

Halesworth Town Council's Grant Policy



1. Objectives

- To promote Halesworth as a vibrant, active and sustainable community
- To contribute to development of facilities in the community
- To benefit other residents in the community, not individuals
- To be awarded to non-profit making organisations, charitable groups or voluntary community groups
- Grants will not be awarded to individuals

2. Definition of a Grant

2.1 A grant is defined as an award of funds to an organisation to undertake voluntary and community activities. The organisation themselves determine their activities and the Council makes a financial contribution through awarding funding.

2.2 The Council will allocate resources:

- Against clear and consistent criteria
- That achieve quality and effectiveness of services
- Have common and transparent arrangements for agreeing objectives, monitoring performance and evaluation

2.3 Grants would not normally exceed 50% of the cost of the project or activity

2.4 Applicants will need to provide details of: their aims and purpose; project activity; proportion/number of beneficiaries living in the electoral area; and demonstrate a clear need for funding

2.5 All grants must be used exclusively for the purposes to which it was awarded and successful applicants will need to provide evidence to this effect by completing an End of Project Monitoring form at the end of the project, but no later than 12 months from receiving the grant (see item 9). The Council reserves the right to request repayment of any grants monies awarded that are a) unspent within 12 months of receiving the grant and/or b) spent for any purpose that is not directly related to the original grant application.

3. Performance management

The Council recognises that performance is an important way of showing that public money is spent in the right way and achieves best value. This is to ensure, the level of service delivery, meeting gaps in existing provision, meeting changing needs, attracting new funding sources, increasing voluntary involvement and ensuring proper governance and financial management.

4. Timing of applications

4.1 Grants will not be made retrospectively and normally only one application will be considered from each organisation in any one financial year.

4.2 Ongoing commitments to award grants or subsidies in future years will not be made. A fresh application will be required each year.

4.3 Applicants are encouraged to attend the Council meeting when the application is being considered. This will greatly assist the process and increase the chances of a successful application. It will also significantly reduce the possibility that the application is deferred if there is a representative present to answer any questions.

4.4 All valid applications (over £250) will be considered in four grant windows; April, July, October and January by the Finance Committee prior to submission to full Council. Applications under £250 will be considered at any time. Emergency applications may also be considered at any time during the year but only at the discretion of the Chair of the Finance Committee.

4.5 All applicants will be contacted following a decision by the Finance Committee (or the Full Council if the application exceeds £5,000).

5. Council budget setting

5.1 The grants budget will be set annually as part of the general budget setting process to be financed out of the precept.

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5.2 This maybe based on the previous year's uptake and the limit set for the annual spending limit for section 137*.

5.3 Consideration will also be given to major projects ongoing in the community, for example the refurbishment of a community hall.

6. Supporting documents required

6.1 Organisations will be required to provide a copy of their previous year's accounts or for new initiatives a budget forecast.

6.2 An organisation is required to have a bank account in its own name with two authorised representatives required to sign each cheque

7. Publicity and Transparency

7.1 The Council will publicise the availability of grant aid widely throughout the community.

7.2 It will report annually on the total spent on grants and list the groups in receipt of a grant and the use made of the grants.

7.3 In awarding grants the Council recognises and supports the valuable contribution made by the voluntary sector to the well-being of the community,

8. Risk Management and review

8.1 There are various associated risks involved in providing funding support.

8.2 The Council will review the grant aid budget annually and periodically review the criteria for awarding grant aid to community organisations.

9. End of Project Grant Monitoring Report

9.1 Successful applicants will be required to complete an End of Project report and provide evidence that the grant was spent for the purposes for which it was awarded.

9.2 It is important that the Council carefully monitors the use of public money and applicants must return the completed form within 12 months of receiving the grant and before any further applications are considered.

9.3 In the interests of transparency, details of the grant awarded will be published on the Council's website.

* *The limit for LGA 1972 section 137 grants 2017/18 is currently £7.57 per head of electorate.*