



Grants Policy

Introduction

Woodbridge Town Council recognises the immense value of voluntary and community activity and its contribution to residents' well-being, the local economy and the sustainability of a wide range of services which benefit visitors and people living and working in the town. The following policy and procedures are based on the principles of fairness, responsiveness to local need, generosity and accountability.

Woodbridge Town Council has the authority to make grants under the Local Government Act 1972, s 137, which allows a local authority to spend a limited amount on activities for which it has no specific power, but which the authority considers 'will bring direct benefit to the area, or any part of it or all of some of its inhabitants'. The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 added the requirement that the benefit obtained should be commensurate with the expenditure incurred. Whilst this Council gives grants under the General Power of Competence, it follows the rules for s137 as good practice.

Grant requests usually far exceed the funds the Council can earmark for this purpose when setting a budget for the year.

The aim of this policy is to enable the Council to make an informed and fair assessment of relative need and thereby seek to ensure that finite resources are distributed fairly and support the Council's priorities.

Principles

Recipients of previous grants should not assume that they will be awarded a grant in future years. Grants will be awarded on the basis of the criteria and assessment process set out in this policy as amended from time to time.

Grants are awarded at the discretion of the Council.

Eligibility Criteria

Grants will only be awarded to organisations or partnerships which demonstrate that they:

- a) Have a need for grant funding. Grants will not be given to any organisation with significant uncommitted funds

- b) Have, in the opinion of the Council, sound governance arrangements.
- c) Have, in the opinion of the Council, sound financial management.
- d) Represent good value for money.
- e) Have, in the opinion of the Council, sufficient ability to deliver the outcomes anticipated.
- f) Have clear policies on equality and inclusion covering service users, subject to recognised exemptions.

Applications from consortia and partnerships are accepted, when submitted by an organisation accepting lead responsibility for delivery. This organisation must be able to provide evidence and supporting documents confirming their eligibility.

Grants may only be awarded to branches of regional or national organisations which clearly demonstrate how the funding is to be used to specifically benefit the people of Woodbridge.

Application and Determination Process

Information about grants is available on the Council Website.

Grant applications must be submitted by 31st May to be determined at the July meeting of Full Council. In the event that not all funds are allocated in July a further call for Grant applications will be made in December.

Original applications are available on file for scrutiny by any Councillor. The Town Clerk will provide a summary of the applications for members prior to each approval meeting. Visits to applicants' organisations may be arranged via the Town Clerk.

All organisations in receipt of grants will be required to provide a short report by May of each year (or when the project has completed, if sooner) indicating how the grant was used and the benefits arising.

Supporting documentation required

On the application form, confirmation will be required that the following items are available for inspection if required.

- a) Aims of the organisation / Constitution / Memoranda and Articles / Terms of Reference
- b) Equality and Diversity policies
- c) Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (Safeguarding) Policy
- d) Health & Safety Policy

- e) Risk Assessments (covering activities for which funding is sought)
- f) Insurance Certification covering the activities for which funding is sought

The application itself must contain the following information:

- a) Names and addresses of key contact
- b) Names of Chairman, Secretary & Treasurer
- c) Location of activities
- d) Number of clients/members served (where relevant)
- e) Description of service/activity provided, project or event to be supported
- f) Reason for application with details of how the grant will be used
- g) How much funding being applied for
- h) How the grant will benefit the town and people of Woodbridge
- i) Details of any previous financial assistance from the Council in the last 3 years
- j) Other sources of funding for the same purpose, whether secured or unsecured
- k) Latest audited or certified accounts (must not be more than 18 months old)
- l) How Council support will be acknowledged/publicised

The eligibility of applications will be assessed against the following criteria

If the applicant has received funding in the previous year the Council must be satisfied that the applicant has delivered that project or service to a satisfactory level and returned a grant report in good time.

Applicants must answer all the questions on the application form

Applications must demonstrate direct benefit to the inhabitants of Woodbridge

The funding requested must be commensurate with the benefit obtained by the inhabitants of Woodbridge

A schedule of awarded grants will be published on the Council's website annually.

Feedback on individual grant applications may be given on request to the organisation concerned.

Multi-year funding agreements

Organisations which are beneficiaries of Council grant funding may be invited to enter into three year funding agreements. This will assist the Council in the management of its grants budget and the organisation concerned in its forward planning.

- a) Service level Agreements may be offered in return for providing a service to the Council
- b) 3-year Discretionary Grants may be offered to enable long-term planning.

Such beneficiaries, in addition to completion of the annual report, may, at the discretion of the Council, be invited to make a presentation to the Council and /or take part in a question and answer session so that the Council is fully acquainted with their work.

The Council will not make any automatic allowance for inflation.

Conditions for giving grants

Minor changes in how the grant is used may be allowed subject to the funding being used in line with the original application. Any such changes must be applied for to the Council and agreed in writing

Records must be kept showing how the grant has been spent.

Monitoring and management information must be provided to the Council at the end of 12 months, or each year for multi-year funding agreements, in the form of an Annual Report.

3-year funding payments will only be made when monitoring information has been provided in writing for the previous year and the latest available accounts have been submitted.

Any funds not utilised for the original purpose must be offered back to the Council