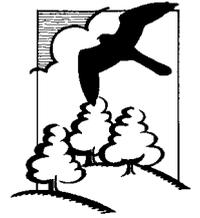


Hawkhurst Parish Council

Community Awards Policy

September 2019



Purpose

This document sets out the Parish Council's policy and procedure for making community awards.

The Parish Council aims to ensure that our award-making activity is:

- open;
- transparent;
- fair;
- competitive; and,
- 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.

Background

Under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, a parish council is permitted 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 or all or some of its inhabitants.

The maximum amount that any Council can raise under S.137 is limited to no more than £7.86 per elector for 2018/19 (the amount is index linked). The calculation uses the number of people on the electoral role on 1st January in the preceding financial year.

The Parish Council has no obligation levy or spend sums under S.137. This money is not 'gifted' to the Parish Council; it forms part of the Precept which the Parish Council makes. The cost of any grants or donations is therefore reflected in residents' Council Tax bills. Therefore, the Parish Council will exercise these powers with caution to balance community need with the desire to minimise local taxation and thereby allow residents to decide for themselves how to spend their own money.

We intend to make Community Awards of £5,000 or £1 per elector whichever is the greater.

The following are not eligible for a Community Award:

- support for an individual;
- private business projects;
- things that are the prime statutory responsibility of other government bodies;

- schemes that solely improve or benefit privately owned land or property;
- projects that have already been completed. and,
- we do not normally fund ongoing staff costs

Who is eligible to apply?

To be eligible for a Hawkhurst Parish Council Community Award an organisation ought to:

- be established for charitable, benevolent, social, cultural, recreational or philanthropic purposes;
- have a constitution, or set of rules, which define its aims, objectives and operational procedures;
- be able to provide a copy of its latest annual accounts and/or most recent bank statement; and,
- have a bank account operated by a minimum of at least two joint signatories.

What can be funded?

Projects should:

- make the local community a better place in which to live, work or visit;
- benefit people who live in the parish;
- evidence that local people support the project and are involved in carrying it out.

Applications do not have to be from groups that already exist and we will be consider grants for day-to-day running costs and individual projects.

Conditions of support

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 an organisation's individual circumstances.

In order to fully understand your project or activity the parish councillors may wish to visit your project or activity, prior to the project or activity commencing. They may also wish to conduct a site visit once your funded project is underway.

As a minimum, you will write to confirm receipt of the cheque for audit purposes, or as the cheque is handed over you will sign a form or receipt at the same time.

Community Awards 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.

Awards ought to be spent within the financial year awarded and should not be added wholly or partly to your reserves.

If your project costs are more than you anticipated on your application, any shortfall must be met by you not Hawkhurst Parish Council.

The need to provide evidence of expenditure (receipted invoices) to the Clerk to the Council on completion of your project will be discretionary – based on the amount given and the purposes given.

Any unused funds must be returned to Hawkhurst Parish Council.

You must acknowledge Hawkhurst Parish Council's support in all publications, publicity and annual reports.

You should show the funding awarded separately in your published financial accounts and Hawkhurst Parish Council should have access to your financial records, on request, where appropriate.

The Council may ask a representative of your organisation to give a report at the Annual Parish Meeting on how you spent the money and how your project went.

When to apply

Organisations can apply at any time – but should note that the Parish Council intend to consider awards twice a year. The two cut-off dates for administrative purposes are

31st January – (to be considered in February Strategy, Administration and Projects Committee and Council in March for a decision.)

31st July . – (To be considered in August Strategy, Administration and Projects Committee and Council in September for a decision)

If an application is unsuccessful in one round it may, if applicants and the Council so wish, also be considered in the subsequent one. This means that all applications can be valid for a 12-month period.

This is a competitive process against other bids and the quality of each bid is important.

All groups will be treated equally. If an organisation has had a grant previously, they are not guaranteed to receive financial support again but are not excluded from applying again. A fresh application will be required each time.

Whilst ad-hoc requests can be made at any time, there is no guarantee that any funds will remain available.

How will decisions be made?

Decisions will by there very nature decisions will be subjective. However, the Council will bear in mind the principles outlined above. Account will also be taken of the extent to which funding has been sought or secured from other sources, and, any perceived gaps or overlaps with other awards.

Community Awards need to be for the benefit of those living within Hawkhurst Parish and so we expect at least two-thirds of funding to be for schemes organised and

operating entirely within the Parish. Projects that operate across Kent or the South East can apply for awards, but they will need to demonstrate that their services are used by Hawkhurst residents.

We may not be able to fund all projects; however, all applications will be considered carefully. The Council's decision will be final. There is no appeal against a refusal, but people are welcome to re-apply. The Clerk may provide feedback, but we will not enter into protracted correspondence.

How to apply

Applications should be made in writing. Please apply to the Clerk for an application form by calling 01580 752 058 or download an application form one from the parish council website. www.hawkhurst-pc.gov.uk

See Application form attached.