

Youth NEET & Resilience Support Grant 2026/27

Grant Prospectus & Guidance Notes

1. Introduction, Aims, and Objectives

Chorley Council is an ambitious local authority committed to improving outcomes for residents, with a particular focus on supporting young people who are not in education, employment, or training (NEET) to progress into sustained EET. In the context of ongoing economic pressures and national and county-level policy changes, targeted employability and early intervention support is essential to reduce long-term disengagement and prevent young people from becoming entrenched in NEET status.

The Council is proactively seeking to address gaps in employability and NEET support through commissioned grant funding that can respond flexibly to changing levels of need and emerging challenges. This grant scheme prioritises prevention and early intervention, underpinned by integrated public services, coproduction with the voluntary and community sector, and decision-making at the lowest practical level to ensure support is responsive, accessible, and locally informed.

The primary objective of this grant scheme is to enable partners to deliver high-quality mentoring and holistic support that improves upon traditional outreach approaches. Funded organisations are expected to use this support to strengthen their existing provision, working to understand and respond to the wider factors affecting a young person's development. This should include developing clear, structured pathways of support, with defined routes that help young people progress into positive education, employment or training (EET) outcomes.

2. Core Funding Framework

- **Total Available Grant Pot:** A total allocation of **£60,000** is available for a 6-9 month delivery period running until April 2027.
- **Funding Source Integration:** This total is drawn from multiple funding sources. Successful grant applicants must ensure that their project delivery is reflective of, and compliant with, the specific outputs and outcomes required by these contributing sources.
- **Primary Target Cohort:** Chorley residents who are explicitly categorised as NEET (aged 16 to 24) or young people aged 16 to 17 classified as "destination not known" by the Education Improvement Service. This includes engaging with education settings out of the area that Chorley children attend, provided that Chorley-based children are specifically targeted.

3. The Four Focus Pillars

To maximise borough coverage and respond flexibly to the local NEET landscape, applicants may propose projects that deliver across one or more of the following four newly interested Focus Pillars:

Pillar 1: Emotional & Physical Wellbeing

- **Focus:** Holistic 1:1 mentoring that works to understand and address the wider personal factors, mental health struggles, anxiety, and stress impacting a young person's development.
- **Requirement:** Environments must be strictly inclusive and neurodiverse-friendly, accommodating specific needs such as British Sign Language (BSL) support for the Deaf community and English as an Additional Language (EAL) for resettled communities where required. Delivery should act as an early intervention to reduce factors leading to long-term economic disengagement.

Pillar 2: Financial & Housing Stability

- **Focus:** Practical, wrap-around barrier mitigation to address the day-to-day struggles that prevent young people from entering education or employment, including housing instability and cost-of-living challenges.
- **Requirement:** Building personal resilience by stabilising a young person's immediate environment, providing them with a secure foundation from which they can consistently engage with face-to-face employability mentoring.

Pillar 3: Employability, CV, and Digital Pathways

- **Focus:** High-quality careers guidance and localised employability support focused on upskilling, CV creation, application assistance, and online training.
- **Requirement:** Strategic integration with local networks. Grant recipients are expected to maintain strong partnerships with key local stakeholders, including consistent engagement in Chorley's employment network and taskforce meetings to ensure a cohesive local offer.

Pillar 4: Targeted Locality Outreach & Rural Equity

- **Focus:** Place-based, face-to-face interventions specifically targeting areas where delivery demands are greatest, alongside hard-to-reach rural wards.
- **Requirement:** Grantees must demonstrate service equity across the entire borough, ensuring both urban and rural residents have equal access. Projects should explicitly detail how locally based community assets and partner

environments will be utilised to deliver support directly within high-need areas (such as *Clayton Brook, Buttermere, and Tatton*).

4. Expected Outcomes and Year 1 Targets

Projects funded through this grant scheme are expected to contribute toward Chorley Council's wider employability and NEET reduction priorities. Applicants should set out their proposed outcomes for the delivery period, including clearly defined targets and a rationale for how these will be achieved.

Proposals should demonstrate an adaptable and responsive delivery model and should include, as a minimum:

- **Engagement and Participation:** The anticipated number of young people (aged 16–24) who will be engaged and supported, including the level and type of intervention (e.g. intensive 1:1 support).
- **Progression Outcomes:** The expected number or proportion of participants who will progress into positive Education, Employment or Training (EET) destinations.
- **Timeliness of Engagement:** Proposed tools for initial contact and assessment following referral, including how applicants will ensure timely and effective engagement.
- **Sustained Outcomes:** The expected proportion of participants who will sustain their progression outcomes over a defined period (e.g. 12 weeks), and how this will be monitored and supported.

