

Stanstead st Margaret's Parish Council

GRANT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION

A grant is a payment made by the Parish Council under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 to an organisation for a specific purpose that will benefit the parish, or residents of the parish, and which is not controlled or administered by the Parish Council. The law requires that Section 137 grants must be “in the interests of, or will directly benefit the area or its inhabitants, or of part of it, or some of it” and The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 says that “the direct benefit should be commensurate with expenditure”.

The Parish Council has no obligation to spend all or any of the money available under Section 137.

The Parish Council's aim is to ensure that the grant awarding process is: Open, transparent, fair, and supports local organisations.

POLICY

Groups within the parish can apply for a grant award and those outside the parish that can demonstrate direct benefit to the inhabitants will also be eligible to apply. The Parish Council awards grants, at its absolute discretion, to organisations which can demonstrate a clear need for financial support to achieve an objective which will benefit the Parish by: Providing a service, enhancing the quality of life of Stanstead St Margarets Residents, improving the environment and promoting Stanstead St Margarets in a positive way.

The Parish Council will not award grants to:

Commercial organisations, for purposes for which there is a statutory duty upon other local or central government departments to fund or provide, Political parties or Religious Organisations. This list is not exclusive and may be added to at the parish council's discretion.

To be eligible for a grant award under Section 137 an organisation must;

1. Be established for charitable, benevolent, social, cultural, recreational or philanthropic purposes
2. Have a constitution, or a set of rules, which defines its aims, objectives and operational procedures.
3. Be able to provide a copy of its latest annual accounts or most recent bank statements
4. Have a bank account with more than one signatory.
5. Be able to meet the conditions and provide the information outlined in the Parish Council's Grants Application Form and Terms of Reference.

Each application will be assessed on its own merits. However, to ensure the fair distribution of available funds, the Parish Council will consider the amount and frequency of any previous awards.

The Parish Council may make the award of any grant subject to such additional conditions and requirements as it considers appropriate. The Parish Council reserves the right to refuse any grant application which it considers to be inappropriate, or against the objectives of the Council.

A grant award must only be used for the purpose stated on the application. If the organisation is unable to use the money, or any part of it, for the purpose stated, then all monies, or unused funds must be returned to the Parish Council.

Retrospective applications (i.e. for projects already completed) will not normally be allowed.

WHEN TO APPLY,

The Parish Council prepares its annual budget during the months of December and January. During that process it will determine what funds it makes available under the Section 137. This sum may vary depending on the overall finances available to the council at the time. In each year a sum of money is set aside for grants to local organisations.

Local organisations wishing to make an application for grant funding should do so according to the published timetable. It is expected that all applications must be submitted with all the requested information outlined in the Grant Application Form.

Application forms can be obtained from the Clerk or downloaded from the Parish Council website

www.Stansteadstmargaretsparishcouncil.org.uk

Grant applications will be assessed by the Council who will look at all applications received and make a final decision on which organisations to support at a meeting of the Parish Council.

Unfortunately, the Parish Council may not be able to fund all projects as there may be more applications than funds available. All applications will be considered carefully. **Due account will be taken of the extent to which funding has been sought or secured from other sources or own fund-raising activities.**

Funds will be released to the successful organisation as soon after that meeting as possible.

Please note that the successful organisation(s) will be required to provide a written report to the next Annual Parish Meeting on May 5th 2020 to give information about how the money was spent and if appropriate how the project went.