

## **Grant Policy**

**Adopted - 17/03/2016**

### **1. Introduction**

A grant is any payment or gift made by a Parish Council to an organisation for a specific purpose that will benefit the Parish, or residents of the Parish, and which is not directly controlled or administered by the Parish Council.

Bardney Group Parish Council operates two types of grant, a Section S137 grant and an unrestricted grant.

The law requires that Section 137 grants 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”.

In order to deliver the most benefit for the residents of Bardney and surrounding villages, a similar approach will be applied to the ‘unrestricted’ grant application.

### **2. Who can apply?**

Local community groups, voluntary organisations and sports/recreational clubs, all must be of a non-commercial nature.

Any grant application must be seen to be of benefit to residents of Bardney Group Parish.

### **3. How can the grants be used and how are they decided?**

Grants can normally only be used for capital projects and not for revenue support.

Bardney Group Parish Council awards grants, at its discretion, to 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 the environment, and promoting the Parish of in a positive way.

The Parish Council will hear the application and make a final decision. 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.

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.

The availability of funds is dependent on the Council’s overall financial position and the choices it makes when allocating its resources.

It is not just the role of the Parish Council to award grants. Where possible it actively encourages organisations to seek grants from other agencies to finance projects.

#### **4. When and how should an application be made?**

All applications are to be made on a form that can be obtained from the Parish Clerk or the Parish Council website.

The deadline for returning completed applications is 31st December annually. Grant applications will be considered by the Council at the Parish Council meeting the following February. Funds will be paid to successful applications at the end of the financial year in March.

Normally only one grant will be given in a Council fiscal year.

Ongoing commitments to award grants in future years will not be made. A fresh application will be required each year.

#### **What is required with the application?**

- Full and complete copies of your signed, certified and audited accounts for the last two years (only if your organisation has been in existence for that period), plus recent bank statements for last 3 months. These should also be signed by a member of your organisation, indicating their position held.
- A detailed budget plan and supporting evidence.
- A copy of your organisations Constitution, Terms of Reference or Rules.
- The number, or percentage, of members that belong to the organisation and that live within the Bardney Group Parish area.
- Details of any restrictions placed on who can use/access the organisation's services.
- Should you have had a previous grant from the Council, it is wise to check that you have included a full report of your previous award. Your current grant application might be affected if you fail to do so.
- Evidence of other awards towards the project, e.g. lottery funding, other bodies.
- For grant requests for projects the Parish Council will require that the organisation has robust tendering regulations, e.g. obtaining a minimum of three tenders. The Parish Council reserves the right to request proof of the tender process. See table below

<b>Value of item or service</b>	<b>How to demonstrate value for money</b>
£500 or less	2 quotes or references to 2 catalogue listings
£501 to £1,500	3 quotes or references to 3 catalogue listings
£1,501 to £5,000	3 quotes or 3 formal tenders

#### **Quotes Requirements**

References to catalogue listings should be print-outs or photocopies.

#### **They should include:**

- the date when they were printed or copied;
- the item description and the price;
- the name of the company or catalogue; and
- the page number or webpage reference.

#### **Quotes or tenders must come from:**

- different suppliers that trade as standalone businesses and are not linked through shared ownership; and

- a business that is independent from the applicant or their business.

Quotes or tenders must include:

- a detailed and itemised breakdown of costs;
- the supplier's address, telephone number and a contact name;
- the VAT number (if the supplier is VAT registered and VAT is itemised on the quote); and
- the supplier's company registration number (if they are a limited company).

Quotes or tenders must be:

- for items that are comparable to each other in terms of quality, size, quantity, units and specification;
- from the last 6 months and still valid; and
- made out to the same business address on the application form - online quotes should also be addressed to the business.

Bardney Group Parish Council expects applicants to get the best value for money for any equipment, so applicants will need to give a detailed justification if they haven't used the cheapest quotes. Quotes may be checked against market rates. The following reasons will not be accepted as sufficient justification for why the applicant has not used the cheapest quote:

- the location of the supplier;
- the fact they have bought from a supplier before; or
- any offers the supplier makes about future service or maintenance of equipment.

If applicants provide fewer than the number of quotes or tenders specified in the table above, **they will need to demonstrate that there are no other suppliers available, either domestically or globally** and that the quote or tender selected represents value for money and is fit for the purpose of the project.

