

# **Shotley Parish Council**

## **Grant Application Funding Policy**

**2019/20**

## **Introduction**

Shotley Parish Council has powers granted to it in legislation to award grants to local organisations, to support their activities in the Parish.

Over the years many varied groups have benefited from grant funding, allowing them to provide services and activities that otherwise may not have been available to the residents of the Parish.

The awarding of grants is taken very seriously by the Parish Council, it understands that it is responsible for public funds and the distribution of these funds needs to be properly managed.

This application document outlines the background to the grants scheme (pages 2-5); please take the time to read these pages carefully. A well presented and clear grant application, that contains all the required information, will greatly assist the Council when considering grant applications.

We hope that organisations that apply for grants understand that we require detailed information to enable the Council to assess applications. The Council undergoes rigorous internal and external audits that scrutinise the grant process carefully and it has to demonstrate that it has taken great care in the awarding of public funds.

In line with GDPR, applicants are requested to read the Shotley Parish Council's Privacy Notice and enclose a completed General Consent Form with their application.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require any assistance.

Good luck with your application.

Mrs. Dina Bedwell  
Clerk to the Council

Telephone no.: 01473 788248  
E-mail: [shotleypc@btinternet.com](mailto:shotleypc@btinternet.com)

Printed copies of this document are available by request.  
The electronic version is available on our Website.

**These notes explain the background to the Council's financial grants scheme. Please read them carefully before you complete the Grant Application Form.**

<b>1. Our Policy</b>
----------------------

**Grants awarded should be in line with the following guidelines:**

- a) Grant applications can be made by local community groups, voluntary organisations and sports/recreational clubs, all must be of a non-commercial nature.
- b) The expenditure must bring some direct benefit to the area or part of it, or to some or all of the inhabitants; this means that it must be possible to point to some way in which, in the broadest sense, the area or its inhabitants will be better off as a result of the expenditure.
- c) Direct benefit must be commensurate with the expenditure involved; it is for the council, acting reasonably, to judge whether this test is met, but they need to consider whether the expenditure is reasonable in relation to the degree of direct benefit that it will produce.
- d) Expenditure within the stated financial and legal parameters must also be within the budget of the council.
- e) Any grant application must be seen to be of benefit to residents within the Shotley Parish Council boundary, (hereafter referred to as "the Council").
- f) Grants can only be used for capital projects and not for revenue support (some discretion may be possible depending on circumstances).
- g) Normally only one grant will be given to an organisation in a Council fiscal year.
- h) Grants will be considered by the full Council.
- i) The funds available for grants are limited and may be used up early in the financial year so please apply early (within deadlines) to avoid disappointment.
- j) The application must be on the Grant Application Form with all requested supporting documentation for it to be considered.
- k) Grant applications will be assessed on the following criteria, which are in no priority order.
  - Lawfulness (the Parish Council has the relevant Power of Expenditure)
  - Need (is the grant essential to the project/group or just filling gaps in provision or lack of support by other statutory bodies/funding sources)
  - The viability, robustness and sustainability of the project (groups must be properly constituted)
  - The majority of benefactors should be residents of the Parish
  - Availability of Parish Council funds and affordability
  - Has the organisation also applied for funding from elsewhere
- l) Grants for assistance in the running (revenue) costs of an organisation may be considered at the discretion of the Council but will normally be limited to three financial years and may be reduced by one third each year, to encourage the organisation itself to develop sustainable funding.
- m) The Parish Council reserves the right to reject applications or to reduce the award made.
- n) Under some circumstances the grant may be provided in kind rather than money.
- o) Grants will not be considered, or awarded if previously considered, if the applicant has any monies overdue to the Parish Council, such as hall hire costs or allotment rents.

**Awards will not be made:**

- To commercial enterprises set up to generate profit
- Those supporting party political issues or supporting or opposing a political party
- Projects with campaigning objectives
- Individuals / businesses
- Health, education or welfare organisations whose services should be provided by statutory funding. "Friends of..." type organisations are not included here.
- If the project/group/applicant does not qualify under permitted Powers of Expenditure
- To bodies that should be funded by their national or umbrella body
- For buildings or activities that are uninsured or uninsurable

**Awarded organisations must:**

- Acknowledge Shotley Parish Council for receipt of the grant in ways to be agreed with the Parish Council
- Provide organisation's bank details for cheque/direct payment, as these will only be made to the organisation's bank account (not to any individual)
- Agree to site or project visits by approved representatives of the Council
- Supply invoices for the goods/works/services paid for by the funding given by the Parish Council
- Supply independently audited annual accounts
  - a) Firstly, in support of their application (for the previous two financial years)
  - b) For the year during which the grant is received, clearly showing its receipt and how it was spent

