibility criteria to restrictive.
- 3.2. Approved schemes will be funded from the District Wide Community Facilities fund (which could be topped up using the 'other' fund if oversubscribed) and the Inclusive Play & Open Spaces fund.
- 3.3. A targeted promotional and engagement plan will be implemented to maximise uptake and enable applicants to deliver projects that benefit local communities at pace and in budget.

4.0 Arguments/Conclusions

Eligibility criteria

- 4.1. In both Funds the criteria for proposed projects will be considered with regard to the following criteria:
 - Evidence that the project is necessary to support local growth

- Evidence of local resident and stakeholder involvement in, and support for, the project
- The level of match funding has been secured at a minimum of 10%
- Commitment to Net Zero Carbon and a green approach, demonstrating the highest possible quality standards in terms of design, materials, workmanship and environment in its delivery in order to achieve sustainability

4.2. There are also some scheme unique criteria being as follows:

Inclusive Play and Open Spaces

2.1. Evidence that an inclusive play audit or needs assessment has been undertaken to ensure the project will meet the required outcome

Local Infrastructure Fund

- Projects should be of a strategic nature and have a minimum cost of £50,000

4.3. The ability of the applicant to deliver the expected benefits on time and within budget will also be considered.

Application Process

4.4. The fund will open for applications from 13 April 2026. Applicants will be required to complete an applications form and submit supporting evidence. A minimum of 10% match funding is required.

4.5. Applications will be assessed by the Director Community and Community Infrastructure Manager, and a recommendation presented to Finance & Assets for approval.

5.0 Additional Implications Assessment

5.1 In the table below, please put Yes or No in each box:

Financial Implications No	Legal Implications No	Human Resources (HR) Implications No
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) No	Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) No	Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) No

6.0 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Local Infrastructure Fund eligibility criteria

Appendix 2 – Inclusive Play & Open Spaces eligibility criteria

7.0 Background documents

Council – 24 February 2026 (Agenda Item 14)

Local Infrastructure Fund

East Cambridgeshire District Council recognises the importance of community facilities to support residents and foster sustainable communities.

The Local Infrastructure Fund has been set up to provide local organisations access to Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding to deliver infrastructure for their community required as a direct result from local growth.

What types of project are eligible?

CIL regulations state that funds must be spent on 'infrastructure necessary to support growth'.

Projects should either provide new facilities or create additional capacity to meet the needs necessary to support growth of the community.

Examples of eligible projects include:

- community centres or village halls
- multi-purpose community sports and leisure centres
- play facilities and open spaces, not including upgrades to aid accessibility, please see Inclusive Play and Open Spaces Fund

What isn't eligible?

Projects related to District Wide Health Care Improvement/Provision and District Wide Water Management and Flood Prevention and projects specifically named in the Council's CIL Infrastructure List are not eligible for this scheme. CIL funding applications for these projects should be made via the CIL Expression of Interest form

Proposed projects will be assessed on the following criteria:

- Evidence that the project is necessary to support local growth
- The benefits provided by the project
- Evidence of local resident and stakeholder involvement in and support for the project
- The level of match funding that the project has been secured
- Commitment to Net Zero Carbon and a green approach, demonstrating the highest possible quality standards in terms of design, materials, workmanship and environment in its delivery in order to achieve sustainability
- The ability of the applicant to deliver the expected benefits on time and within budget.
- Project must be completed by March 2028.
- Projects should be of a strategic nature and have a minimum cost of £50,000

Applications can be made at any time. Applicants will be required to complete an application form and submit supporting evidence. A minimum of 10% match funding is required.

