

SHARDLOW & GREAT WILNE PARISH COUNCIL

Grant Awarding Policy and Procedure

Introduction

A grant is 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. The law requires that Section 137 grants must be “in the interests of or will directly benefit the area or its inhabitants, or of part of it, or some of it” and “the direct benefit should be commensurate with expenditure”. Similar considerations will apply when considering applications for other grants.

Policy

The Parish Council awards grants, at its absolute discretion, to organisations which can demonstrate a clear need for financial support to achieve an objective which will benefit the Parish by:-

- Providing a service,
- Enhancing the quality of life,
- Improving the environment, and promoting the Parish of Shardlow & Great Wilne (S&GW) in a positive way.

The Parish Council will NOT award grants to:-

- Private individuals,
- Commercial organisations,
- Purposes for which there is a statutory duty upon other local or central government departments to fund or provide,
- “Upward funders”. ie.local groups where fund-raising is sent to a central HQ for redistribution.
- Political parties.

This list is not exclusive, and may be added to at the council’s discretion.

Only one application for a grant will be considered from any organisation in any one financial year.

Ongoing commitments to award grants in future years will not be made. A fresh application will be required each year. This will be at the discretion of the council.

Grants will not be made retrospectively.

Applications will not normally be considered from national organisations or local groups with access to funds from national “umbrella” or “parent” organisations; unless funds are not available from their national bodies or the funds available are inadequate for a specified project.

Applications from religious groups will be considered where a clear benefit to the wider community can be demonstrated irrespective of their religious beliefs. Compliance with this requirement will need to be demonstrated throughout the project.

Applications from education, health or social service establishments will be considered where the organisation can demonstrate that it is working in partnership with other groups and where there are benefits to the wider community within the Parish.

If the application is from an organisation or group, the written aims and objectives, constitution and membership rules should be available for inspection by the Parish Council as part of the consideration of the application. In addition, an organisation must demonstrate that it is properly managed and able to run its affairs responsibly. The Parish Council may ask to inspect, as part of the consideration of an application the audited accounts or accounts that have been independently examined by a suitably qualified person, for the previous two financial years or, in the case of a newly formed organisation, a detailed budget and business plan. An organisation is required to have a bank account in its own name with two authorised representatives required to sign each cheque.

All applications must demonstrate clearly how a grant will be of benefit to the local community within the Parish.

Due account will be taken of the extent to which funding has been sought or secured from other sources or own fund-raising activities. Further details of other organisations that may be supportive should be declared to the Council when the application is made.

Application Procedure

Organisations requesting financial assistance for amounts in excess of £500 are required (if possible) to submit in the year preceding their funding requirement i.e. at the latest 31st March:

- A completed application form,
- Copies of their last year end accounts,
- The number, or percentage, of members that belong to the organisation and that live within the S&GW Parish Area,
- Details of any restrictions placed on who can use/access their services,

Organisations will normally be expected to have clear written aims and objectives, a written constitution, and a separate bank account controlled by more than one signatory.

For grant requests for projects costing over £3,000 the Parish Council will require that the organisation has robust tendering regulations, eg. obtaining a minimum of three tenders. The Parish Council reserves the right to request proof of the tender process. Projects notified and included in the Parish Council's budget will only have the funds released on completion of the work. Whilst the Parish Council would not normally consider applications for Capital Projects, any such applications will require a more substantial case with supporting evidence of community benefit. For these grants, the council will expect to see some form/evidence of other third party funding. All grants awarded will be subject to regular 'report back' to S&GW Parish Council as to progress and/or community benefit.

Assessment Procedure

An unplanned grant request, once received in writing, will be considered at the next meeting of the Parish Council.

Each application will be assessed on its own merits. However, to ensure as fair a distribution as possible of available funds, the Parish Council will take into account the amount and frequency of any previous awards, and the geographical spread within the parish. Due account may also be taken of the extent to which funding has been sought or secured from other sources or fund raising activities.

The Parish Council may make the award of any grant or subsidy subject to such additional conditions and requirements as it considers appropriate. The Parish Council reserves the right to refuse any grant application which it considers to be inappropriate, or against the objectives of the Council.

Nothing contained herein shall prevent the Parish Council from exercising, at any time, its existing duty or power in respect of providing financial assistance or grants to local or national organisations under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972, Section 137.

Successful Applications

A grant award must only be used for the purpose stated on the application. If the organisation is unable to use the money, or any part of it, for the purpose stated, then all monies or unexpended part of such monies must be returned to the Parish Council. The Parish Council may request proof of expenditure.

Organisations receiving grants are required to advise their users/members that the grant or equipment has been received from S&GW Parish Council. Where appropriate, the Parish Council may require a notice to be affixed. Where equipment is gifted to an organisation, The Parish Council requires that it be insured and maintained at the expense of the user.

The purpose

Grants are made as one-off payments, and will not represent an ongoing commitment by the Parish Council to award grants or subsidies in future years. A fresh application will be required each year.

To ensure as fair a distribution as possible, the Council will take into account the amount and frequency of previous awards.

The Council may make the award of a grant subject to such additional conditions and requirements as it considers appropriate.

Grant Applications

To apply for a grant in the first instance the Parish Clerk should be contacted with an outline of the purpose and funding requirements. If the initial concept is accepted by the Council then further details will be requested from the applicant.

Check List for Applicants

1. Purpose of grant
2. Anticipated benefit to the Parish
3. Amount applied for
4. Is support being sought from anywhere else/what fund raising have you done?
5. Organisation: constitutional details/two years of accounts/bank account details,

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