<b>2. Conditions</b>
----------------------

- a) Applications will not be considered from individuals.
- a) Applications will not be considered from organisations intending to support or oppose any particular political party, or to discriminate on the grounds of race, religion or sexual orientation.
- b) Applications will not be considered from private organisations operated as a business to make a profit or surplus.
- c) Applications will not be considered from "upwards funders", i.e. local groups whose fund raising is sent to their central headquarters for redistribution.
- d) Applications will not be considered from national organisations or local groups with access to funds from national "umbrella" or "parent" organisations; unless funds are not available from their national bodies or the funds available are inadequate for a specified project.
- e) Applications from religious groups will be considered where a clear benefit to the wider community can be demonstrated, irrespective of their religious beliefs. Compliance with this requirement will need to be demonstrated throughout the project.

- f) Applications from education, health or social services establishments may be considered only where the organisation can demonstrate that it is working in partnership with other groups and where there are benefits to the wider community.
- g) The organisation must have clearly stated aims and objectives.
- h) The organisation must provide a written Constitution that has been formally adopted by the members of that organisation, or a similar document of agreement between individuals where their association is less formal.
- i) The organisation must provide, or propose to provide, an activity or service that is believed to be clearly needed by the local community, or by a particular group of residents.
- j) The organisation is required to submit audited accounts or accounts that have been independently examined by a suitably qualified person, for the previous two financial years or, in the case of a newly formed organisation or less formal group, a comprehensive budget and business plan.
- k) The organisation is required to have a bank account in its own name with at least two authorised representatives required to sign each cheque, or a similar robust financial control system.
- l) Refer to the timetable below, which details the timing of grant applications. In the case of an advance payment, written confirmation may be required stating that the money will be used for the purpose requested, as well as a monitoring and evaluation statement at the end of the project period or the financial year, whichever is the sooner.
- m) Shotley Parish Council reserves the right to reclaim the grant (or remainder) in the event of it not being used for the purpose specified on the application form. Organisations will be expected to voluntarily inform the Parish Council if this should occur. Failure to return unspent funds can significantly affect the outcome of future applications.
- n) Any organisation/individual suspected of committing any type of fraudulent activity with funds granted by the Parish Council will be reported to the authorities and will be excluded from future funding.
- o) Grants will not be awarded retrospectively, for costs incurred in the past. Grants can only be applied to future funding requirements.
- p) Shotley Parish Council reserve the right to recoup any equipment provided by the grant should the organisation cease to exist.
- q) Organisations that receive a grant will be required to acknowledge Shotley Parish Council's contribution on their publicity and printed material.
- r) Organisations that are registered charities will be expected to have submitted all annual returns and accounts required by the Charity Commission. Charities that are shown on the Charity Commission's website ([www.charity-commission.gov.uk](http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk)) to have returns or accounts that are overdue will have their grant application deferred for consideration, until such time as the returns and accounts have been submitted to and registered by the Charity Commission.

<b>3. Additional Conditions of Funding- Large Capital Projects</b>
--

- a) Organisations requesting funds for buildings must provide evidence of security of tenure in the relevant property for a minimum of 7 years from the date that the grant is considered.
- b) Organisations requesting funds for buildings must provide proof that the property is adequately insured.

- c) Where the Parish Council deems it appropriate, organisations will be required to provide progress reports and/or to allocate a place on their management or executive committee for one or more Parish Council representatives.
- d) Where deemed necessary, the Parish Council may request site visits and meetings with the applicants to discuss the viability of the proposed project.
- e) As much notice as possible is required for any large grant application, as this will ensure that if the grant is to be awarded, the Parish Council can make appropriate budgetary provision. The grant award may be phased over a number of years.
- f) Grants to be phased over a number of years must not be approved during the last year of a council's term of office so as to not place undue pressure on the incoming council.

<b>4. Timetable</b>
---------------------

- a) The Parish Council considers grant applications of up to £200 between April 1<sup>st</sup> and March 31<sup>st</sup> of any financial year. Applications must be received at least seven days before a meeting in order to be included on that agenda for consideration.
- b) The Parish Council considers grant applications for over £200 in the same financial year no later than 30<sup>th</sup> September.
- c) The Parish Council considers grants over £200 for the following financial year between October 1<sup>st</sup> and January 10<sup>th</sup> (ahead of approving the budget and precept for the following year).
- d) This is in order to avoid overspending during the current year and allows for any budgetary adjustments to be made for the following financial year.
- e) There may be some flexibility with deadlines but this will be at the discretion of the Council and subject to the Council's financial position.
- f) The start of a financial year, from when grants can be paid, is April 1<sup>st</sup>.

Dates of the Parish Council's meetings are posted on the Council's website and are also available from the Clerk.

For any additional information or advice, please contact the Parish Clerk or speak to one of our Parish Councillors.