Applicant organisations must have a constitution, or set of rules, which define its aims, objectives and operational and governance procedures

Support will not be given to or for:

- Projects not related to growth
- Minor repairs, maintenance, redecoration, fencing and movable equipment items
- Routine operating costs or other revenue expenditure

AGENDA ITEM 9 - APPENDIX 1

- Projects on which work has already commenced
- Infrastructure located outside East Cambridgeshire, even if used by East Cambridgeshire residents

Questions for application form/to be scored

Pass/Fail – all answers must be yes

- Project is necessary to support growth and complies with CIL regulations
- The funding requested is for capital expenditure
- The applicant organisation meets the published eligibility criteria
- The project is located in East Cambridgeshire
- The application complies with Subsidy Allowance Legislation
- A minimum of 10% match funding has been secured
- Minimum project cost of £50,000

Questions to be scored out of 5:

None = 0 points

Negligible = 1 point

Limited = 2 points

Some = 3 points

Substantial = 4 points

Exceptional = 5 points

- Evidence that the project is necessary to support growth
- Details of community benefits provided by the project
- Evidence of local resident and stakeholder involvement in, and support for, the project
- Commitment to Net Zero Carbon and a green approach
- Deliverability - ability of the applicant to deliver the expected benefits on time and within budget
- The level of match funding that the project has secured

Scoring out of 5 for the level of match funding that the project has secured:

11-19% = 1 point

20-29% = 2 points

30-39% = 3 points

40-49% = 4 points

50%+ = 5 points

If the project meets the stated criteria and scores 50% or over of the total available points, a recommendation to fund that project will be presented to the Council's Finance and Assets Committee.

AGENDA ITEM 9 - APPENDIX 2

Inclusive Play and Open Spaces CIL Fund – Grant Criteria

East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC) recognises the essential role of play in child development and the importance of creating opportunities for outdoor play that can be accessed

The East Cambridgeshire Inclusive Play and Open Spaces CIL Grant Scheme has been set up to provide capital funding towards projects that ensure playgrounds are accessible to children of all abilities.

Proposed projects will be assessed on the following criteria:

- Evidence that the project is necessary to support local growth
- Evidence of an inclusive play audit or needs assessment
- The benefits provided by the project
- Evidence of local resident and stakeholder involvement in and support for the project
- The level of match funding that the project has been secured
- Commitment to Net Zero Carbon and a green approach, demonstrating the highest possible quality standards in terms of design, materials, workmanship and environment in its delivery in order to achieve sustainability
- The ability of the applicant to deliver the expected benefits on time and within budget.
- Project must be completed by March 2028.

Applications can be made at any time. Applicants will be required to complete an application form and submit supporting evidence. A minimum of 10% match funding is required. The amount of grant awarded will be relative to the level of growth in the parish/town/city.

Applicant organisations must have a constitution, or set of rules, which define its aims, objectives and operational and governance procedures

Support will not be given to or for:

- Minor repairs, maintenance, redecoration, fencing and movable equipment items
- Routine operating costs or other revenue expenditure
- Projects on which work has already commenced
- Infrastructure located outside East Cambridgeshire, even if used by East Cambridgeshire residents

Questions for application form/to be scored

Pass/Fail – all answers must be yes

- The funding requested is for capital expenditure
- The applicant organisation meets the published eligibility criteria
- The project is located in East Cambridgeshire
- The play area/open space been subject to an inclusive play audit or needs assessment
- The application complies with Subsidy Allowance Legislation
- A minimum of 10% match funding has been secured
- Does application include or have at least 3 quotes been sought, from different suppliers.

AGENDA ITEM 9 - APPENDIX 2

Questions to be scored out of 5:

None = 0 points

Negligible = 1 point

Limited = 2 points

Some = 3 points

Substantial = 4 points

Exceptional = 5 points

- Evidence that the project is necessary to support growth
- Details of community benefits provided by the project
- Evidence of local resident and stakeholder involvement in, and support for, the project
- Evidence of need from inclusive play audit
- Commitment to Net Zero Carbon and a green approach
- Deliverability - ability of the applicant to deliver the expected benefits on time and within budget
- The level of match funding that the project has secured

Scoring out of 5 for the level of match funding that the project has secured:

11-19% = 1 point

20-29% = 2 points

30-39% = 3 points

40-49% = 4 points

50%+ = 5 points

If the project meets the stated criteria and scores 50% or over of the total marks available, a recommendation to fund that project will be presented to the Council's Finance and Assets Committee.