

# WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL



## GRANTS POLICY

### 1. Introduction

1.1 Wellington Town Council is committed to supporting a vibrant and thriving local community, with the wellbeing of residents at the heart of services and activities on offer.

1.2 As a Town Council, Wellington has statutory powers to make grants to local charities and groups<sup>1</sup>. The purpose of such grants is to provide financial support to the wide range of organisations providing or developing services or activities around the Town.

1.3 Over the years many groups have benefited from the Council's grant scheme. This has enabled social, educational and leisure opportunities for the community that might not otherwise have been available to local people.

1.4 Wellington Town council will set a yearly budget for grants during its annual budget-setting activities, prior to the commencement of each financial year. Currently this is £15,000 (2019-2020).

1.5 The Council understands that it is responsible for public funds and the distribution of these funds needs to be properly managed. The awarding of grants is taken very seriously by the Council, and each application will be carefully reviewed before a decision is made.

1.6 This policy relates to the giving of awards under the Council's Grant Scheme and is not applicable to other forms of financial support which may be given.

### 2. Our Grants

2.1 Grants awarded will be in line with the Council's policy of supporting the local community and making a contribution to the life and well-being of the town. Particular

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<sup>1</sup> Local Government Act 1972 S137; Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976

priorities for the Council are to support services or activities for children and youth, those which seek to reduce social isolation, and those which encourage a safe and harmonious environment. All applications should clearly define the benefits of their project to local people.

2.2 Grants applications will be will be considered monthly (see Section 6).

2.3 Application forms are available on request from the Council Offices and must be requested by the particular group intending to apply for a grant. Forms will not normally be made available through a third party.

### 3. Eligibility

3.1 Applications are welcomed from local groups, organisations or partnerships seeking a financial contribution towards the costs of providing specific activities or services wholly or principally for the benefit of parish residents. General funding for day-to-day management of a particular group will not qualify.

3.2 Organisations applying for a grant must be operating on a voluntary, charitable or 'not for profit' basis

3.3 Grants can only be applied for where the project or activity has yet to take place. Retrospective funding will not be considered for costs incurred prior to the grant application.

3.4 Generally the organisation applying for funding will be expected to contribute to the service or activity for which the grant is being requested. There will be occasions however, based on the individual merit of an application, where the full costs will be met by a grant.

3.5 Awards will *not normally* be made to:-

- Projects whose primary objectives is to campaign or lobby;
- Individual rather than group applicants;
- Local branches that could be funded by their national or umbrella body **or**
- Send funds raised to their umbrella body for general purposes;
- Organisations who have already received a grant in the current financial year;
- Groups which already receive council funding through a Service Level Agreement;
- Groups with considerable financial reserves of their own.

Any exceptions to these guidelines will be based on the individual merits of the application.

3.6 Awards will *not* be made to:-

- Commercial enterprises set up to generate profit;
- Those supporting party political issues or opposing a political party;

- Groups or activities which appear discriminatory in nature;
- Activities that are not lawful or risk disrepute to the Council;
- Groups which are not considered financially viable;
- Groups which previously benefitted from a grant where monies given were not spent for the purpose provided;
- Health, education or welfare organisations whose services should be provided by statutory funding.

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

3.8 Applications from education, health or social services establishments may 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.

## **4. Submitting Applications**

4.1 Applications must be made to the Council Office using the Council's Grant Application Form. Both paper and electronic applications are acceptable.

4.2 The applicant must state clearly their organisation's aims and objectives.

4.3 All requested supporting documentation must be included before any application can be considered, including relevant accounting statements.

4.4 The applying organisation is required to submit 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 or less formal group, a comprehensive budget and business plan.

4.5 The group must also submit a copy of its written Constitution, as formally adopted by the members of the organisation. Where the association is less formal a similar document of agreement between individuals will be acceptable.

4.6 The applicant must state if the organisation has applied for funds elsewhere, and if known, the outcome of this application. The Council must also to be informed of any fund raising activities being carried by the applicant.

4.7 Council staff will not fill out application forms for the applicant. Staff will however give appropriate advice and support to enable the applicant to complete the form.

