



Community Grant Policy

Filename and version	Status	Date adopted	Review date
GrantpolicyV1.2022	Draft	November 2022	November 2023

Introduction

Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council aims to promote community resilience and build social capital by supporting the work of local organisations which are making a positive difference to our community. The council is particularly interested in supporting organisations and groups doing work which aligns with the council's own strategic priorities and delivery plans.

The council makes provision within its annual spending plans to provide community grant funding and help in kind to local groups and organisations who would benefit from this support. The purpose of this policy is to document the way decisions are made about award of such grants and provide guidance to applicants and decision makers.

Community grants come from taxpayer funds and a key principle of this policy is to ensure that grant expenditure is open and transparent. Decisions related to award of community grants have been delegated to the community committee or may also be considered by full council.

Eligibility

The council will consider applications from:

- local community groups
- voluntary sector organisations
- registered charities
- community interest companies
- social enterprises
- sports clubs
- faith groups – although requests to support narrowly religious activities will not be considered

The council will not consider applications from:

- political parties
- individuals
- companies which aim to make a profit
- statutory bodies

Applicants may be asked to provide supporting information about their constitution, policies and finances.

Type of projects considered

- activities or projects which add to the well-being of residents
- activities or projects which physically improve our area
- equipment or resources for the above
- pilot projects for the above
- development costs for new projects

The community grant funding scheme cannot be used to fund running costs, accommodation or staff salaries. (Consideration of funding for these may be considered through the development of a formal partnership agreement with the council which is outside the scope of this policy. For more information please contact the council.)

Applications for capital grants should be matched funded. The applicant should provide at least 50% of the cost of the project. All grants will be considered more favourably if funding has been requested or obtained from more than one funding stream. Applicants are therefore encouraged to look at alternative sources of funding in addition to this scheme.

Scale of awards

Grants will be considered for any amount between £50 and £5,000, however, both the group and the project must meet our eligibility criteria. The council will consider whether the benefit to be derived from the grant will be commensurate with the sum requested and therefore will consider how many residents are likely to benefit from each award.

Evaluation

All applications will be considered on their merits and grants will not be awarded retrospectively. Only one application for a grant from any organisation, for the same specified purpose, will be considered in a 12-month period.

Applications will be evaluated using an agreed scoring system which will consider

- evidence of local need

- information demonstrating this is the best way to deliver the project /activity
- information about who will benefit
- value for money
- evidence of funding or benefits in kind from other sources
- sustainability
- inclusivity

Applications will not be considered until all the requested supporting documentation is provided and applications may be rejected if documentation cannot be made available.

Evaluated applications will be considered and approved/declined by the council's community committee. A schedule of committee meeting dates is published on the council's website. Please contact the office for the relevant submission deadlines for grant applications for each committee.

Applicants will be advised of the committee's decision in respect of grant applications as soon as practicable following relevant committee meetings. Funds will be paid to the successful organisations by bank transfer and may only be used to fund the purpose(s) stated on the application. Proof of expenditure is required before funds are released. In exceptional circumstances (eg for very small organisations with limited cash flow) funds may be released in advance of expenditure at the council's discretion.

A condition of the award is that successful applicants will provide a simple report at the completion of the project, with photographic evidence if appropriate. The report will include evidence on how funds have been spent and detail how benefits have been delivered and must be submitted within 6 weeks of the completion of the activity or purchase. The council reserves the right to make such reports and/or photographs public, eg in the council's newsletters or via social media channels and this should be considered when preparing photographs for inclusion with the report. This will enable outcomes achieved to be celebrated, as well as raise community awareness of local organisations and the benefits to Bletchley and Fenny Stratford residents from the grant funding.

Completed applications and supporting documentation should be sent to:

Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council

Sycamore House

Drayton Road

Bletchley

MK2 3RR

or emailed to info@bletchleyfennystratford-tc.gov.uk

If you have any questions about the application process, the application form, or any other aspect of the Community Grants Scheme, please do not hesitate to contact us on 01908 649469