

North Mundham Parish Council Grant Awarding Policy and Procedure

Once adopted, this policy will take effect from the first day of April following.

Introduction to Policy

1. A grant is any payment or gift made by the Parish Council to an organisation which is not directly controlled or administered by the Parish Council, for a specific purpose that will benefit the Parish or residents of the Parish.
2. The law requires that grants made under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 must be “in the interests of or will directly benefit the area or its inhabitants, or of part of it, or some of it” and “the direct benefit should be commensurate with expenditure”. It is also a requirement that where a grant of more than £2000 is made using Section 137 then the Council is required to demand that the recipient provides, as a condition of the grant, an account of how the grant has been used. Similar considerations will apply when considering applications for other grants such as those made under the General Power of Competence.

Purpose

3. The Parish Council may award grants, at its absolute discretion, to voluntary or charitable organisations which can demonstrate a clear need for financial support to achieve an objective which will benefit the Parish by:
 - providing a service
 - enhancing the quality of life,
 - improving recreation or sports facilities
 - improving the environment
 - promoting the Parish of North Mundham in a positive way.

Eligibility

4. The Parish Council will not award grants to:
 - private individuals
 - commercial organisations
 - purposes for which there is a statutory duty upon other local or central government departments to fund or provide
 - regional or national organisations unless their activities provide an identifiable benefit to local residents
 - political parties
 - religious organisations: unless for a purpose which does not discriminate on grounds of belief.
5. This list is not exclusive, and may be added to at the council's discretion.

Application Procedure

6. Only one application for a grant will be considered from any organisation in any one financial year.
7. Ongoing commitments to award grants in future years will not be made. A fresh application will be required each year. This will be at the discretion of the Council.
8. Organisations requesting financial assistance for amounts more than £100 are required to submit an application by 30 September, at the latest, in the financial year preceding their funding requirement in time to inform the Council's discussion of the next year's budget. Grant requests will normally be considered by the Council at its January meeting. Requests for grant funding for amounts of £100 or less can be submitted at any time.

9. Grant applicants must submit a completed application form. This must be supported by a copy of their last year-end accounts showing the organisation's income, expenditure and level of balances. Organisations that do not prepare annual accounts must supply copies of bank statements covering the six months preceding the application. The requirement to produce accounts will be waived for national or regional organisations which publish their accounts. The Council may award grants to organisations of its own choosing which have not submitted a formal application.

10. Grants cannot be awarded after the relevant project or event has been completed

Other Considerations

11. Organisations will normally be expected to have clear written aims and objectives, a written constitution, and a separate bank account controlled by more than one signatory.

12. For grant requests for projects costing over £3,000 the Parish Council will require that the organisation has procurement policies of an equal or greater stringency as its own, for example obtaining a minimum of three quotations. The Parish Council reserves the right to ask for proof of the quotations process.

13. Projects notified and included in the Parish Council's budget will only have the funds released on completion of the work.

14. Whilst the Parish Council would not normally consider applications for capital projects, any such applications will require a more substantial case with supporting evidence of community benefit. For these grants, the council will expect to see evidence of fund-raising or other third party funding.

15. All grants awarded will be subject to regular reporting to North Mundham Parish Council to demonstrate progress and the achievement of a community benefit.

Grant Budget

16. At the Parish Council's specific annual budgeting meeting an amount will be set from which grants will be awarded during the following financial year. This amount will principally be for grant requests that have already been received by the Parish Council in accordance with the application procedure, and which it envisages may be granted. Any amount included within the budget for an application amount does not guarantee an award: a decision upon an award will remain for approval by the Parish Council at the appropriate meeting.

17. An additional amount will be reserved from which other grant requests up to £100 may be made. A maximum award of £100 only for such unplanned applications will be considered.

18. Once the grants budget is exhausted, the Parish Council will only consider emergency requests for assistance, and generally only from organisations with which it has close links.

Processing Grant Requests

19. An unplanned grant request, once received in writing, will be considered at the next meeting of the Parish Council.

20. Each application will be assessed on its own merits. However, to ensure as fair a distribution as possible of available funds, the Parish Council will take into account the amount and frequency of any previous awards. Due account may also be taken of the extent to which funding has been sought or secured from other sources or fund-raising activities.

21. The Parish Council may make the award of any grant or subsidy subject to such additional conditions and requirements as it considers appropriate.

22. The Parish Council reserves the right to refuse any grant application which it considers to be inappropriate, or against the objectives of the Council.

23. Nothing contained herein shall prevent the Parish Council from exercising, at any time, its existing duty or power in respect of providing financial assistance or grants to local or national organisations under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972, Section 137.

Successful Applications

24. A grant award must only be used for the purpose stated in the application. If the organisation is unable to use the money, or a part of it, for the purpose stated then all monies, or the unspent part of such monies, must be returned to the Parish Council. The Parish Council may request proof of expenditure.

25. Where equipment is funded or gifted to an organisation, the Parish Council will require that it be insured and maintained at the expense of the user.

Promotion

26. The Parish Council will ask for recognition from successful groups in the form of the promotion of the Parish Council in the organisation's newsletter or any press release. The Parish Council will also recognise successful groups in its own reports to parishioners.

27. Where appropriate, the Parish Council may require a notice to be affixed to equipment which it has funded.

Adopted on 5th January 2015

Minute Number 10.16(1)

Signed D. Turnbull

Chairman North Mundham Parish Council