



Arlesey Town Council – S137 Grant Policy and Procedure

Where a Town Council has no specific Power set by statute to fund or contribute towards specific expenditure, the Local Government Act 1972 s137 provides for local councils to provide financial support – up to a maximum per elector s137 (4)(a) reviewed and amended annually, set by the MHCLG (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government). Where a Council has adopted the General Power of Competence s137 need not be applied as GPoC will be used.

Introduction to Policy

A grant is any payment or gift made by the Town Council to an organization/group for a specific purpose, primarily capital purchase that will benefit Arlesey, or residents of Arlesey, and which is not directly controlled or administered by the Town Council. Enabling financial assistance to be granted when not covered by a specific duty or power of the Council (see appendix A "Powers and Duties of Parish Councils) the LGA 1972 makes provision for section 137 grants to be made. Such 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 direct benefit should be commensurate with expenditure". Similar considerations will apply when considering applications for other grants. The Council may, as it sees fit, allocate an annual budget to facilitate grant payments within the permitted allowance per elector calculated annually by the MHCLG. For clarity, gifts are items purchased and gifted to a group to be retained, maintained and insured as the groups asset at their expense.

Policy

In the event that the Town Council has budget allocated to grant payments it will award grants, at its absolute discretion, to organisations/groups 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,
- Improving the environment and promoting the Parish of Arlesey in a positive way.

Funding of capital purchases will be considered primarily, expenditure requested will be considered after capital purchases should set budget allow.

The Town Council will NOT award grants to: -

- Private individuals,
- Commercial organisations,
- Purposes for which there is a statutory duty upon other local or central government departments to fund or provide,
- "Upward funders". i.e. local groups where fund-raising is sent to a central HQ for redistribution.
- Political parties.

This list is not exclusive and may be added to at the council's discretion. Only one application for a grant per organization/group will be considered in any one financial year. On-going commitments to award grants in future years will not be made. Applications may be made each year; however, no guarantee of yearly funding is made by permitting this. Grants will not be permitted retrospectively; applications should be submitted prior to expenditure by applicants.

Application Procedure

Organisations/groups requesting financial assistance are required to fully complete an application form available from the council website or the Clerk of the Council. When completed, forms and supporting information requested, must be returned to the Clerk/Council offices for the application to be considered. Failure to attach all requested information may delay consideration of the application.

Grants below £250 can be provided in advance of expenditure. Unspent funds to be returned to council within 3 months of receipt.

Where an application is for an amount greater than £250 the application must be received by the 10th working day of October of that financial year. The following details will be required, accompanying the application

- last year end accounts,
- The number, or percentage, of members that belong to the organization/group and that live within the Arlesey Parish Area,
- Details of any restrictions placed on who can use/access their services,
- Details of the organisation/group policy in relation to Equal Opportunities,
- Organisation/group will normally be expected to have clear written aims and objectives, a written constitution, and a separate bank account controlled by more than one signatory.

For grant requests for projects costing £1,000 or more the Town Council will require that the organization/group has robust tendering regulations, e.g. obtaining a minimum of three tenders. The Town Council reserves the right to request proof of the tender process.

Projects notified and included in the Town Council's budget will only have the funds released on completion of the work – all receipts/proof of purchase must be provided to council for their records.

All grants awarded will be subject to regular 'report back' to Arlesey Town Council as to progress and/or community benefit. In a situation where the whole fund awarded is not applied to the purpose requested, the remaining sum must be returned to the council.

Assessment Procedure

During the Town Council's annual budgeting process, a fund will normally be set for grant applications for the following financial year. This amount will principally be for grant requests that have already been received by the Town Council in accordance with the application procedure and may include an additional budget to allow for further applications which it envisages may be granted. Any amount included within the budget for an application amount does not guarantee an award: a decision upon an award will remain for approval by the Town Council at the appropriate meeting. An additional amount will be reserved from which other grant requests (up to £250) may be made. A maximum of £250 per award only for such unplanned applications will be considered. Once the grants budget is exhausted, the Town Council will only consider emergency requests for assistance and those of a highly compelling nature.

An unplanned grant request-received in writing will be considered at the next Town Council meeting.

Each application will be assessed on its own merits. However, applicants should expect the Town Council to consider the amount and frequency of any previous awards, and the geographical/demographic spread within the parish. Due account may also be taken of the extent to which funding has been sought or secured from other sources or fund-raising activities.

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

Nothing contained herein shall prevent the Town Council from exercising, at any time, its existing duty or power in respect of providing financial assistance or grants to local or national organisations under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972, Section 137.

Successful Applications

A grant award must only be used for the purpose stated on the application. If the group is unable to use the money, or any part of it, for the purpose stated, then all monies, or unexpended part of such monies must be returned to

the Town Council within a time limit of 3 months to return any unspent funds from the date grant awarded, unless reasonable proof to show reason for being unspent is provided. The Town Council will request proof of expenditure.

Organisations/groups receiving grants are required to advise their users/members that the grant or equipment has been received from Arlesey Town Council. Where appropriate, the Town Council may require a notice to be affixed.

It is a condition of payment of all grants that Arlesey Town Council is indemnified against any loss or damage to persons or property howsoever following the award of a grant whether that be in relation to the items employed or services provided linked to the award of the grant.

