



# Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

## Community Fund Policy

### Introduction

- 1 This is the Community Fund Policy of Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council and adopts the definitions in the Council's Policy Guidance and Glossary.
- 2 The Council has the power to award grants under its General Power of Competence and may from time to time allocate funds into an Earmarked Reserve for that purpose.
- 3 The Community Committee ("the Committee") shall, at such time or times as it may decide, consider applications for community grants in accordance with this Policy from non-profit, voluntary, or charitable organisations which can demonstrate a clear need for financial support to achieve an objective in accordance with this Policy.
- 4 There will usually be one round of applications per financial year, advertised via the Council's newsletter, Website, etc. The Committee may consider applications outside this process if funds remain in the relevant Earmarked Reserve, but is under no obligation to do so.
- 5 The award of any grant shall be at the Committee's discretion and based on the merits of the application, eligibility criteria, and the funds available.
- 6 The Committee is not obliged to award a grant just because an application has been made.
- 7 This policy sets out:
  - eligibility for funding;
  - the application process;
  - decision criteria; and
  - conditions of funding.

### Eligibility

- 8 Applicants must be:
  - 8.1 a registered charity;
  - 8.2 a voluntary group; or
  - 8.3 a non-commercial organisation.
- 9 The applicant should be properly constituted and have its own bank account or earmarked section within another organisation's account (although the Committee may relax these requirements in limited circumstances).
- 10 Applications must support an initiative that is not, as a matter of course, funded by the Council, and is for the benefit of the Parish or its inhabitants by:

- providing a service; or
  - enhancing the quality of life; or
  - improving the environment; or
  - promoting the Parish in a positive way.
- 11 Applications may be for one-off capital or revenue costs, but:
- 11.1 applications for capital grants may be given preference over those for revenue costs; and
- 11.2 applications for revenue costs must clearly demonstrate how future revenue costs will be funded.
- 12 Retrospective applications will not be funded (eg where the expenditure has been made, the project has been carried out or the event has taken place).
- 13 An organisation must not have previously applied for a grant in the current financial year.

## Application process

- 14 To be considered within the annual round, applicants must complete a Community Grant Fund Application Form (available from the Website or by emailing the Clerk – contact details on the Website), and submit such within the time-limit detailed.
- 15 All questions on the application form should be fully answered and supporting information provided.
- 16 Each application may be for a sum up to the maximum per award detailed on the Website.
- 17 Applications will be considered by the Committee and a representative of each applicant having an application considered will be invited to the relevant Meeting to answer any questions and support the application.
- 18 The Committee will usually make its decision in Part II (ie in private) and may decide to award the full amount sought, or a lesser amount, or decline to award anything. Applicants will be informed of the outcome after the Meeting.
- 19 Payment of grants for successful applications will usually follow within one calendar month of the decision (a form to be completed by the applicant will accompany the grant).

## Decision criteria

- 20 The criteria that the Committee will consider in deciding whether to award a grant will include:
- 20.1 the eligibility of the application;
- 20.2 the likely effectiveness of the initiative and the benefit of the grant to the parish or its inhabitants (that benefit must be commensurate with the amount sought).
- 20.3 whether the amount sought is appropriate and realistic;
- 20.4 what level of contributions have been sought or secured from other sources, including the organisation's own fund-raising activities;
- 20.5 whether sufficient funding could be raised from a more appropriate source.

## Conditions of funding

- 21 The administration of and accounting for any grant shall be the responsibility of the applicant.
- 22 All grants shall be accounted for, and evidence of expenditure shall be supplied to the Committee on request (and any form requesting details of how the grant has been used shall be returned to the Clerk as required by it).
- 23 A grant must only be used for the purpose for which it was awarded unless the written approval of the Council has been obtained for a change of use.
- 24 In the event that the grant is not used, in part or in full, a full explanation shall be submitted to the Committee within one year of the grant being paid – in such circumstances the Council reserves the right to require the grant or any balance to be repaid.
- 25 Successful applicants are expected to acknowledge the Council's contribution in relevant publicity.
- 26 Awarding a grant does not imply a commitment to awarding further grants in future years (but on the other hand applicants are welcome to apply for grants in subsequent financial years regardless of the outcome of previous applications).
- 27 The Committee may make the award of any grant subject to such additional conditions and requirements as it considers appropriate.

