

Great Aycliffe Town Council

Grants and Donations Policy



April 2021

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GRANTS AND DONATIONS POLICY

1.0 Scope of the Policy

- 1.1 The Town Council recognises the hard work of the many individuals and organisations that help to improve services and facilities for residents of the Parish and promote the community of Great Aycliffe.
- 1.2 The Town Council is committed to providing assistance and support to individuals, charities, community organisations and voluntary groups living, working, or serving the community of Great Aycliffe and has in place a Grants and Donations Fund to enable it to provide financial support.
- 1.3 This policy contributes towards the achievement of Strategic Aims 1, 2 and 6 in the Council's Service Delivery Plan:-
 1. *To provide good quality governance and management of the Council.*
 2. *To manage the council's finances and assets in a responsible manner.*
 6. *To help and encourage partnership working to improve services and facilities for the residents of Great Aycliffe.*
- 1.4 The Council currently operates the following grant schemes:-
 1. Annual Grants and Donations Budget of £5,000 per year.
 2. Annual Youth Council Grant Budget of £2,000 per year.
- 1.5 The above budgets may be supplemented from time to time by additional resources, for example additional budget approvals may be made via the annual budget setting process or unspent resources may be carried forward from year to year as part of the year-end closedown process.
- 1.6 The Council may also from time to time set aside additional grants funds. For example, financial support may be requested from the Council's Large Community Events Budget from local organisations wishing to hold community events within the Parish, and the Council has also recently agreed to setup a COVID-19 Recovery Reserve which is likely to include a Community Grants Fund.
- 1.7 The Council may also provide non-financial support to individuals and community organisations, for example by providing advice and support, offering free use of Council land, facilities, and equipment where appropriate e.g. use of land to hold events, vouchers for use of facilities such as the golf complex and sports complex to use as prizes for fundraising activities.
- 1.8 The Council may also consider one-off capital grants to community organisations, subject to capital reserves being available. However, such contributions would fall outside of the scope of this Grants and Donations Policy and would therefore be considered and dealt with on an individual basis following any such enquiries being received by Council.
- 1.9 It is important to note that this policy is intended to be flexible and allow scope to consider each application on its individual merits. The Policy may therefore be amended from time to time, or the requirements waived. This would be subject to consideration by the Review Sub Committee and the approval of the Policy and Resources Committee.

2.0 Purpose of the Policy

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to set out the procedures and guidelines for the consideration and approval of requests for grants, donations or financial assistance from individuals, charities, community, and voluntary organisations, and not for profit groups who live, work, or serve the community of Great Aycliffe.
- 2.2 Grants and donations are funded from taxpayer's money and the implementation of this policy will help the Town Council to make informed assessments of grant applications and donation requests in order to make decisions in a fair, objective, and transparent way.
- 2.3 This policy will be split between the requirements for small grants and donations of up to £1,000 each, and the requirements for large grants of between £1,000 and £5,000.

3.0 Legal Framework

- 3.1 Under the powers conferred by the Localism Act 2011, the Town Council has adopted the General Power of Competence.
- 3.2 The power allows the Council to spend money for the benefit of the people in its area, on activities and services that are not specifically authorised under any other powers providing that action is allowed by statute and promotes the welfare of Great Aycliffe parish residents.
- 3.3 This power therefore enables the Council to make grants and donations without any financial limit or restrictions on the purpose for which the grant is given, unless there is a specific power or duty that the Council is still required to observe e.g. grants to a church are not permitted.
- 3.4 Grants and donations are therefore made by the Town Council to individuals and community organisations under the General Power of Competence.

4.0 Eligibility Criteria

Organisations

- 4.1 The Council will consider applications for small grants and donations, large grants, or non-financial assistance, from any organisation that meets the following criteria:-
 - a) They are a local charity, community interest company (C.I.C), voluntary or community organisation or other non-profit making body.
 - b) They provide services or carry out activities that improve life for residents of Great Aycliffe or enhance or promote the community.
 - c) They are a regional or national organisation, where they can demonstrate that the funding will be ring fenced for use specifically to improve life for residents of Great Aycliffe or promote the community.
 - d) The work of the organisation and funded activities or services complements the values and strategic aims of the Town Council.
 - e) The amount of the grant or donation is commensurate with the benefit that will be provided to the community of Great Aycliffe.

- 4.2 Examples of eligible organisations would include local community centres, residents' groups, voluntary groups, youth centres, dance schools, sports clubs, scouts, cubs, brownies, and guides, and charities providing services directly to the residents of Great Aycliffe.
- 4.3 All organisations applying for financial assistance must be providing a service that benefits the community of Great Aycliffe and preference will be given to those organisations that have an approved constitution and dedicated bank account in place.
- 4.4 The Council will not consider grants or donations or requests for non-financial assistance from the following:-
- Organisations that do not provide a service that benefits the community of Great Aycliffe;
 - Individuals, other than those meeting the requirements of paragraphs 4.5 and 4.6 below;
 - Statutory organisations e.g. councils, police, schools, where a grant that would constitute the direct replacement of statutory funding;
 - Political groups or activities promoting political beliefs (other than the free use of meeting rooms for political groups of the Town Council for meetings relating to Council business);
 - Religious groups where funding is to be used to promote specific religious beliefs;
 - Any works on property relating to the affairs of the church or an ecclesiastical charity;
 - The payment of staff salaries;
 - Private sector or 'for profit' organisation.
 - Activities or services that do not complement the strategic aims and values of the Town Council;
 - Projects completed, services provided or equipment purchased before the funding application has been considered;
 - Projects that cannot demonstrate a direct benefit to the community of Great Aycliffe; or
 - Organisations that have a disproportionately high level of uncommitted reserves.

