

**SITHNEY PARISH COUNCIL  
SECTION 137 GRANTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

Policy adopted at the Council meeting 05/08/2014

# **SITHNEY PARISH COUNCIL**

## **SECTION 137 GRANT AWARDING POLICY**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

This document sets out the Parish Council's policy and procedure for grant and donation making.

The Parish Council's aim is to ensure that all our award-making activity is:

- open
- transparent
- fair
- supports local organisations

Our awards are open to established voluntary or community groups, as well as new or informal groups of Parishioners who are or intend by the date of application to become formally constituted.

### **2. PARISH COUNCIL POWERS and SECTION 137**

- 2.1. A Parish Council has a number of powers granted under various Acts of Parliament which enable it to spend money.
- 2.2. In addition, if a Council lacks a particular power it may consider the use of the statutory power of Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, which permits it to spend *up to a certain limit* on anything which in the opinion of the Council is in the interests of the Parish, or any part of it, or is in the interest of all or some of its inhabitants.
- 2.3. This amount is limited to a figure per head of the electorate on the electoral role on 1<sup>st</sup> April before the commencement of the financial year. The figure is index-linked and for 2014/15 is £7.20 per head.
- 2.4. The Parish Council has no obligation to spend all or any of the money available under S.137. This money is not 'gifted' to the Parish Council; it forms part of the Precept which the Parish Council makes on Cornwall Council. The cost of any grants or donations is therefore reflected in residents' Council tax bills.

### **3. WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?**

To be eligible for the award of a grant under Section 137 an organisation must:

- 3.1.be established for charitable, benevolent, social, cultural, recreational or philanthropic purposes
- 3.2.have a constitution, or set of rules, which define its aims, objectives and operational procedures
- 3.3.be able to provide a copy of its latest annual accounts including Balance Sheet showing cash at bank and reserves. Accounts are to be checked and signed by a person independent of the group
- 3.4.have a bank account operated by a minimum of at least two joint signatories

#### **4. WHAT CAN BE FUNDED?**

- 4.1.the activity to be supported should be something that makes the local community a better place in which to live, work or visit
- 4.2.it should benefit people who live in the Parish
- 4.3.applications do not have to be from groups that already exist.
- 4.4.each group may only make one application per financial year
- 4.5.applications will be considered for day-to-day running costs and individual projects
- 4.6.applications from regional or national organisations will be considered only if a direct benefit to Sithney and its residents can be demonstrated.

#### **5. THE FOLLOWING ARE NOT ELIGIBLE**

- 5.1.support for individuals or commercial organisations
- 5.2.projects that are the prime statutory responsibility of other government bodies
- 5.3.political parties
- 5.4.projects that improve or benefit privately owned land or property
- 5.5.projects that have already been completed or will have been by the time the grant is made
- 5.6.applications from organisations whose prime activities are fund raising and the giving of grants to needy causes represent a duplication of the Council's function. i.e. Local groups where fund-raising is sent to a central HQ for redistribution.

#### **6. CONDITIONS AND CRITERIA OF SUPPORT**

Within the overall framework of its policies the Council will consider each application on its merits and will take into account, and require the following:

- 6.1. The Council may make the award of any grant subject to all or some of the following conditions. Required conditions will be at the discretion of the Council and take into account the organisation's individual circumstances.
- 6.2. The balances and reserves held by an organisation and the degree to which these might be in excess of a prudent provision will be taken into account.
- 6.3. In order to fully understand the project or activity the Parish Councillors may wish to visit the project or activity, prior to the project or activity commencing. They may also wish to conduct a site visit once a funded project is underway.
- 6.4. Grants will not be made to activities that discriminate on any grounds.
- 6.5. Ongoing commitments to award grants and subsidies in future years will not be made. A fresh application will be required each financial year.
- 6.6. Funding must only be used for the purpose agreed with the Parish Council and if the monies are not spent on the items agreed, they must be returned to Sithney Parish Council.
- 6.7. Funding must be spent within the financial year awarded and cannot be added wholly or partly to the organisations reserves.
- 6.8. If actual project costs are more than anticipated on the application, any shortfall must be met by the organisation; Sithney Parish Council will not be in a position to make up any shortfall.
- 6.9. The need to provide evidence of expenditure (receipted invoices) to the Clerk to the Council on completion of the project will be discretionary – based on the amount given and the purposes given. (If required, this evidence of expenditure should be equal to, or more than, the total of the amount of the grant detailed on your application.)
- 6.10. The organisation must acknowledge Sithney Parish Council's support in all publications, publicity, and annual reports.
- 6.11. The organisation should show the funding awarded separately in the published financial accounts and Sithney Parish Council should have access to your financial records, on request, where appropriate.
- 6.12. A representative of the organisation awarded a Grant should give a report at the Annual Parish Meeting (held on an evening between March and May each year) on how the money was spent and if appropriate how the project/activity went.

## **7. WHEN TO APPLY**

- 7.1. The Parish Council operates with a financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March. Organisations are eligible to apply during the year. Any grant awarded should be spent within the Sithney Parish Council's financial year in which the grant was awarded.

7.2.All groups will be treated equally.

## **8. HOW WILL DECISIONS BE MADE?**

All bids will be judged at the next Council meeting following receipt of the application form together with all relevant supporting documentation. The decisions will be made by Sithney Parish Council and the Council's decision is final. Unfortunately the Council not be able to fund all projects as there may be more applications than there is money available, however 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, including the level and purpose of Reserves held.

## **9. HOW TO APPLY**

9.1.The Clerk to the Council will receive all applications in the first instance and will collate all the necessary information ready for presentation and discussion at the next scheduled Council meeting.

9.2.Applications should be made in writing using the designated application form.

9.3. The Clerk will be able to supply the standard application form.

9.4.All questions on the application form should be fully answered and additional appropriate information, which supports an application, should be provided.

9.5.In addition to the application form organisations will be required to provide the following supporting information:

- a copy of their written constitution or details of their aims and purpose, unless provided for a previous application
- full details of the project or activity,
- demonstration that the grant will be of benefit to the local community within the Parish,
- the proportion or number of beneficiaries living in the electoral area,
- demonstration of a clear need for the funding,
- a copy of the previous year's accounts (including Balance Sheet showing cash and reserves held) or, for new initiatives, a detailed budget, or business plan.