Applicants should ensure that their proposed targets are realistic, evidence-based, and aligned with the needs of the local cohort, while demonstrating clear ambition and value for money.

5. Monitoring, Compliance, and Evaluation

To ensure high-quality, safe and effective delivery of : activities, all funded groups will be required to meet the following standards.

- **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Compliance:** The grant recipient shall ensure at its own cost that all persons involved in face-to-face service provision possess a valid Enhanced DBS certificate. This must be obtained no earlier than two months before the individual is engaged in the project. Certificates must be made available to Chorley Council for inspection upon request. Individuals with unvalidated consent or unsuitable convictions revealed via a DBS check will be prohibited from service delivery.
- **Safeguarding and Protection of Vulnerable Groups:** The grant recipient must have robust, up-to-date safeguarding policies and procedures in place to protect

young people and vulnerable adults from harm, abuse, or neglect. Grantees are legally responsible for conducting comprehensive risk assessments for all aspects of service delivery to identify, evaluate, and mitigate potential safety risks. Any safeguarding incidents, disclosures, or significant risks to a participant's welfare must be documented immediately and reported directly to Chorley Council's designated safeguarding lead alongside relevant statutory services.

- **Confidentiality and Data Protection:** Grant recipients must not, without the prior written consent of the Council, disclose or make independent use of any confidential or personal material provided by the Council or prepared pursuant to the project. This applies strictly to all personal information regarding customers of the service. Staff must carry photographic identification at all times and must immediately inform the Council if a staff member is related to or well known to a service user.
- **Comprehensive Risk Management:** The grant recipient shall be solely responsible for conducting comprehensive risk assessments for all aspects of project delivery. These assessments must actively identify, evaluate, and manage potential delivery risks to ensure safe execution. The Council reserves the right to audit financial processes and risk assessments to ensure standard processes are being correctly executed.

6. Grant Monitoring and Intelligence Requirements

Because this funding brings together several different priorities, successful applicants must use evidence to track progress, measure performance, and support learning:

- **Monthly Outreach Tracking:** Providers will review and update the core NEET list monthly, working directly with LCC Youth Futures Team.
- **Sustained Interval Tracking:** To evaluate the long-term retention of positive outcomes, grantees must implement a follow-up service that checks in on participants at week 4 and week 12 intervals following an EET placement.
- **Investigative Research Intelligence:** To map the "why" behind local economic inactivity, providers must complete an **in-depth survey** with every NEET young person they support. These surveys must explicitly capture the specific accumulating barriers, personal aspirations, and service gaps experienced by local youth.
- **Strategic Data Sharing:** Grantees must implement an effective monitoring framework that feeds into performance reviews. Providers will prioritise timely data sharing with the Education Improvement Service to facilitate accurate, borough-wide NEET recording.

- **Qualitative Case Studies:** Providers must compile and submit **one high-quality case study every 2 months** illustrating the successes of the project.
- **End of Grant Learning Report:** In April 2027, the funding must culminate in a comprehensive final report performing an in-depth analysis of the local NEET landscape. This report must transparently break down the project's successes, learnings, and operational failures to inform future strategic adjustments and council commissioning.

7. How to Apply

Chorley Council welcomes applications from single VCFSE organisations as well as place-based consortiums involving local housing providers, community groups, and parish councils.

To apply for the **Core Resilience & NEET Support Grant Scheme 2026/27**, applicants must submit a formal Grant Application Form.

Eligibility criteria

To be considered for a funding award, applicants must:

- be based in or working within Chorley and delivering services which are targeted at and directly benefit Chorley residents.
- be a registered charity, voluntary, community, faith, or social enterprise sector group/organisation. Organisations that are not eligible include those that are trading as a commercial business, local authorities and private individuals.
- have a bank account registered to their group or organisation with at least two unrelated signatories.
- demonstrate through their application form that they have the necessary expertise and resources to see the project through to successful completion.
- ensure that it addresses one or more of the key focus pillars.
- ensure the project is based on local need.
- demonstrate the positive impacts which will be made through the project.
- If the project involves changes to a facility, building or outside space then the applicant must be the owner, or have permission from the owners, before submitting an application.

Application forms, evaluation matrices, and submission deadlines can be accessed via the Chorley Council funding portal. For further inquiries or to discuss partnership bids, please contact the Lead Officer for Employment and Skills at Chorley Council here: communities@chorley.gov.uk