



COMMUNITY GRANTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY BEFORE COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM

Grants awarded by Meopham Parish Council are public money. Local taxpayers pay for them, and we are accountable to them for all expenditure. Therefore, we apply very stringent criteria to each application.

Meopham Parish Council recognises the crucial role that volunteers and community groups play in Meopham – and how key they are to a successful community.

In exceptional circumstances, the Meopham Parish Council can make more grants outside of the policy, within our statutory powers, subject to limited funding.

WHO CAN APPLY

1. Grants will only be considered for groups and organisations operating within the area administered by Meopham Parish Council (i.e. within the parish boundaries) which can demonstrate a need for financial support to benefit the local community and/or are providing a service in the parish. At the council's discretion, it may consider groups and organisations out of the parish providing they are of direct benefit to a significant number of parishioners in the parish.
2. The organisation must be either non-profit making or charitable. 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 fully fund or provide
 - "Upward funders" i.e., local groups where fund-raising is sent to a central HQ for redistribution
 - Political parties
 - Religious organisations

This list is not exclusive and may be added to at the council's discretion. The council will not normally fund organisations that have reserves in excess of twelve months operating costs.

As an example, the Community Grant Policy could support the following types of expenditure:

- Equipment
- Training
- Hire of premises
- Info on publicity
- Other project costs
- Start-up or development costs for new community groups

The Council will not usually fund salary costs.

Conditions

3. Only one application for a grant will be considered from each organisation in any one financial year and must be made in advance of the project commencing.

Meopham Parish Council

St Johns Centre, Wrotham Road, Meopham, Kent, DA13 0AA - Tel: 01474 813779

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4. Grants will not be made retrospectively.
5. Invoices/receipts are required as evidence that expenditure has been incurred and any under spend of grant must be returned to the Council.
6. All grants must be spent within 12 months of the date of the award, unless an extension to this deadline is approved by the Council.
7. Meopham Parish Council reserves the right to recall any grant given to an organisation which ceases to operate within 1 year following the award of a grant.
8. The council will normally award grants once a year in September but subject to change. Should this leave any part of the budget unallocated, late applications for the remainder may be considered provided they are of an emergency or exceptional nature and are received before the end of the calendar year. In such a case, it will be the responsibility of the proposer to demonstrate the exceptional or emergency nature of the application.
9. Organisations are not restricted to the number of funding applications submitted to the council for a grant over a period of time. However, the history of previous applications will be considered in the decision-making process.
10. The giving of funding one year does not set a precedent for another year.
11. Applications for grants are required to provide the council with a written report to demonstrate how the funds were spent. This report should be sent to the Council within 12 months of the award date.
12. Successful applicants are required to contribute to the annual parish report – demonstrating to the general public how the grant funds have been spent and the benefits accrued.
13. The Meopham Parish Council logo should be used on all advertising and promotional materials for the project or event supported by the grant.
14. Nothing contained herein shall prevent the Council from exercising at any time its existing duty or power in respect of providing financial assistance or funding to local or national organisations under the provisions of Section 137 or where there is an alternative power that is more appropriate.

Application Process

15. All applicants are required to complete an application form with a supporting letter to the Finance Officer.
16. Application forms will be made available by post, on the parish website (www.meopham-pc.gov.uk) and from the Parish Office.
17. The organisation/project must be properly constituted, structured, and administered in relation to its financial management and controls. Evidence will be required to show that appropriate management mechanisms are in place and that accountability is provided through formally elected or delegated members/managers/trustees.
18. An up-to-date copy of the organisation's latest audited accounts and balance sheet, or other sufficient financial documents (particularly if you are a start-up organisation), must be submitted with the completed application form.
19. All applications should set out the aims, beneficiaries, and outcomes of the project and demonstrate clearly how the funding will assist residents in the Parish.
20. Applications must show evidence of efforts made to raise their own funding requirements and demonstrate how the shortfall could not be met by other methods. Applicants must tell the

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council whether other bodies are being asked to award grants or have already approved grants.

21. Applications must be sent to the Finance Officer at the Parish Office by the deadlines set annually in each financial year.
22. Applications will be considered at the next meeting of the Full Council following the application deadline dates.
23. All applicants will be contacted following the Council's decision. Any refusal of a grant application, for whatever reason, should not be taken as a comment by the Council on the worthiness of the cause or the work of the organisation.

Policy Reviewed and Approved: Full Council – 20.12.22