Individuals

- 4.5 Applications for small grants and donations from individuals may be considered in appropriate circumstances, including the following:-
- (a) Charitable or educational purposes linked to recognised bodies acceptable to the Council;
 - (b) Are seen to be of local benefit, for example through information dissemination or are likely to encourage inspiration and motivation within the applicant's peer group.
 - (c) Would help promote and raise the profile of the community of Great Aycliffe e.g. individuals participating in national or international sporting or cultural events.
- 4.6 Individuals will not be eligible to apply for large grants.

5.0 Small Grants and Donations (up to £1,000)

Introduction and General Principles

- 5.1 A total sum of £5,000 per year is currently set aside in the Council's Small Grants and Donations Budget, whilst a further £2,000 is available in the Youth Council Grants Fund, which is administered by the Youth Council, subject to separate guidelines, and overseen by the Policy and Resources Committee.
- 5.2 Applications for a small grant or donation will be limited to a maximum of £1,000, although it is expected that most small grants and donations will be smaller amounts in the region of £100 to £250 in order to ensure that the grants fund benefits as many individuals and organisations as possible.
- 5.3 Requests may also be made via the Small Grants and Donations Budget for non-monetary support such as requests such as providing advice and support, offering free use of Council land, or requesting free use of facilities such as the golf complex and sports complex for charity events or to use as prizes for fundraising activities.
- 5.4 Requests for the use of Council land to hold events would usually be considered by the Events Sub Committee via an Events Application.
- 5.5 Requests for non-monetary support such as the use of facilities without charge or prizes for fundraising activity would be considered by the Policy and Resources Committee under Grants and Donations, and the equivalent monetary value of the support would be recharged to the Small Grants and Donations Budget e.g. the cost of four golf rounds or a meals voucher for the sports complex.

Small Grant or Donation Application Process

- 5.6 Applications for a small grant or donation may be applied for via a letter which includes or has attached to it sufficient supporting information to fully explain the nature of the grant or donation request.
- 5.7 If the grant or donation request is from an organisation, a copy of the constitution and the latest set of audited accounts will be required to be provided , if these are available, and preference will be given to those organisations that are formally constituted and have audited accounts.
- 5.8 As a general rule, only one application per year will be accepted from any organisation or individual, although further applications may be considered in exceptional circumstances.
- 5.9 Grants will be awarded on a case by case basis and an award made one year is not an indication that funding will be continued in future years and organisations should not therefore presume that funding will continue.
- 5.10 Small grant or donation requests will be considered at the next available meeting of the Council's Policy and Resources Committee.
- 5.11 Once submitted, the grant application and supporting documents will be circulated to all Council Members and will be considered a public document. Should an

applicant require that any information contained in either the application or the supporting documents remain confidential, they should attach a note to explain which items must remain confidential, and why.

Consideration of Small Grant or Donation Requests

- 5.12 All grant applications will initially be assessed for eligibility in accordance with the requirements of this policy by the Council's Corporate Management Team.
- 5.13 Additional information or clarification will be requested where necessary to ensure that all relevant information is available for consideration by the Council's Policy and Resources Committee.
- 5.14 The following considerations will be taken into account by the Policy and Resources Committee in reviewing requests for small grants and donations:-
- Evidence that the organisation is located in or provides services to the community of Great Aycliffe;
 - The level of benefit or value to the community of Great Aycliffe that the donation will make;
 - How well the grant request complements the Town Council's values and strategic aims and objectives;
 - Evidence that the organisation is well-managed and governed via a review of the constitution of the organisation;
 - Consideration of the financial need and sustainability of the organisation via a review of the accounts of the organisation;
 - Where relevant, evidence that funding has been sought from other sources and the level of match funding available; and
 - Whether the group has received a donation in the past.

6.0 Large Grants and Donations (Between £1,000 to £5,000)

Introduction and General Principles

- 6.1 The Council does not currently have a dedicated Large Grants Fund in place within its Revenue and Capital Budget.
- 6.2 However, the Council may from time to time set aside sums of money for the purpose of providing large grants or set up a specific Large Grants Fund on either an ongoing or one-off basis.
- 6.3 For example, financial support can currently be requested from the Council's Large Community Events Budget from local organisations wishing to hold community events within the Parish.
- 6.4 Such requests are currently dealt with via the Council's Events Sub Committee and subject to the completion of an Application for Event Funding Form. A copy of this form is attached at Appendix 1.
- 6.5 The Council has also recently agreed to setup a COVID-19 Recovery Reserve for the 2021/22 financial year which is likely to include a Community Grants Fund.
- 6.6 This section of the Grants and Donations Policy would apply in the case of the of any grant or donation request in excess of £1,000 up to a total of £5,000.