## **5. Assessment Criteria**

5.1 Grant applications will be assessed with reference to the following criteria, which are in no priority order:-

- The application is submitted in line with the Council's policy;

- Funding will fill gaps in provision of services or facilities;
- The project to be funded has to be viable;
- The need for the service or activity being funded is clearly demonstrated;
- The grant should benefit residents of the parish.
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## **6. The Council's decision**

6.1 Wellington Town Council will ensure openness and transparency when awarding its grants.

6.2 Grant applications will be reviewed monthly by the Council's Finance Committee which will make a recommendation for formal approval at the full Council meeting later that evening.

6.3 Grant applications will be circulated in advance of meetings but no decision will be made prior to the meeting.

6.4 Councillors must clearly declare any interest associated with a grant application prior to the decision being discussed.

6.5 Grant applicants, or an alternative representative of their organisation will be invited to attend the council meeting where their application will be considered.

6.6 The applicant or representative will be offered the opportunity to speak in support of the application, under the Public Speaking agenda item, prior to the grant being decided.

6.7 Approval of the grant by full Council will require a proposal which must be seconded. A vote by show of hands will then be taken. Applications require a simple majority vote to be approved. Where the vote is tied the Chairman will have the deciding vote.

6.8 Recommendations for grants will be recorded in the minutes of the finance committee, and formal resolutions recorded at the subsequent council meeting.

6.9 A letter confirming the grant, stating the amount awarded will be sent to applicants within 5 working days of the council meeting.

6.10 Where a grant has been declined, a letter will be sent to the applicants within 5 working days of the council meeting. Reasons why the grant has not been approved will be given so that organisations understand why they have not been successful.

6.11 Where further information is required, or a grant has been declined for reasons relating to the actual application, the grant may be re-submitted once the shortcoming has been addressed.

6.12 The decision of the Council is final. There is no right of appeal for a grant which has been declined based on its merits.

## **7. Payments**

7.1 Payments will be made by cheque within 5 working days of the council meeting, unless alternative arrangements are agreed.

## **8. Grant Conditions**

8.1 Wellington Town Council expects organisations which benefit from a grant to:-

- Identify any assets purchased through the grant as being acquired with the assistance of a grant from the Town Council;
- Have a group bank account, with at least two authorised signatories as cheques cannot be made out to any individual;
- Allow appropriate site or project visits by representatives of the Council, subject to reasonable notice being given;
- Provide receipts or proof of expenditure subject to reasonable notice being given;
- Notify the Council immediately if the intended project is amended in any way;
- Have a full set of risk assessments for the activities to be carried out;
- Have Public Liability Insurance to cover services and activities to be provided.

8.2 Wellington Town Council reserves the right to reclaim the grant in the event of it not being used for the purpose specified on the application form, or within a reasonable timeframe.

8.3 Wellington Town Council reserve the right to recoup any equipment provided by the grant should the organisation cease to exist within three years of the grant being paid.

8.4 Organisations that receive a grant will be required to agree an appropriate public acknowledgement of the Town Council's contribution.

## **9. Large & Capital Grants – Additional Conditions of Funding**

9.1 Wellington Town Council defines a large grant as any sum in excess of £3000.

9.2. The Council will only award a large grant in exceptional circumstances.

9.3 Capital grants are those towards buildings and/or facilities as opposed to services or activities.

9.4 Organisations requesting funds for buildings must provide evidence of security of tenure in the relevant property for a minimum of 7 years from the date that the grant is considered.

9.5 Organisations requesting funds for buildings must provide proof that the property is adequately insured.

9.6 Where appropriate any request for grant funding for buildings must be accompanied by the relevant permission to carry out such work.

9.7 As much notice as possible is required for any large grant application, this will ensure that if the grant is to be awarded the Town Council can make appropriate budgetary provision.

9.8 In the case of a large grant the award may be phased, by mutual agreement, over a number of years.

## **10. Promoting the Grant Fund**

10.1 The council will publish bi-monthly reports in its newsletter 'The Edge' stating which groups have received a grant, what for, and the monetary value of the award.

10.2 Successful applicants will be invited to return to council meetings, or to provide a written statement setting out what was achieved by the service or activity which received council funding.

10.3 Successes will be promoted by either party via appropriate web-sites, the press and social media.

## **11. Policy Review**

11.1 The Grants Policy will be reviewed annually, including the amount of the grant fund.

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