



Oliver's Battery Parish Council

Community Grants Policy

Introduction

Local councils are empowered to make payments for example to support entertainment and the arts, community transport, crime prevention initiatives, musical bands, community gardens, dancing, recreational and sports facilities etc.

The Council includes in its budget each year (funded by the precept) a sum for grants. This policy sets out the process by which small-scale grants can be made to groups of a charitable and non-commercial nature, for example societies and clubs. It does not apply to working groups of the Council.

Grants are for a *specific* purpose or project and can be applied for any amount. Please note that only in very specific or exceptional circumstances will grants in excess of £1,000 be considered.

Please note that the Council is not permitted to provide grants to any taxpayer-funded organisations, for example schools, hospitals, emergency services.

Definitions

Throughout this Policy and the Application Forms the word 'group' shall include 'organisation'.

Aims and Objectives of the Council

The Council aims to work with others in the best interests of the local community and will continue to support groups within the parish and outside where there is a clear benefit to residents of Oliver's Battery.

Specific examples of the Council's objectives are to:

- Improve road safety

- Maintain accessibility of countryside including public rights of way
- Maintain and improve facilities at the Recreation Ground and The Battery which may include the map boards, leaflets and signposting
- Improve public transport or establish options for alternative arrangements

Priorities for Awarding Grants

Priority will be given to the following (in no particular order):

- First-time applicants
- Newly formed groups because they often have difficulty sourcing funding
- Groups which are based in the parish
- The number of residents of Oliver's Battery likely to benefit or whether any particular category of residents would receive specific benefits (for example children and young people, older people, persons with any form of disability)
- Applications for specific projects or activities rather than for general running costs
- Applications that will enhance equality, social inclusion and community cohesion

Criteria that an Application should meet

1. There must be a current bank account in the name of the group. Grant payments will not be made to individuals, even if they are an official of the group
2. Projects/activities must be able to demonstrate a need for assistance for activities that benefit the residents of Oliver's Battery
3. Grants will not be given for political or religious activities
4. Grants will not be given for management costs or overheads and must be used directly for the provision of projects/activities
5. Projects/activities which have already received funding through this grant scheme will not be eligible for further funding for the **same activity** in subsequent years (NB an annual event does not fall within the meaning of **same activity**)
6. Groups are required to have an open access/equal opportunities/non-discriminatory approach towards membership, use of facilities and activities, and to take reasonable steps to ensure that positive measures are put in place to remove any barriers to access; also the group is required to actively encourage disadvantaged groups in the community to make use of the services, facilities or activities provided
7. Groups must have appropriate public liability and employer's liability insurance for the activities they provide
8. Any spend prior to formal notification by the Council to the group will be ineligible for grant funding
9. The group must be a registered charity or a 'not-for-profit' body or voluntary group, with a formal constitution or set of rules

Details of the application and awarding process

The Council will accept applications at any time during the financial year. However, there is a limited budget for grants. Larger applications may have to be included in the Council's budget for the following financial year.

If the application meets the Council's criteria, the Clerk will add the application to the next agenda for consideration by the Council.

Application forms are available on the Council's website www.oliversbattery.info or from the Clerk. Please note that there are two forms: one for grants not exceeding £250 and one for grants only, over £250.

The relevant form is to be completed and either posted to the Clerk or emailed as a Word document or as a pdf document.

It is for the Council to determine whether they have a power to provide the grant or whether s137 of the Local Government Act 1972 is to be used. The Clerk will check the Council has the statutory power to make the grant or whether s137 applies, and s137 grants may be made to charities, but they must be able to demonstrate the grant will be used in the interests of, or will directly benefit Oliver's Battery (or part of it) or its inhabitants (or some of them). The amount that can be spent under s137 is limited by statute and changes every year.

Applicants may be requested to attend the council meeting at which the application is to be decided, so that they can answer any questions.

The Council will assess how effectively the group will use the grant, how well the grant will meet the needs of the parish, whether the costs are appropriate and reasonable, and whether it will help to enhance equality, social inclusion and community cohesion.

There is no restriction on the number of times a group may apply for grant, but the history of previous applications will be considered in the decision-making process.

The minutes will record whether an application was approved or rejected and the reason for making the award.

Successful applicants will be notified within 14 days of the relevant council meeting with a decision letter, which will request bank details

Assuming the application is successful payment will be made within one calendar month of the decision.

Conditions

1. Groups must not change the use of the grant award and must spend the grant on the purpose for which it was approved unless agreed otherwise in writing by the Council
2. If specifically requested by the Council, the group will be required to publicise the support of the Council. Guidance on this will be sent to successful applicants in the decision letter
3. If requested, the group must submit to the Council a short statement within three months of spending the grant, to confirm that the money was spent on the approved purpose and report how residents of Oliver's Battery have benefited
4. If grant funding is used inappropriately, or the group fails to respect the conditions attached to the grant, the group will upon request in writing by the Council reimburse the full cost of the grant
5. If grant funding is not used within 12 months of the formal approval of the grant, the group will upon request in writing by the Council reimburse the full cost of any grant funding not spent
6. The supporting information identified on the relevant application form must be included with the application
7. The Council may determine a different amount, using the figure stated by the applicant as a guide only
8. The Council reserves the right to refuse any application
9. The Council reserves the right to request copies of invoices and/or other documents as evidence that the expenditure has been incurred
10. If the group ceases to operate the Council will be reimbursed the amount of grant

Further Information

Nothing in this Policy prevents the Council from providing a grant to a group or project without application where the Council considers that giving a grant will bring benefits to residents of Oliver's Battery.

Where a Member of the Council is a member of a group applying for funding, that Member must declare, in accordance with the Code of Conduct, an interest in the application and refrain from voting.

Information included in the application may be available for public inspection.

Next review due: January 2024