

ASHFORD HILL with HEADLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Grants and Donations Policy

Introduction

The Parish Council is committed to giving financial support to local initiatives but has a responsibility to distribute grants in a fair and equitable manner to reflect the value of the organisations, services or activities to the residents of Ashford Hill and Headley. To this end the council will consider only donating to organisations, services or activities which can demonstrate that the money will make a real difference to the services that they offer to our community. The Parish Council will not fund activities outside its powers and functions or activities which it considers to be the responsibility of a Statutory Authority.

The Parish Council sets aside a sum of money each year to donate to good causes in the parish as either a grant or a donation. The sum allocated by the Parish Council is part of the annual precept the Parish Council collects from the electorate and is available for distribution from 1 April of each year.

The Parish Council is governed by rules set out in the Local Government Act 1972 (section 137) which states the money must be spent on purposes for the direct benefit of the parish and be commensurate with the expenditure incurred, for example, spending a large amount for the benefit of only one or two people is not acceptable.

Contributions may be made to charities and bodies providing a public service on a non-profit-making basis, but only in furtherance of their work in the United Kingdom. It is unlawful for a council to contribute to an individual or a charity or a public service body operating overseas. Contributions to UK charities and bodies providing a public service do not have to bring any direct benefit to the council's area or to its inhabitants.

No further amount will be allocated from the annual budget if the money is committed before the end of the financial year (end of March each year).

Policy

Applications will be accepted throughout the financial year from individuals (on behalf of a group) or not for profit community groups, or where the donation is to provide benefit to residents of the Parish. Any expenditure under section 137 must be properly authorised by resolution, minuted and shown in a separate column in the Councils' accounts.

The Parish Council operate the following criteria:

- Only one application for a grant in each financial year
- The organisation must be non-profit making (and not an individual)
- Grants are not made retrospectively
- The organisation must be one that, in some way, benefits the local community

- The organisation must demonstrate a clear need for financial support by providing a description of the project / activity for which a contribution is needed
- A set of audited accounts or suitable financial statement must be submitted to ensure there is a genuine need for a grant
- Organisations that have only recently set up and do not have audited accounts should provide a financial statement regarding their proposed budget instead
- Efforts to generate income from other sources must be submitted
- A report on how the money was spent should be submitted to the Parish Council with details of the outturn
- Monitoring may take place

Procedure

Although applications will be accepted throughout the year, normally they will be considered twice during the financial year – in the months of June and December. Ideally, therefore applications should be submitted to the Clerk of the Council not later than the end of the preceding month with the information set out in the policy.

Please note that all agenda papers are published and therefore in the public domain. The Clerk of the Council will inform the applicant of the Councils' decision and arrange payment if you are successful or an explanation if the grant or donation was turned down.

Should the application be successful:

- A written receipt must be provided by the organisation and a note to show the funds have been used for the purposes specified in the application.
- The Council reserves the right to require repayment in the event of the outcome not being achieved.
- The Council reserves the right to request the organisation to present their achievements at the Parish Council's Annual Parish Meeting.

Adopted March 2024

Revised April 2024, July 2024