



## Chorley Council Employment Support Fund

We are excited to launch our new Community Employment Support Grant scheme and are inviting partners and organisations to apply. The funding is provided by the UK Government as part of the United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).

This is a one-off grant fund programme which builds on our core delivery and will enable Chorley to further enhance and sustain their delivery, react to the current challenges our communities are experiencing and help in providing services that support our residents.

In total, £35,000 is available and we will award individual grants of between £5,000 and £8,000.

Please read the criteria below to ensure your organisation and project meets our expectations so you can receive this funding:

### What is the funding for?

Funding is available to support initiatives under the following UKSPF intervention – E13 “Supporting people to progress toward and into employment”. These grants are designed to support residents 18+ toward and into employment. The funding is designed to deliver and enhance employment support.

The grant scheme will be an open competitive process. Projects must support the work the council has already undertaken and deliver outcomes that react to the pressures our residents are experiencing. Successful projects should be innovative and creative, addressing local needs and clearly demonstrating the difference the project will make to local people. Bids may address gaps in services or complement and enhance any existing offer. We want to build on known successes so will consider supporting activity that has already proved to add value.

Value for money will be a priority assessment criterion for all submissions. Additionality is key and funding must not be used to displace existing or committed funding. It's about helping residents to grow, understand and be in a better position to work. Applicants will need to show they can deliver a lasting legacy for our residents, enhancing the life of people in Chorley and supporting better outcomes.

Applicants must also be compliant with the UK Subsidy Control regime - [UK subsidy control regime - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/uk-subsidy-control-regime) - and all public sector support received over the past three years will be considered. Organisations already exceeding public subsidy thresholds will be ineligible for funding.



Alongside the overarching goals of the UKSPF programme, applicants must demonstrate how their application enhances the life of people in Chorley and supports better outcomes by meeting one or more of the local priorities below:

- Improving Employability Skills
  - Deliver digital skills training for job seekers (e.g., using online job platforms, office software, professional online profiles).
  - Run intensive 'work-ready' bootcamps focusing on CV development, interview techniques, and communication skills.
  - Develop a volunteering pathway that provides participants with multiple opportunities to gain important skillsets to improve employability.
- Giving the Unemployed a Voice
  - Conduct research (e.g., focus groups, surveys) to better understand the barriers faced by unemployed residents in Chorley.
  - Develop a storytelling project (e.g., video, podcast, blog) that allows unemployed residents to share their experiences and skills.
- Upskilling with Qualifications
  - Provide accredited training that creates a direct pathway into specific local job sectors (e.g., social care, hospitality, logistics).
  - Offer training and qualifications in skills for green industries (e.g., domestic energy efficiency, retrofitting, environmental conservation).
- Building Confidence for Employment
  - Deliver group coaching sessions designed to build self-esteem, resilience, and a positive mindset for the job search.
  - Run workshops focused on developing personal branding, networking skills, and how to effectively 'pitch' skills to employers.
- Mentoring Young People (NEET)
  - Establish a 1-to-1 mentoring programme that pairs young people (18-24) not in education, employment, or training (NEET) with a professional from a local business.
  - Organise a series of industry insight days or workplace visits to introduce NEET young people to different career opportunities.

## What will your project deliver?

Each project must demonstrate how it meets the aims of the funding programme and contributes to the key outputs and outcomes of UKSPF. **These may vary between projects but must include the output and outcome numbered '1', alongside one or more of the other outputs/outcomes defined below.**

