

# 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.

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 priorities for the Council are to support services or activities for children and youth,

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

those which seek to reduce social isolation, those which encourage a safe and harmonious environment, and those who seek to reduce carbon emissions. All applications should clearly define the benefits of their project to local people.

2.2 Grants applications will be considered four times a year at the Finance meeting in April, July, October & January (see also Section 6). Application deadlines and meeting dates can be found on the Council's website.

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. However, activities that promote particular religious beliefs will not be considered. 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 (if not previously submitted), 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 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.
- Project does not increase carbon emissions

## **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 four times per year by the Council's Finance Committee as set out in the timetable detailed in section 4.

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 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 BACS 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/services purchased through the grant as being acquired/provided 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 or risk assessments for the activities to be carried out;
- Have Public Liability Insurance to cover services and activities to be provided;
- Agree to abide by the Council's Carbon Neutrality policy

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 £3,000. The Finance Committee have delegated authority to award grants up to £3,000. Awards over this amount will be in the form of a recommendation to Full Council where the request must receive final approval.

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 reports and information on its website and social media pages stating which groups have received a grant, for what purpose, 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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## WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL FINANCIAL GRANT APPLICATION GUIDANCE NOTES

### Introduction

Like many other Town and Parish Councils, Wellington has powers to award grants to local organisations, to support their activities in the Town.

Over the years many varied groups have benefited from grant funding, allowing them to provide services and activities that otherwise may not have been available to the residents.

The awarding of grants is taken very seriously by the Council, it understands that it is responsible for public funds and the distribution of these funds needs to be properly managed.

This is an outline to the grants scheme. Please take the time to read these pages carefully. A well presented and clear grant application, providing all the required information, will help the Council when considering grant applications – and will also, help applicants.

We hope that organisations that apply for grants understand that we require detailed information to enable the Council to assess applications. The Council undergoes rigorous internal and external audits that scrutinise the grant process carefully and it has to demonstrate that it has taken great care in the awarding of public funds.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require any help.

Good luck with your application.

Dave Farrow  
Town Clerk

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**These notes explain the background to the Council's financial grants scheme.  
Please read them carefully before you complete the Grant Application Form.**



## Our Policy

Grants awarded should 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.

Grants will be considered on a quarterly basis by the Finance Committee then recommended to the Town Council meeting, if required. The timetable for applications is detailed in the policy.

The application must be on the Grant Application Form with all requested supporting documentation for it to be considered.

Grant applications will be assessed on the following criteria, which are in no priority order.

- In line with the Council's policy
- Filling gaps in provision
- The project has to be viable
- The grant should benefit residents of the Town.
- The Council will want to know if you have applied for funds elsewhere.
- The Council will also want to know if you have done any fund raising yourself.

### **Awards will not be made to:**

- Commercial enterprises set up to generate profit.
- Those supporting party political issues or opposing a political party.
- Projects with campaigning objectives will not normally qualify for any award.
- Individuals will not normally qualify for assistance.
- Health, education or welfare organisations whose services should be provided by statutory funding.

### **Awards will not normally be made:**

- To bodies that could be funded by their national or umbrella body.
- To organisations who have already received a grant within the financial year.

### **Successful applicants must:**

- Identify any assets acquired through the grant as being acquired with the assistance of a grant from the Town Council.
- Have a group bank account as cheques cannot be paid to individuals.
- Agree to site or project visits by representative of the Council.
- Supply independently audited annual accounts in support of their application for the last two years.

## Conditions

Applications will not normally be considered from individuals (exceptional circumstances will need to be demonstrated).

Applications will not be considered from organisations intending to support or oppose any particular political party, or to discriminate on the grounds of race or religion.

Applications will not be considered from private organisations operated as a business to make a profit or surplus.

Applications will not be considered from “upwards funders”, i.e. local groups whose fund-raising is sent to their headquarters for redistribution.

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 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.

The organisation must have clearly stated aims and objectives.

The organisation must provide a written Constitution that has been formally adopted by the members of that organisation, or a similar document of agreement between individuals where their association is less formal.

The organisation must provide, or propose to provide, an activity or service that is believed to be clearly needed by the local community or by a particular group of residents.

The 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.

The organisation is required to have a bank account in its own name with at least two authorised representatives required to sign each cheque, or similar robust financial control system.

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.

Grants will not be awarded retrospectively, for costs incurred in the past. Grants can only be applied to future funding requirements.

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.

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

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

The Town Council defines a large grant as one in excess of £3000.

The Finance Committee have delegated authority to award grants up to £3,000. Awards over this amount will be in the form of a recommendation to Full Council when final approval must be given.

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

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

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. The grant award maybe phased over a number of years.

### **Completing Your Application Form**

#### **Do not worry if you cannot complete all sections of the form**

The form has been designed to cover a wide range of applicants, and recognises that many of these will not be able to provide some of the information requested on the form.

If you need to use additional sheets to complete any section, please use white paper, size A4, to help with copying.

If you are a formally constituted organisation, remember to enclose a copy of your governing documents and accounts. If not, ensure that you have presented your idea clearly and given enough detail for us to thoroughly understand what you are trying to do.

The form is designed with the following in mind:

#### **Section A**

It is sometimes the case that an application is from a widely dispersed group or organisation, where a local representative is leading the project. We simply need to know who you are, and how we should contact you if we need to discuss your application in more detail.

#### **Section B**

We are seeking enough information to allow us some insight into the workings of your group. Do not worry about fine points of distinction between categories of member, if you have them, we simply need to form an idea of your group and how it goes about its work.

### **Section C**

We need to form a clear picture of the organisation, project, or service that you are planning. We will look for a close relationship with our own policy wherever possible, and evidence of sensible planning and research.

Always remember that the money we award is public money and we must ensure that it will be spent wisely, and for the benefit of local residents.

We must also ensure that in giving a grant we are not acting outside our statutory powers.

We may decide that your application deserves an award, but be unable to give any money immediately, in which case we need to understand clearly how the project will run and may suggest that you re-submit your application at a later date.

We will use the information you provide in this section to gain assurance that the project is viable, will be adequately managed and that you have planned sensibly to achieve your aims. Do not worry about precise details (unless the plan is very simple), we are looking for an overall impression of the elements of your scheme and how you have approached the issue of funding.

### **Section D**

If you are able to provide formal documents and details then you must do so. If you are a small or informal group, then you should attempt to show clearly how you ensure proper control of your financial affairs.

### **Section E**

We must be assured that the application is made with the approval of your organisation, if you are formally structured. If you are a small, informal group this can be addressed with a simple written statement from the parties involved.

### **Section F**

We hope that completing the form will not be too difficult, but do expect some effort to provide the information we require.

### **Section G**

This is a binding agreement, which will apply in the event that your application is successful. Please read it carefully, and do not sign section E unless you understand the terms and are prepared to accept them fully.

### **Section H**

Please take a moment to go through this checklist and tick to confirm that the required information and supporting documentation has been provided.