

The Yorkshire County Cricket Club
Emerald Headingley Cricket Ground
Kirkstall Lane
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April 28, 2020

Hi All

Hope you are all keeping well, just thought I would send an update regards available funding for clubs to ensure they are supported in the short-term in this current crisis. I've had a quite a few enquiries and there is confusion over who can apply/who to and for what etc, so thought I would try and summarise below. A few points worth noting also at this stage:

With regards government small business grants, each local authority has the responsibility, but it should be noted all operate at different speeds, all are inundated with high volumes of enquiries, and many have staff furloughed or 'seconded' to other departments. All pay automatically if a club/organisation qualifies, but it can take a few weeks, in some cases a few days. Similar issues with the Sport England Emergency Fund regards the volume of applications and staff numbers apply.

Please note also that Sport England have paused their Community Asset Funding - <https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/our-funds/community-asset-fund> This is to essentially focus on the response to COVID-19 – and their funding programmes (more details below).

There is a FAQ on the CAF site about existing applications – but basically they are unlikely to respond within the next 4 weeks on outstanding applications.

If you are having difficulty in applying or have any questions please feel free to contact me and I will try and support wherever possible, also any club who has applied and been successful, could you please let me know as it helps with support for other clubs and gives an indication of the areas/local authorities where I can attempt to get in touch and chase up on behalf of clubs.

Covid-19 Funding support for clubs and organisations

Apologies for the lengthy email which follows, but I want to ensure absolute clarity on funding available/criteria and who to approach etc.

Firstly it is important that clubs look at government and Sport England options first before exploring any ECB assistance. Also at this stage to clarify (and I've added in more details below), all of the support funding packages available do not cover lost income, which isn't the purpose of the emergency funding – this is to cover fixed / essential costs not lost or projected income loss. One of the common questions asked relates to any reserves a club may have:

- Have you identified any reserves that you plan to use over this time?
- If you don't plan to use reserves over this time explain why not / why – this could be that this funding has been secured/raised for a future facility development project as an example – clubs won't be penalized for having reserves as long as it can be evidenced the reasons as to why it cannot be used for short-term payment of upcoming expenditure such as insurance/running costs etc.

Before applying for costs, it is important organisations seek to either negotiate, defer or suspend payments where possible.

Ineligible Costs in most cases include:

- Loss of forecast income
- Purchase of non-essential goods / equipment
- Any other expenditure that the funding agency deems inappropriate

Funding Support

Depending on the club structure/set up, you may be eligible for rate relief and a £10k cash grant (which is allocated by your local authority) - <https://www.tax.service.gov.uk/business-rates-find/valuations/16874852000>. There is more information available here - [https://www.sportandrecreation.org.uk/news/covid-19/Business Rates Relief and Cash Grants](https://www.sportandrecreation.org.uk/news/covid-19/Business_Rates_Relief_and_Cash_Grants) . I suggest that you contact your local authority to discuss.

1. Grant Funding for Rate Paying Clubs

The support available is:

- Clubs paying business rates should now qualify for a 12 month rate holiday in 2020/21
- Clubs paying business rates with a rateable value under £15,000 may qualify for a one off grant (not a loan) of £10,000
- Clubs paying business rates with a rateable value of £15,000 or more may qualify for a one off grant (not a loan) of £25,000

The above support is being administered by local authorities.

Have you also applied the Sport England Community Emergency Fund? – details here

- <https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/our-funds/community-emergency-fund> - £3k-10k grants are available for clubs that have been hardest hit by the coronavirus, although this fund is likely to be over-subscribed.

2. Community Emergency Fund

Sport England (£20m) : Available to voluntary sport clubs/organisations.

This funding scheme is set up to compliment other sources of funding, and should only be applied for if you are not eligible for funding from any other sources (but prior to making any application to ECB). Organisations thinking of applying should have explored all other options first (Central Government etc).

The scheme is more designed for local sports clubs and organisations at risk of closing or facing short-term financial hardships due to being forced to close due to Coronavirus. Applications can be made for between £300 and £10,000.

The scheme will fund:

- Maintenance
- Utility Bills
- Rent
- Insurance
- Facility/Equipment Hire
- Core staffing costs (which aren't covered by other government funding sources)
- Retrospective – losses from 1st March

The scheme will not fund:

- Activities or costs which are already covered by other government funding, including rates (your club may be eligible for 100% rate relief via your local authority).
- Capital costs
- Anything beyond July 2020

ECB

There are two ECB schemes; an Emergency Loan Scheme and a Return to Cricket Grant Scheme.

The Emergency Loan Scheme aims to support affiliated Cricket Clubs during the COVID-19 crisis by providing funding to assist clubs to cover any shortfall in essential day to day running and maintenance costs until normal recreational cricket activity can be resumed.

It is important to note that the Return to Cricket Grant Scheme is only available to provide cricket clubs and leagues with assistance in exceptional circumstances, where other potential sources of financial support are not available, e.g. constitutionally a loan is not an option or there is a high risk of default in paying back a loan. Additionally the Return to Cricket Grant Scheme is only for clubs who have an annual turnover of less than £15,000.

For both schemes, there is a requirement that other funding options (e.g. those mentioned above) have been explored first - I have attached guidance for both schemes for you to consider.

Summary

The first course of action for clubs paying business rates should be to apply to their Local Authority for Grant Funding of either £10k or £25k, depending on their rateable value. Clubs who do not pay business rates (e.g. ground rented from local authority or other body) will be unable to claim this and should therefore consider a claim through the Community Emergency Fund. Clubs unable to obtain funding from either of these two sources may apply for the ECB Emergency Loan Scheme, or the 'Return to Cricket' Grant Scheme, but must not make a claim through both of them.

There is also some excellent support and guidance to be found here: <https://learn.sportenglandclubmatters.com/course/view.php?id=71>

Next Steps

As mentioned above I suggest that you explore first of all the support on offer from the government and Sport England and read through the guidance notes for both ECB schemes.

Once you've done that, and I appreciate there is a lot of information to take in here, if required please get in touch with me to discuss further or for any support required.

Many thanks and good luck

Steve Archer
Head of Region (West)