Output	Definition
1. Number of people reached and/or supported.	Number of people directly impacted by the UKSPF intervention. The definition of direct impact will vary across interventions
2. Number of workshops supported/created.	<p>The number of new workshops created or improved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Workshop means any service offered to support residents in a physical location</li> <li>- 'Created' means the workshop did not previously exist.</li> <li>- 'Improved' means adding, supporting or refreshing with the aim of creating better support offers.</li> </ul>
3. Number of local events, activities, participatory programmes delivered.	<p>Number of events and/or participatory programmes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Events include but are not limited to: digital skills, bootcamps, focus groups, training.</li> <li>- Participatory programmes mean the delivery of outreach and engagement events to support residents seeking employment or working towards employment.</li> </ul>
4. Number of volunteering opportunities supported	<p>Number of organised volunteering roles supported as a direct result of the intervention. This includes opportunities for people to volunteer on a regular basis, and opportunities for one-off volunteering.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Formal volunteering refers to those who have given unpaid help via a group, club, or organisation: for example, leading a group, administrative support or befriending or mentoring people.</li> </ul>
5. Reporting Insights	<p>An end of funding report that pulls together information and understanding gathered through the duration of the delivered intervention, and presents these insights in the form of either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A written report</li> <li>• A presentation</li> <li>• A video</li> <li>• A podcast</li> <li>• A portfolio of case studies</li> <li>• An exhibition and/or celebration event</li> </ul>

Outcomes	Definitions
1. Improved perception of employability	The number of individuals who report their perception of their employment opportunities as good or very good. As this is aiming to measure change, it will only be relevant where the user could score it previously. Measurement should directly relate to the perception change through the UKSPF project. Reporting will also allow the option to report a decrease metric if applicable.
2. Increased users of workshops	The increase in number of users of workshops “Users” are the people using workshops.
3. Improved engagement numbers	The increase in number of individuals engaged in the activity during the funding period. Engagement can include physical and digital engagements. What is classed as the 'local area' where events are recorded should remain consistent throughout the collection e.g., should not include/exclude events in neighbouring locations which were excluded/included in previous returns. Reporting will also allow the option to report a decrease metric if applicable.
4. Number of volunteering opportunities created	The number of organised volunteering roles created as a direct result of the intervention. This includes opportunities for people to volunteer on a regular basis, and opportunities for one-off volunteering. - Formal volunteering refers to those who have given unpaid help via a group, club, or organisation: for example, leading a group, administrative support or befriending or mentoring people.
5. Reporting Insights	An end of funding report that pulls together information and understanding gathered through the duration of the delivered intervention.  The report must contribute to developing a deeper understanding of the factors relating to unemployed adults. This can include amplifying their voice through consultation, focus groups, interviews and showcasing their achievements, or data driven approaches that use monitoring and assessment tools with users.



## **Eligibility Criteria**

To be considered for a funding award, applicants must:

- Be based in the borough of Chorley.
- Be a registered charity, voluntary, community, faith, or social enterprise sector group/organisation, Community Interest Company or Limited Company.
- Organisations must have a bank account registered to their group or organisation.
- Be able to start delivery by 29<sup>th</sup> September 2025.
- Be able to complete your project by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026.
- Ensure that your project addresses one or more of the key priorities of the fund.
- Ensure the project is based on local need.
- Demonstrate the positive impacts which will be delivered by the project.
- Funding will not be awarded to cover any retrospective spending.
- The council must be satisfied that the applicant has the necessary expertise and resources to see the project through to successful completion.
- Grants are not generally available to fund permanent staff positions, but consideration will be given to maintain some hours-of-service delivery, or exceptionally towards posts on fixed-term contracts. Consideration will be given where salaries are included as part of the organisation's start-up costs.
- Grants are not available to fund an organisation's basic running costs.

## **Partnership working across Chorley and South Ribble**

We welcome partnership working and appreciate that organisations may work across the boroughs of Chorley and South Ribble. If any application is part of one which will also be considered by South Ribble, we will liaise with South Ribble Borough Council to discuss application with their relevant officers and decision panel.

## **Funding conditions**

Evidence must be provided that all required policies and practices are in place, as set out in the grant approval letter before grant monies are paid.

Grants awarded may be subject to certain conditions which must be satisfied before payment is made. The applicant must indicate acceptance of such conditions when any offer of a grant is made.

In applying, applicants are giving Chorley Council consent to carry out financial checks on their organisation.