- 6.7 Large grants and donations may only be applied for by organisations. Individuals will not be eligible to apply for large grants.
- 6.8 Grants in excess of £5,000 would fall outside of the scope of this Grants and Donations Policy and would therefore be considered and dealt with on an individual basis following any such enquiries being received by Council and would be subject to a detailed report being presented to the Policy and Resources Committee.

Large Grant or Donation Application Process

- 6.9 Organisations must apply for a large grant or donation using a Large Grant Application Form. A copy of the Large Grant Application Form is attached at Appendix 2.
- 6.10 Application forms can be downloaded from the Council website or are available at the Council Offices. Assistance may be requested by any group having difficulties completing the application form.
- 6.11 This form requests information around the organisation applying for the large grant, including its name, address, contact details, and principal aims and objectives, as well as detailed information around the nature of the grant request, including the purpose the grant is to be used for, how many Great Aycliffe residents will benefit, the costs involved, how much grant is being requested, and any match funding.
- 6.12 A copy of the organisation's constitution, equal opportunities policy, safeguarding policy, registered charity number (if applicable), public liability insurance, annual report, the latest set of audited accounts and latest account balance will also be required to be provided.
- 6.13 Copies of quotes will be required in advance for any individual items of expenditure over the value of £1,000.
- 6.14 As a general rule, only one application per year will be accepted from any organisation, although further applications may be considered in exceptional circumstances.
- 6.15 Grants will be awarded on a case by case basis and an award made one year is not an indication that funding will be continued in future years and organisations should not therefore presume that funding will continue.
- 6.16 Large grant or donation requests will be considered at the next available meeting of the Council's Policy and Resources Committee.
- 6.17 Once submitted, the grant application and supporting documents will be circulated to all Council Members and will be considered a public document. Should an applicant require that any information contained in either the application or the supporting documents remain confidential, they should attach a note to explain which items must remain confidential, and why.
- 6.18 Large grants and donations are subject to the applicant agreeing to and signing the Large Grant Terms and Conditions attached at Appendix 3.
- 6.19 These terms and conditions require the applicant to agree to and comply with the following requirements:-
- The completion of a Post Grant Questionnaire;

- The grant or donation can only be used for the purpose stated in the application;
- Grants and donations must be spent within one year of the grant award and any unspent monies left must be returned;
- Copies of invoices or receipts relating to each item of expenditure relating to the grant must be provided;
- The applicant must acknowledge the financial support received from the Council in any publicity or promotional material;
- The Council reserves the right to reclaim any grant not being used for the specified purpose of the application or in the event that the organisation disband or a project or event does not go ahead.

6.20 Additional grant conditions may also be attached to any funding from the Town Council and if so these will be set out in the grant confirmation letter.

6.21 Organisations are responsible for ensuring that they are in compliance with all applicable legal and statutory requirements.

6.22 A copy of the Post Grant Questionnaire is included with the Large Grant Terms and Conditions attached at Appendix 3.

6.23 This questionnaire must be completed within one month of the completion of the project or event to which the grant relates.

6.24 The questionnaire requires the organisation to provide details of the project or event including confirmation that it went ahead, confirming its success and the benefit it has brought to the community of Great Aycliffe, and providing a breakdown or expenditure, supported by copy receipts or invoices.

6.25 Failure to complete the Post Grant Questionnaire or comply with any of the terms conditions attached to a grant may result in the grant being repaid and affect future grant applications.

Consideration of Large Grant or Donation Requests

6.26 All large grant applications will initially be assessed for eligibility in accordance with the requirements of this policy by the Corporate Management Team.

6.27 Additional information or clarification will be requested where necessary to ensure that all relevant information is available for consideration by the Council's Policy and Resources Committee.

6.28 The large grant or donation request will be presented to the next available Policy and Resources Committee for consideration.

6.29 The following considerations will be taken into account by the Policy and Resources Committee in reviewing requests for large grants and donations:-

- Evidence that the organisation is located in or provides services to the community of Great Aycliffe;
- The level of benefit or value to the community of Great Aycliffe that the large grant will make;
- Evidence that the organisation is well-managed and governed via a review of the constitution of the organisation and its annual report;
- Consideration of the financial need and sustainability of the organisation via a review of the accounts of the organisation and its level of its current balances;
- Evidence that funding has been sought from other sources and the level of match funding available; and
- Whether the group has received a grant or donation in the past.

6.31 The organisation is welcome to attend the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee during which the grant request is to be considered and speak in support of their grant application under the public questions section of the agenda.

7.0 Payment of Grants and Donations

7.1 Successful applicants will receive payment following approval of the grant or donation at the Council meeting following the Policy and Resources Committee.

7.2 Grants will be paid by cheque, made out to the named organisation or individual or by BACS transfer upon request.