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S137 Grants Policy

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Author:

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Signatory:

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1. Introduction

Annually, Greenham Parish Council (GPC) offers grants to organisations working for the benefit of the community only. Grants are made out of money provided by the council tax payers of Greenham Parish and accordingly the Parish Council has a responsibility to satisfy itself that grants will provide benefit to the local community.

Unfortunately, the Council may not be able to fund all projects as there may be more applications than there is money available. However, all applications will be considered carefully.

2. Regulatory Framework:

The Local Government Act 1972 section 137 makes provision for Parish Councils to provide financial support, up to a fixed amount, for the benefit of residents of the Parish. The total annual amount available to a Parish for this purpose is prescribed by Government and is a 'resident rate' times the number of residents on the Parish Electoral roll.

Under this legislation, the council has no obligation to spend all or any of the money available under S.137. This money is not 'gifted' to the council; it forms part of the Precept which the council makes on West Berkshire District Council. The cost of any grants or donations is therefore reflected in residents' Council tax bills.

3. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- set out GPC's approach to grant requests and awarding
- ensure grants are awarded based on consistent criteria
- ensure that s137 grant fund management is open, transparent, fair and supports local organisations benefitting Greenham Parish residents directly and demonstrably.

4. Scope

This policy sets out the procedure for the processing and consideration of grant applications by Council.

5. Criteria

- 5.1 Grants are restricted to applications made by groups only and on matters that benefit Parish residents.
- 5.2 Applicants must set out how the community in Greenham Parish will benefit directly from the work funded by any grant. They must be able to show that the grant will make the parish a better place to live, work and/or visit. This is particularly important where an application is made by an organisation working regionally or nationally.
- 5.3 S137 grants are open to established voluntary or community groups, as well as new or informal groups of Parishioners who are formally constituted by the date of application. To be eligible for the award of a grant under Section 137 an organisation should satisfy all of the following.
 - be established for charitable, benevolent, social, cultural, recreational or philanthropic purposes.
 - have a constitution, or set of rules, which define its aims, objectives and governance procedures.

- have a bank account operated by a minimum of at least two signatories.
- be able to provide a copy of its latest annual accounts including Balance Sheet showing cash at bank and reserves. Accounts are to be checked and signed by a person independent of the group.

However, it is recognised that smaller organisations within the GPC community may not be compliant with all the points above. In that instance, awarding of a grant, and waiving some of the above requirements, will be subject to the council considering and agreeing the demonstrable benefits to the local community of Greenham Parish.

5.4 Grants will not be made under any circumstances to:

- individuals
- commercial organisations
- projects that are the prime statutory responsibility of other government bodies
- political parties
- projects that primarily improve or benefit privately owned land or property
- applications from organisations whose prime activities are fundraising
- local groups where fundraising is held in generic funds at their central HQ without being ringfenced for the applicant
- for retrospective funding

5.5 Grants should be for specific purposes which can be directly attributable to GPC e.g. where GPC funds a particular item or project which can be advertised as such.

5.6 Grants must be used within 12 months for the purpose for which they were given.

5.7 Grants should not be added, wholly or partly, to rolling reserves unless part of a previously approved programme of funding for a particular project.

5.8 The Council will normally only consider one grant application per organisation per financial year.

6. Procedure

6.1 The council reserve the right to refuse to fund an application.

6.2 The decisions made by the council are final. There is no appeals process.

6.3 The council may consider grants annually, six-monthly, quarterly or monthly.

6.4 A copy of this policy will be given to all grant applicants, either an electronic or hard copy.

6.5 A recipient of a grant **must** provide evidence of how the grant was spent in the form of a written report or letter, supported by financial evidence where available. The report must be received by the Clerk within 12 months of receipt of the grant. This council reserves the right to make this report public on the council's website as proof of how the s137 monies were spent.

6.6 Recipients of grants must acknowledge receipt in writing for council audit purposes.

6.7 Recipients are expected to acknowledge Greenham Parish Council's support on all promotional materials, press releases and/or stationery.

6.8 Councillors will be expected to declare their interests in any specific application and act according to the GPC Code of Conduct.

7. Authorisation of Policy on behalf of Full Council:

The undersigned approves this policy on behalf of Greenham Parish Council.

Signature:	
Name (print):	
Position:	Date: ___/___/___

Page approved by (initials) & date:
