

Yes. For a community organisation such as **The Wheel and Erne District Chinese Families' and Friends' Association**, a strong pre-Budget submission should combine evidence-based recommendations that benefit policymakers, researchers, local authorities, migrant communities, and the wider community and voluntary sector.

Below is a draft set of recommendations that could be adapted for publication on The Wheel's Pre-Budget hub.

Key Pre-Budget Recommendations

1. Sustainable Funding for Community and Voluntary Organisations

- Introduce multi-annual funding agreements (3–5 years) for community organisations.
- Increase core funding streams to cover administration, governance, staffing, compliance, and service delivery costs.
- Establish a dedicated fund for small ethnic minority and migrant-led organisations that often lack access to mainstream funding.

Expected Impact

- Greater organisational stability.
- Improved service quality and long-term planning.
- Stronger community participation and social cohesion.

2. Investment in Integration and Inclusion Services

- Increase funding for migrant integration programmes, including language support, cultural orientation, and community engagement initiatives.
- Expand intercultural programmes that promote understanding between different communities.
- Support local authorities and community groups in implementing integration strategies.

Expected Impact

- Improved social inclusion.
- Reduced isolation among migrant families.
- Enhanced community relations.

3. Strengthening English Language and Lifelong Learning Supports

- Expand affordable and accessible English language classes.
- Increase funding for community-based adult education and digital literacy programmes.
- Support pathways for recognition of overseas qualifications and professional skills.

Expected Impact

- Increased employment opportunities.
- Better access to public services.

- Improved economic participation.

4. Tackling Child Poverty and Supporting Families

- Increase investment in family support services.
- Expand after-school programmes and homework clubs in disadvantaged communities.
- Provide targeted supports for children from migrant and minority ethnic backgrounds.

Expected Impact

- Improved educational outcomes.
- Reduced inequalities.
- Stronger family wellbeing.

5. Community Mental Health and Wellbeing

- Increase funding for community-based mental health services.
- Support culturally appropriate mental health programmes.
- Fund peer-support and social prescribing initiatives delivered through community organisations.

Expected Impact

- Earlier intervention.
- Reduced pressure on statutory services.
- Improved wellbeing across communities.

6. Addressing Social Isolation Among Older People

- Expand funding for community transport, social participation programmes, and culturally sensitive services for older adults.
- Support intergenerational initiatives that connect older people with younger community members.

Expected Impact

- Reduced loneliness and isolation.
- Improved health outcomes.
- Stronger community networks.

7. Digital Inclusion and Access

- Establish a Digital Inclusion Fund for community organisations.
- Provide grants for devices, connectivity, and digital skills training.
- Ensure digital public services remain accessible to people with limited digital literacy.

Expected Impact

- Reduced digital exclusion.
- Better access to employment, education, and government services.

8. Research and Data Collection on Minority Ethnic Communities

- Increase investment in research on the experiences and needs of minority ethnic communities.
- Improve collection of equality and diversity data across public services.
- Fund community-led participatory research projects.

Expected Impact

- Better evidence for policymaking.
- More effective targeting of public resources.
- Greater understanding of community needs.

9. Housing and Homelessness Prevention

- Increase investment in affordable housing supply.
- Strengthen homelessness prevention measures for vulnerable families.
- Improve access to housing information and support services for migrant communities.

Expected Impact

- Greater housing security.
- Reduced risk of homelessness.
- More inclusive communities.

10. Climate Action and Community Resilience

- Create dedicated funding streams for community-led climate and sustainability projects.
- Support energy efficiency upgrades for community facilities.
- Ensure disadvantaged and minority communities are included in climate transition measures.

Expected Impact

- Lower energy costs.
- Increased community resilience.
- More equitable climate action.

Cross-Cutting Recommendation

Recognise and Invest in the Role of Migrant-Led Community Organisations

The Government should recognise migrant-led organisations as essential partners in delivering integration, inclusion, education, wellbeing, and social cohesion outcomes. Budget measures should ensure equitable access to funding, capacity-building supports, governance training, and participation in policymaking processes.

Suggested Closing Statement

The Erne District Chinese Families' and Friends' Association calls on Government to make strategic investments in community infrastructure, social inclusion, family support, education, mental health, and integration. These investments will strengthen communities, improve public outcomes, and support a more inclusive, resilient, and cohesive society. By supporting community and voluntary organisations, Government can leverage local expertise and trusted relationships to deliver lasting social and economic benefits.

This framework aligns well with the priorities commonly highlighted by policymakers, researchers, community development practitioners, and the wider voluntary and community sector, making it suitable for submission through The Wheel's pre-Budget consultation process.