If an applicant is proposing to buy second-hand equipment, at the point of claiming their grant, they must provide a declaration from the seller that proves:

- the original proof of purchase;
- it hasn't been bought using public funds in the last 7 years;
  - it meets health and safety legislation;
  - it has at least 5 years' useful life remaining from the date of the final grant payment; and
  - it does not cost more than the market value for new equipment.

## **5. VAT**

BGPC grant awards will not cover reclaimable VAT. If an organisation is unable to cover the cost of the VAT then there is the option for BGPC to pay the relevant bill and then reclaim the VAT.

## **6. 0% Loans**

BGPC reserve the right to offer grants in the form of a 0% interest loan. Loans would be offered over either 12 or 24 months with monthly repayments to be paid by BACS on the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month.

## **7. What will not normally be funded**

The following will not normally be funded:

- Private individuals.
- The activities of political organisations.
- The activities of religious organisations, unless they can show they operate clear and open community activities which do not require membership or connection to the organisation and that the application will be of benefit to the community.
- General operational and maintenance costs.
- Events that have already occurred, equipment already purchased, works already started or completed.
- Repayment of loans or cost of services, equipment or provisions in anticipation of a grant.
- Organisations that have a closed or restricted membership.
- Organisations that are the responsibility of another public body/agency, however some form of matched/joint funding might be considered.
- "Upward funder" i.e. local groups where fund-raising is sent to a central HQ for redistribution.
- Purposes for which there is a statutory duty upon other local or central government departments to fund or provide.

This list is not exclusive, and may be added to at the council's discretion.

## **8. Grant conditions**

- 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.
- Organisations are responsible for ensuring that they are in compliance with all legal and statutory requirements.
- Should for any reason the organisation disband during the period of the grant the Council may ask for all or part of the monies to be paid back.
- Prior approval of the Council is required if any change of purpose of the grant is required.
- Organisations must contact the Council before disposing of any equipment or resources purchased or part purchased with a grant from the Council.
- The Council reserves the right to monitor the use of the grant, the organisation will allow reasonable access to premises/accounts upon request from the Parish Clerk.
- Acknowledgement of the financial support received from the Council is required on documentation and any promotional literature or other media operation. To not do so could mean funding being withdrawn.
- To be eligible for a grant an organisation shall not discriminate on grounds of racial origin, gender, disability, age, ( except for obvious reasons, such as becoming a member of a Youth club), and political or religious persuasion.
- Normally only one grant per year, though exceptions may be made.
- More than one project may be comprised in a grant, though one completed application form per project is required.

Should any of these conditions not be met it could result in the award being withdrawn, the grant having to be repaid and future grant applications being refused.

## **9. Reporting**

- All grants awarded will be subject to a 6 month 'report back' to Bardney Group Parish Council as to the progress and/or community benefit. Failure to return a 'report back' may result in the Council asking for all or part of the monies to be paid back.

## **10. Publicising the Grant**

Bardney Group Parish Council requires that grants are publicised. The requirements will be set out in the grant agreement letter. Successful applicants will be required to:

- mention the grant in any press releases, online communications and websites; and
- display a poster, plaque, or billboard, depending on the amount of funding received and the type of investment, including the BGPC logo.

Non-compliance of publicity requirements is a breach of the funding agreement and may result in your grant claim being reduced, withdrawn or reclaimed.

**Applicants must cover the cost of publicising the grant and this cannot be included in claims for grant reimbursement.**

## **11. Changes During the Grant Period**

The applicant is expected to use the grant money to buy items as specified in the application and grant funding agreement. During the grant period, exceptional circumstances may arise where applicants need to change elements of a project. Applicants must inform BGPC in writing immediately and where appropriate seek a contract variation.

Applicants must inform the BGPC about any changes to a project, for example:

- changes to use of buildings, equipment or any other assets bought with the grant;
- disposing of or selling any of the assets;
- closing, selling or transferring the business that's associated with the grant.

This applies during the project and for five years after the payment of the final claim. Agreement to an amendment is not automatic and if the applicant goes ahead with a change that BGPC does not agree to, there may be an obligation to repay the grant or BGPC may withhold part or the entire remaining grant.