

Gunness Parish Council

Grant, Budget and Awards Policy and Process – December 2024

Introduction

Gunness Parish Council (the Council) is ultimately funded by the residents of Gunness through the North Lincolnshire Council Precept. It therefore has only limited funds available to assist Community Organisations working in Gunness for the benefit of the community.

Subject to funding being available, the Council is committed to helping local Community Organisations which promote and enhance community life in the Parish

The Council's financial support is provided by way of grants. The Council is committed to following best practice in grant giving. To assess applications fairly, rationally and objectively each one is subject to a range of criteria which are designed to be general indicators of need but are not exclusive and can be flexibly applied.

The Council's policy on grants is based on the principle of supporting the development of partnerships which encourage and enable local Community Organisations to deliver local projects, services and opportunities to the residents of Gunness.

The aims of the Council's Grant Award Policy

The Council awards grants to support the following aims:

- To enable local people to participate in Community Organisations and activities.
- To help local Community Organisations improve their delivery effectiveness.
- To assist in the provision of services via the voluntary sector that are beneficial to local people.
- To improve or enhance the local environment.

General Principles

In managing the grant, budget and award process the Council will apply the following principles;

- A Community Organisation is defined as;
 - A non-profit making group, set up and run by a voluntary, unpaid management committee and/or an organisation that is registered with

The Charity Commission, and operates exclusively for charitable purposes.

- Grants will be given based on need, merit and contribution to the local community.
- Applicants must clearly show how any Grant given will benefit the people living in the Parish.
- Any Grant given will be subject to ongoing monitoring and subsequent evaluation of the outcome of the grant.
- Community Organisations should not make a presumption that the award of a Grant will continue on an annual basis.
- The Grants budget is set for the following financial year ensuring that it is within the maximum amount defined by Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Grants and Awards Process

Application process

To apply for a Grant the Community Organisation must;

- Be a Community Organisation that meets the definition above in the General Principles section.
- Have a constitution
- Have a dedicated bank account.
- Be operating or providing a service to the Parish.
- Make the Grant application using the latest version of the Grant Application Form available on the Council website.
- Provide all the information requested in the Grant Application Form including the recent set of accounts.
- Adhere to deadlines provided in the timescale for the process.

The Council welcomes applications from small or newly formed groups and those that have not applied before.

It is understood that a new Community Organisation may not yet be in a position to immediately fulfil all of the criteria set out above. A Grant application can still be made if there is a plan and commitment to fulfil the criteria prior to the Grant being paid early in the following Financial Year. The Council will need to see evidence of this having been completed prior to the payment being made.

Grant Application forms are available by email from the Parish Clerk. The Parish Clerk can also help any group having difficulties completing the application form.

Review and Approval Process

At the start of the review process the Grants sub-committee will set a working assumption upper limit for the Grants based on the number of electors in the Parish and the current Retail Price index applied the appropriate sum for the current financial year. This is a working assumption for the maximum that the budget can be.

A sub-committee of the Council will review all grant applications once the deadline for applications has passed.

The Council will use the following criteria to decide on Grant applications;

- Whether the Community Organisation has followed the Grants process and meets our requirements and Grant awarding policy.
- Level of benefit to Gunness and the impact the grant will make.
- Evidence of a well-managed group including previous experience and track record.
- Financial sustainability and viability of group and/or project.
- Evidence that funding has been sought from other sources and the level of such funding obtained.
- Evidence of compliance with previous Grant award conditions.

The Council will not fund the following;

- Organisations that do not provide a service to the community in Gunness.
- Individuals or appeals supporting an individual.
- General appeals.
- Statutory organisations or the direct replacement of statutory funding.
- Political groups or activities promoting political beliefs.
- Religious groups where funding is to be used to promote religious beliefs.
- Arts & sports projects with no community or charitable element.
- Medical research, equipment or treatment.
- Animal welfare.
- Projects that may take place before an application can be decided.
- Organisations that have a closed or restricted membership.
- Equipment or other costs that have already been purchased or incurred prior to the application being considered.
- Grants for the repayment of loans or cost of services, equipment or provisions in anticipation of a grant.

Invalid applications will be returned to the applicants stating the reason why.

If an organisation has been told that it's application has been deemed invalid it may choose to resubmit an amended application providing that it is received by the Clerk more than 10 working days before the date of the Council meeting at which the Grant applications are due to be considered.

On completion of the review by the Sub-Committee all valid applications will be submitted to the Council for consideration and approval. This submission will include

the individual and total amounts requested and how this relates to the Grant budget maximum.

The Council may require or invite applicants to a meeting with sub-committee or to a Council meeting to present their case and/or answer questions.

In the event that the total value of all the Grants applied for exceeds the Grant budget working assumption maximum the Council must choose one or more of the following actions in order to address the excess amount;

- Decline to award specific applications
- Reduce the award amount on specific applications
- Reduce the amount on all applications by a percentage or set value amount

All valid applicants will be notified of the Council's decision in principle following the Council meeting.

The Sub-Committee may recommend and/or the Council may require that additional conditions be attached to any grant and these will be set out in the award confirmation letter.

Grants approved at this meeting are still subject to the overall Council budget for the following financial year being approved.

Payment process

All approved grants will be paid after the June 2025 Parish Council meeting.

Grants will only be paid by cheque payment into to the bank account of the named organisation.

Monitoring and reporting requirements

The Council may require that successful recipients of a grant provide information about and/or evidence of how the grant payments have been utilised.

In particular, if requested groups are to provide the Council with written evidence of what the money has been spent on and the benefit it has brought to the people of Gunness. Such evidence of how the money has been spent can include copies of invoices and receipts, plus attendance numbers, photos, press clippings, etc. where applicable. This information should be submitted within 1 month of the event/project end or by the end of February each year whichever is sooner, so that it can be reported at the Annual Parish Meeting.

General grant conditions

- Grants are awarded on an annual basis and an award made this year is not an indication that funding will be continued in other years.
- The grant can only be used for the purpose stated in the application and the Council reserves the right to reclaim any grant not being used for the specified purpose of the

application. However, if a group wishes to change the purpose of the grant, they must seek approval by writing to the Council who will consider whether to approve the change. Change of purpose requests for projects where the work has already been completed will not be considered.

- Organisations are responsible for ensuring that they are compliant with all applicable legal and statutory requirements (including those relating to health and safety and equalities).
- Should, for any reason, the organisation disband or the project not completed the Council may ask for all or part of the monies to be returned.
- Acknowledgement of the financial support received from the Council is required on documentation and any promotional material, including websites.
- In order to receive payment, organisations must have a bank account into which grants can be paid; payments will not be made to private individuals.
- Only one application per year will be accepted from any organisation.
- Failure to comply with any conditions attached to a grant may result in the grant being repaid or affect future grant assistance.
- The Council's decision is final and there is no appeal process.

Grant Budget process

The Grant budget will be set to the total of all the approved grants and must be below the working assumption maximum agreed by the sub-committee. This will then form part of the Precept budget.

Policy agreed at meeting of Gunness Parish Council held on 5th December 2024

Signed -----

Cllr Tony Gosling

Chairman of Gunness Parish Council