



Cranbrook and Sissinghurst Parish Council

Grant Awarding Policy

INTRODUCTION

Cranbrook and Sissinghurst Parish Council (the Council) has the power to award grants under the General Power of Competence. It recognises the importance of supporting local groups and organisations that benefit the local community and sets aside a sum of money each year for good causes in the Parish, available as a grant. This policy recognises the Council's responsibility to ensure that locally collected funds are allocated prudently. This aligns with the Council's overall aim 'To improve the quality of life for our parishioners'

The sum allocated is part of the annual precept the Council collects from the electorate and is available for distribution from 1st April each year.

The availability of funds for grants is dependent on the Council's overall financial position and the choices it makes when allocating its resources each year. One year's funding may not necessarily mirror previous years. The Council will set an amount within the budget each year that will be allocated for the duration of the financial year.

These guidelines are designed to give a broad overview of what projects and requests might be considered and how an application can be made.

WHAT IS A GRANT?

A grant is any payment made by the Council to be used by 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 Council. The Council awards grants, at its discretion, to Parish organisations which can demonstrate a clear need for financial support and benefit the Parish (without discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, sexual orientation, colour, occupation, religion or political opinion).

WHAT CAN BE FUNDED?

Applications will be considered for, but will not be limited to, the following purposes:

- Projects which improve the long-term well-being of residents
- Improvements related to recreation and/or sports
- Improving the environment

- Providing a local service not met elsewhere
- For running costs of a local viable group that is experiencing short-term hardship
- For hosting special events or celebrations
- For activities that raise the profile of the Parish

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

To be eligible to apply for a grant an organisation/individual must usually:

- Be a not-for-profit body
- Be established for charitable, social, or recreational purposes
- Have a constitution, or set of rules, which defines its aims, objectives and operational procedures
- Be able to provide a copy of its latest annual accounts which should be signed by a person independent of the group
- Have a bank account that is in the name of the organisation.
- Be able to demonstrate clearly how the funding will benefit the local community.
- Individual applicants may be considered on a case-by-case basis but they must be able to demonstrate a clear benefit to the community of Cranbrook and Sissinghurst Parish (i.e., that it is not just for personal benefit)
- Newly formed organisations should provide a detailed budget and business plan

THE FOLLOWING ARE NOT ELIGIBLE

- Businesses or projects which improve or benefit privately owned land or property
- The running costs of any organisation (except as above)
- Any projects that are the prime statutory responsibility of other government bodies
- Political Parties
- Religious organisations (unless for purposes that do not discriminate on grounds of belief)
- 'Upward funders' – local groups where fundraising is sent to central headquarters for redistribution, except where a clear local benefit can be demonstrated
- Retrospective applications for projects which have already been completed.

CONDITIONS OF SUPPORT

The Council will make the award of any grant subject to all or some of the following conditions. Required conditions will be at the discretion of the Council and take into account an organisations individual circumstances:

- Applicants will be expected to demonstrate which other funding sources they have applied for before approaching the Council.
- The amount of the award will be at the discretion of the Council.
- The receiving organisation/individual must provide the Council with a report within six months of receipt of the grant confirming how the money was spent. Failure to produce such a report may result in the grant having to be refunded.

- Copies of invoices and/or other documentation including receipts, photographs will be required as evidence that the expenditure has been accrued
- Funding must only be used for the purpose agreed with the Council. Failure to do so will necessitate the return of the grant.
- Funding awarded must be spent within the financial year
- If the project costs more than anticipated, the shortfall must be met by the organisation, no further funding will be agreed
- The Council requires that its support is acknowledged in any publications, publicity and annual reports
- Organisations are restricted to making only one application per financial year and previous years' requests may be considered to ensure as many different organisations within the community are benefitting as possible
- Providing funding in one year does not set a precedent for another/future year(s)
- The Council has the right to impose additional conditions on any funding awarded as it considers appropriate
- The Council has the right to withdraw any already agreed funding if false information is provided.

PROCESS OF APPLICATION

- Applications must be submitted no later than three months before the grant is required
- All applications will be considered in an open and transparent way, it will NOT be a first come first served process
- All applications must be submitted on the Council's application form (forms are available from the Parish Office on request and are available for download on the Parish Council's website)
- All applications must include a copy of the most recent audited accounts and bank statements to date
- New organisations should provide a business case
- Organisations will be required to provide a copy of their constitution together with the details of the aims and purpose, project or activity and demonstrate a clear need for funding
- All applications must demonstrate clearly how the funding will be of benefit to the local community within the Parish
- The Clerk to the Council will receive all applications in the first instance to ensure all criteria are met before taking to committee for decision
- The Clerk reserves the right to refuse an application if all criteria are not met or to ask for more information/evidence as he/she feels appropriate
- Applications will be considered at the next Policy & Resources Committee. Applications must be received 7 days prior to the meeting.
- The Council may ask for further information in order to consider the application
- All applicants will be contacted following the Council's decision.

POSSIBLE DECISIONS

The Parish Council will make one of the following decisions:

- Agree the funding request in full or in part
- Agree funding in principle, subject to additional stated requirements
- Agree funding to be made at a later date for all or part of the amount requested
- Defer consideration of the application to a future date or period
- Refer the applicant to alternative funding sources
- Decline the application

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