A panel will determine all grant awards. All awards will be subject to the submission of necessary supporting documentation as stated in the grant award letter. Following confirmation of grant awards, payment of grants will be made on the following basis:

- First stage payment – following sign-off of all grant awards and funding documentation (estimated timescale September – October 2025)
- Second stage payment – following satisfactory progress in delivery and receipt of progress report (estimated timescales January 2026).

Organisations are expected to use the grant received for the purpose outlined in their grant application. All projects must be complete by March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026. Applicants will be required to keep a record of all project activity, expenditure and outputs achieved for 7 years following project completion.

Recipients of grants must inform the council of any problems with completing the project as early as possible. The council will expect repayment of the grant in full if the project is not completed or necessary monitoring information is not received by a set date as agreed with the grant recipient. The council may consider requests to repay in part, or not at all if the project is not completed due to circumstances beyond the applicant's control.

### Monitoring and evaluation

All successful applicants will be required to provide monitoring information. The fund will look to be open and flexible as possible on use of the funding and level of monitoring required will be reflected in value of funding granted. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Project details
- Breakdown of spend including invoices.
- Demonstration of desired outcomes and impact
- User feedback
- Photographs / promotional materials / opening events

To ensure grants awarded are adding value to our communities, recipient organisations will be required to provide progress and/or end of project reports detailing outcomes achieved and provide any necessary monitoring information.

### Application Process

Applications must be made online at [www.chorley.gov.uk/funding](http://www.chorley.gov.uk/funding)

Key Milestones	Date
Fund launch	August 2025
Open for applications	August 2025
Deadline for applications – early applications are encouraged	5 <sup>th</sup> September 2025
Scoring of applications and final decisions made	16 <sup>th</sup> September 2025
Applicants notified of the outcome and Agreements signed	19 <sup>th</sup> September 2025
Funding allocated to groups	October 2025
Delivery of projects commence	29 <sup>th</sup> September 2025
Ongoing monitoring and End of project returns	Per agreement

## Assessment and Scoring

An evaluation panel will assess and evaluate the applications against the criteria, and recommendations made. Applications must demonstrate clear alignment within the brief in terms of a well scoped project and defined outcomes in relation to the funding priorities.

Please note that while AI writing tools can be helpful when writing applications, care should be taken to ensure that your application closely details what you aim to deliver. Submissions should offer a well thought through project that is bespoke to the requirements of the funding and outlines clearly how your organisation will add value.

When allocating funds and scoring, consideration will be given to any gaps in provision. The evaluation panel will seek to allocate funds across the different funding priority aims.

All applications would be advised of the decision, setting out agreements to those who have been successful and upon the receiving of those agreements, funding will be awarded. Unsuccessful applicants will be given brief feedback so applications can be strengthened in future.

<b>Meets eligibility criteria.</b>
Organisation based in Chorley, bank account, project delivery dates etc.
<b>Outcomes</b>
The project has clear, visible outcomes and it is clear on the impact of project.
<b>Demonstrable need</b>
Evidence of need - clear and fully understand why the project is needed.
<b>Community involvement</b>
It is clearly demonstrated that stakeholders have been involved in the development and/or delivery of this project (residents/groups/partners).
<b>Target demographic</b>
The target demographic is clear, and the project outcomes are aligned with the needs of this demographic.
<b>UKSPF and council priorities</b>
The project clearly contributes to UKSPF funding aims and wider council priorities.
<b>Clear timeline</b>
There is a clear timeline for project delivery and a high level of confidence that the project will be completed as described.
<b>Value for money</b>
This will be based on number of beneficiaries and the quality of provision and long-term benefits.
<b>Sustainability</b>
The outcomes from the project will have a long-term impact and consequently lead to further positive outcomes.
<b>Feasibility and experience of delivery</b>
The group or organisation demonstrate the capabilities to deliver the project, including ability to evaluate and monitor delivery. Evidence of previous successful delivery will be assessed.

Any general queries about this scheme to be emailed to [communities@chorley.gov.uk](mailto:communities@chorley.gov.uk)