

HOPESAY PARISH COUNCIL GRANT AWARDING POLICY

Introduction

This policy has been drawn up to demonstrate a fair and transparent process for awarding grants, being any payment or gift made by the Parish Council to an organisation for a specific purpose that will benefit the parish, or residents of the parish, and which is not directly controlled or administered by the Parish Council.

To support the community it serves, Hopesay Parish Council will set a budget each financial year to enable it to award small grants at its discretion. Eligible organisations are

- local groups, clubs, societies, and organisations;
- regional / national Charitable Bodies providing services available and of direct benefit to parish residents.

Organisations applying for grants must demonstrate a) a need for financial support, and b) the social, educational, or economic benefits that financial support would bring to the parish by:

- Providing a service
- Enhancing the quality of life
- Improving the environment
- Promoting the parish in a positive way

1. Legal power

The Parish Council has powers to award grants to local community organisations and charities. Depending on what the grant is for, the individual power will either be listed on our website under “powers of parish councils” or, if not covered under these powers, can be granted under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972. Section 137 allows the Parish Council to spend a limited amount on activities it is not otherwise empowered to do, but which must be in the interests of or will directly benefit the area or its inhabitants, or part of it, or some of it. The benefit should be commensurate with expenditure. Hopesay Parish Council will apply similar considerations when awarding grants under other powers.

The Section 137 limit is the amount per registered elector and is reviewed annually by central government.

2. Organisation and Locality

Applications will only be accepted from charitable, voluntary or non-profit making organisations, but not political parties.

Applications cannot be accepted from individuals.

Applications can only be considered from religious organisations if for a purpose which is completely non-discriminatory and which meets Council’s other conditions.

3. Process

Applications can only be accepted on the Council’s application form, so that all applications can be treated fairly.

Applicants should provide copies of all documentation requested in the application form, or requested by the Clerk of the Council.

Applications must demonstrate clearly how the grant will be of benefit to parishioners / the local community.

Applications may be made at any time during the year, but **applications must be received by the end of September** to be considered at the Council meeting awarding grants each year.

Applications will be considered and awarded by resolution at a full parish council meeting, normally in **October**.

4. Other Conditions

The Council will make the decision on which grants to award, and the **Council's decision is final**.

Ongoing commitments to award grants in future years will not be made.

Applications should not result in any recurring expenditure for the Parish Council.

A member of the organisation may be asked to attend a Council meeting to discuss the application.

The awarding of a grant does not set a precedent for any subsequent applications, and any previous awards made may be taken into consideration.

The Council may attach any additional conditions and requirements to a grant that it considers necessary. E.g. receipts may be required to demonstrate expenditure on specific purchases; interim monitoring reports, and/or progress updates may be required; and / or other documentation to ensure that the grant is used in accordance with the application.

Any grant must only be used for the purpose for which it was awarded.

Any unspent portion of the grant must be returned.

If an organisation is dissolved before the grant has been utilised, the grant must be returned.

Grants will not be made retrospectively.

Applications must be accompanied by a copy of the organisation's most recent accounts and its latest bank statement. Minutes of its last AGM may also be requested.

Organisations which have not previously applied to the Parish Council must submit a copy of their constitution.

Written evidence of how the grant has been spent must be supplied within one year of the grant being awarded.

Recipients may be required to provide:

- a written report of how the grant money has been used
- an annual report, or minutes
- accounts that clearly identify the manner of spending
- any combination of the above

Hopesay Parish Council acknowledges that some organisations, particularly new and smaller ones, may experience difficulty in completing the application and all possible assistance will be given to help those organisations.

Hopesay Parish Council will also

- Publish within the parish the availability of grant aid
- Review the grant aid budget at least annually
- Review the policy and procedure for applying at least annually