

Stonham Aspal Parish Council

Grants and Donations Policy

1. Definitions

A grant is awarded for a specific defined purpose. A donation is awarded for general purposes. Both can only be awarded for the benefit of the Parish.

2. Power

- a. All money held by the Parish Council is public money and therefore spending is subject to legal restrictions.
- b. Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 legislates for when a Parish Council can make grants or donations to other organisations that fall outside of other permitted expenditure. Subsection 1 states that a local authority may "...incur expenditure which in their opinion is in the interests of, and will bring direct benefit to, their area or any part of it or all or some of its inhabitants,...."
- c. Grants cannot be made to an individual person for their own use (nb. Payments can be made to an individual on behalf of a local group where evidence is provided see xxx)
- d. Section 137(4)(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 restricts the value of grants that can be made in the financial year 2022/23 the amount is £8.82 per elector
- e. The Parish Council may be in receipt of 'Community Infrastructure Levy' money. Spending of this must be in line with the guidance published by Mid Suffolk District Council which states "The PC have a duty to spend CIL income on providing, improving, replacing, operating or maintaining infrastructure that supports the development of the PC area or anything else concerned with addressing the demands that development places on the area."
- f. The Parish council may opt to purchase an item that a group is trying to obtain rather than issue a grant or donation. In these circumstances the item will remain the property of the parish council eg equipment purchased for the recreation ground.

3. Policy

- a. Any grant or donation must comply with legislation in force.
- b. Any grant or donation made by the Parish Council must directly benefit the Parish of Stonham Aspal and its Parishioners.
- c. The Parish Council cannot make grants to individuals.
- d. The Parish Council can only make donations to charities where their activities directly benefit the parish
- e. The organisation making a request for a donation or grant should be a non-profit making organisation where membership is open (i.e. there is no restriction to membership on grounds of sex, race, religion or any other protected characteristic.)
- f. Grants can only be used for the purpose stated in the application. In the event of an underspend on a project or unintended profit at a non-profit making event any residue must be paid back to the Parish Council up to the value of the original grant. (Unless previously agreed in writing by the Parish Council.)

- g. Donations can only be used for the core purpose of the not-for-profit organisation to whom it has been made.
- h. The Parish Council expects applicants to consider other sources of funding such as by participants / beneficiaries, self-support through charging, grants or donations from other organisations or bodies.
- i. The Council will only approve one off grants or donations against a specific application and will not commit to any continuing expenditure.
- j. Only one grant will be given to any group or organisation, or for any particular purpose, in any financial year (1st April to 31st March).
- k. Grants cannot be awarded after the relevant event or project has been completed.

4. Application process

- a. All applications for grants or donations shall be made in writing using the application form available from the Clerk to the Parish Council or via the Parish Council Website. The form must be completed in full before it will be considered at a meeting. Applicants can contact the Clerk for support in completing the form.
- b. From time to time the Parish Council may elect to donate to a charity who they have regular contact with whom provide a direct benefit to the Parish. In such instances the Clerk can complete the necessary application. (Previous examples Citizens Advice, Air Ambulance)
- c. The Parish Council budget is set in January each year. Where possible applications for grants and donations in the following financial year (1st April – 31st March) should be made before the January meeting of the Parish Council.
- d. Applications for grants or donations will be considered at the next full Parish Council meeting after receipt of the form by the Parish Clerk. The applicant will be notified of the council's decision after the meeting.
- e. Where a Member of the Council is a member of a group/organisation applying for funding, that Member must declare, in accordance with its Code of Conduct, an interest in the matter and refrain from voting. Advice may be sought from the Monitoring Officer.
- f. The Parish Council will assess applications with particular reference to the number of parishioners likely to benefit from the request.
- g. The Parish Council may choose to grant or donate an amount that is different to that requested. An explanation will be given with the council's decision.
- h. When issuing a grant to a formal organisation the Parish Council reserve the right to request copies of accounts, receipts, orders and invoices pertaining to grants made for a specific purpose
- i. When payment is to an individual representing a grant for informal organisation then orders, receipts or invoices must be provided in advance of any payment being made.
- j. The council may request that the applicant provide written feedback detailing how the grant / donation has benefited their group / organisation and the Parish.
- k. The Council's decision on any application is final and there is no right of appeal.
- l. The Council reserves the right to request repayment of any grant or donation where an applicant does not comply with the conditions in this policy.