

Puncknowle and Swyre Parish Council Grant Award Policy.

Principles of Grant Aid

The Council operates a S137 grant aid policy. There is a limit on the amount a Parish Council can spend which is set by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) for the purposes of section 137(4) (a) of the Local Government Act 1972 ("the 1972 Act"). This enables Puncknowle and Swyre Parish Council (PSPC) to award a small amount in grants each year where it is able to do so. The upper limit for 2022-23 is £8.82 per elector.

The policy aims to:

- Help the voluntary groups within the Parish of Puncknowle and Swyre to improve their effectiveness
- Help to ensure the provision of services needed by Puncknowle and Swyre Parish residents via the voluntary sector
- Support organisations which meet the needs of people experiencing social and economic difficulties, and
- Ensure that there is equality of access and opportunity for all Puncknowle and Swyre Parish residents to the services and funds it provides. The Council values the diversity and strengths of the local voluntary sector and acknowledges its independent role in the community as:
 - A source of valuable services
 - A means of enabling people to work together
 - A channel for campaigning and advocacy.

The Council defines a voluntary group as a 'not-for-profit' organisation, set up and run by a management committee. This policy sets out the Council's funding principles and details its expectations of all groups in receipt of grant aid.

Application Process

PSPC will consider applications for grants from voluntary groups or charitable organisations annually in October. To qualify for an award the applicant must be able to demonstrate that any funding from the Council will benefit the Parish, or residents of the Parish. In determining the validity of an application, the Council will refer to the following guidelines:

Applications will be considered for the following purposes:

1. For purchasing equipment either in part or in full.
2. For the funding of transport that will enable group members to partake in a group trip or outing regardless of their incomes.
2. For training activities, or to purchase the expertise of an outside trainer/ instructor/ facilitator.
4. For activities that raise the profile of the area.
5. For running costs of a group/project that is reliant on donations.

6. For hosting special events or celebrations
7. For the provision of recreational facilities.

Conditions:

1. Grants will not be awarded to individuals
2. The award must be used for the purpose for which the application was made.
3. If the group is unable to use the award for the stated purpose, all monies must be returned to the Council.
4. All awards must be properly accounted for and evidence of expenditure should be supplied as requested. If the Council is not satisfied with the arrangements, it reserves the right to request a refund of monies awarded.
5. Groups operating outside the parish boundary will normally be limited to an upper limit of £100.

Eligibility:

1. Any Charity, Voluntary Group or Community Organisation.
2. Agencies that operate within the Parish and are of benefit to the local community, with the following provisos:
 - The Council will not fund activities that it considers to be the responsibility of a Statutory Authority.
 - Applications from schools for an activity that takes place within the school day will not be considered.

Organisations applying for grant aid should note:

- Grants are made only to groups meeting the needs of Puncknowle and Swyre Parish residents
- Grants are made to meet deficits on future running costs, to encourage new groups or new projects, or to help with the costs of some one-off expenditures
- Grants will only be made to groups which need financial help. Accumulated reserves will be considered when grant levels are decided.
 - Grants are normally made for one year's expenditure at a time and should be spent within the year for the purpose for which they were given. They should not be added, wholly or partly, to reserves unless part of a previously approved programme of funding for a project
 - Grants cannot be made to cover money already spent.
 - Grants will not be made to groups, which operate for private gain or are connected with any political party; grants may be made to religious organisations for social or welfare purposes, but not to cover the costs of worship or conversion.

- Groups will be required to return grant-aid if they close, or if a project or services funded by the Council, is not satisfactorily provided.

Voluntary groups grant-aided by the Council are required to:

- Ensure efficient levels of administration, hold regular meetings, keep minutes and circulate information to group members.
- Keep proper accounts. Grants may only be made to groups, which have submitted satisfactory accounts, unless the group is recently formed.
- Report back as required to the Council on their activities
- Involve group members and users in policy-making and in the management of activities and services
- Be open to eligible users, as defined by the group's constitution
- Establish and monitor equal opportunities policies and practices
- Meet the legal responsibilities of an employer where appropriate; adopt, implement and monitor good employment practices and procedures
- Recruit and support volunteers where appropriate
- Acknowledge the Council's support in annual reports

This policy was adopted by PSpC at its meeting on 1 December 2020

Reviewed and updated at the PSpC meeting on 7 March 2023