

Wimborne Town Council Draft Grants Scheme Policy

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1. Introduction

1.1 Wimborne Minster Town Council (the Council) recognises the immense value of voluntary and community activity and its contribution to residents' well-being, the local economy and the sustainability of a wide range of services which benefit visitors and people living and working in the town.

1.2 The Council has a commitment to encourage, support and promote volunteer organisations and charities within Wimborne Minster and the following policy and procedures are based on the principles of fairness, responsiveness to local need, generosity and accountability, as supported in the Council's annual Grant Scheme budget.

1.3 Grant requests can exceed the funds the Council has earmarked for this purpose when setting its budget. Council's Grant Scheme comes from the taxpayer funds and a key principle of this policy is to ensure the Council makes informed and fair assessments of relative need and thereby seek to ensure that finite resources are distributed fairly. Any amount applied for that exceeds the Council's Grant Scheme budget will only be approved in exceptional and / or unforeseen circumstances and will require approval by Council on the recommendation of the Resources Committee.

1.4 The Council's authority to make grants comes from the Local Government Act 1972, s 137 (which allows a local authority to spend a limited amount on activities for which it has no specific power, but which the authority considers 'will bring direct benefit to the area, or any part of it or all of some of its inhabitants') as amended by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (which added the requirement that the benefit obtained should be commensurate with the expenditure incurred), and the General Power of Competence (Localism Act 2011).

1.5 Recipients of previous grants should not assume that they will be awarded a grant in future years. Grants will be awarded on the basis of the criteria and assessment process set out in this policy (as amended from time to time) and are awarded at the discretion of the Council.

1.6. Only one grant per applicant will be awarded in a financial year (1st April to 31 March) unless there are exceptional circumstances and will require approval by Council on the recommendation of the Resources Committee.

1.7 This policy is designed to act as guidance for both applicants and councillors when considering applications.

1.8 Applicants are encouraged to look at alternative sources of funding.

1.9 The Council seeks to provide grants which reflect the ethos of Council's current Priorities (please visit <https://www.wimborne.gov.uk/your-council/council-priorities/> for more information) and enhance the profile and reputation of Wimborne Minster.

1.10 Additionally grant applications should demonstrate value for money and appropriate strong governance – see point 3.1 below for more information.

2. Council's Grant Scheme

2.1 The Scheme is open to grant applications from 1 April to 30 November every year and will be determined by the Council's Resources Committee.

2.2 Any grant applications received for over £5,000 will be reviewed by Council's Resources Committee and a final determination made by Full Council.

3. Eligibility

3.1 The Scheme is only open to community organisations, local charities and community interest companies which demonstrate that they:

- have a need for grant funding - grants will not be given to any organisation with significant uncommitted funds,
- have, in the opinion of the Council, sound governance arrangements in place - for example policies on equality and inclusion covering service users (subject to recognised exemptions) and experienced individuals leading the project,
- have, in the opinion of the Council, sound financial management arrangements in place - for example via appropriate internal controls, insurance and audit arrangements,
- represent good value for money – for example supplemented by other funding sources or collaboration,
- have, in the opinion of the Council, sufficient ability to deliver the outcomes anticipated,
- have a bank account in their own name, and
- if awarded, deliver a benefit to the residents of Wimborne Minster.

3.2 The Council will not fund: hospitality, salaries, religious organisations (unless for non-religious activities), core school expenditure or projects with party political links.

3.3 Applications from consortia and partnerships are accepted, when submitted by an organisation accepting lead responsibility for delivery. This organisation must be able to provide evidence and supporting documents confirming their eligibility.

3.4 Grants may only be awarded to branches of regional or national organisations which clearly demonstrate how the funding is to be used to specifically benefit the people of Wimborne Minster.

3.5 An applicant that makes grants itself will not be eligible for grant aid from Council; however Council may award a grant if the applicant is giving a grant or donation to an umbrella/subsidiary/associated organisation and Council considers the grant **application is merited.**

4. Applying for a Grant

4.1 On the application forms, confirmation will be required that the following items are available for inspection: aims of the organisation / a constitution / memoranda and articles / terms of reference.

4.2 The application itself must contain the following information:

- a) Single point of contact information,
- b) Names of Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer,
- c) Location of activities,
- d) Number of clients/members served (where relevant),
- e) Description of service/activity provided, project or event to be supported,
- f) Reason for application with details of how the grant will be used,
- g) How much funding being applied for,
- h) How the grant will benefit the town and people of Wimborne Minster,
- i) Details of any previous financial assistance from the Council in the last 3 years,
- j) Other sources of funding for the same purpose, whether pending or confirmed,
- k) Latest audited or certified accounts and budgets (if available) (must not be more than 18 months old),
- l) How Council support will be acknowledged/publicised, and
- m) If the applicant has received funding in the previous year the Council must be satisfied that the applicant has delivered that project or service to a satisfactory level and returned a grant report in good time.

4.3 Applications for grants

4.3.1 Applications should be made on the application form via the Council website (<https://www.wimborne.gov.uk/grants-and-awards/>) and include all information requested on the form (hard copies are available on request). Please note applications are available for scrutiny by councillors and members of the public and meet GDPR compliance requirements. Visits to applicants' organisations may be arranged via the Town Clerk. An application will not normally go to the Resources Committee and / or Council until all required information has been provided.

4.3.2 Applicants must supply the previous financial year accounts. Further information may be requested at the discretion of officers, the Resources Committee and/or Council. Members are required to undertake due diligence in relation to all applications on behalf of Council.

4.3.3 New/start-up organisations should submit a financial statement containing their proposed budget.

4.3.4 Where expenditure on a single item would exceed £500 the applicant should demonstrate that best value has been sought; this may be by submitting quotations.

4.4 Applicants are encouraged to attend the Council or Committee meeting where their grant will be considered to answer any questions which may arise.

4.5 Applicants will be advised by an Officer of the date and time when their application will be considered.

5. Conditions of Grants

5.1 All organisations in receipt of grants will be required to provide a short report by March of each year (or when the project has completed, if sooner) indicating how the grant was used and the benefits arising and present their report at the Council's Annual Parishioners Meeting (the date of this meeting will be confirmed by the Town Clerk).

5.2 Any funds not utilised for the original purpose must be repaid to the Council.

5.3 Recipients should acknowledge the financial support received from the Council in press releases and publicity. The Council will provide logos for use to indicate its support.

5.4 Recipients must advise the Council prior to disposing of any resources or equipment funded/part-funded/supplied by the Council as part of a grant application within two years.

5.5 The Council may apply any additional conditions it deems necessary as part of the grant award.

5.6 The Town Clerk will contact all applicants with the outcome Council's decision. If your request has been successful, you will be provided with details of how to claim your grant money.

5.7 Once a decision has been made there is no appeal system and the decision of Council is final.

5.8 Payments shall only be made to an organisation. The Council will not issue a grant to an individual.

5.9 Feedback on individual grant applications may be given on request to the organisation concerned.

6. Service Level Agreements

6.1 Organisations may be invited to enter into a three-year funding agreement (SLA) for providing a service to the Council, if appropriate.

6.2 SLAs assist the Council in the management of its grants scheme budget and the organisation concerned in its forward planning.

6.3 Any agreed SLA, in addition to completion of the annual report, may be invited to make a presentation and /or take part in a question-and-answer session so that Council is fully acquainted with their work.

6.4 Three year funding payments will only be made when monitoring information has been provided in writing for the previous year and the latest available accounts have been submitted. For further information contact the Town Clerk by email at louise.harrison@wimborne.gov.uk or call 01202 881655.

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