DITCHLING PARISH COUNCIL

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Ditchling Parish Council - Grants and Donations Policy

Policy Statement

A grant or donation is any payment made by Ditchling Parish Council to be used by an organisation for a specific purpose in the furtherance of the wellbeing of the community, either generally, or for a specific purpose and which is not directly controlled or administered by Ditchling Parish Council. The purpose of any grant or donation given by Ditchling Parish Council is to support initiatives in the local community and to help create opportunities for the residents that are not funded by Ditchling Parish Council

Application Procedure

Organisations requesting financial assistance are required to submit by 30th December at the latest, with applications being assessed in January annually.

- A completed application form,
- Copies of their last year- end audited accounts,
- The number, or percentage, of members that belong to the organisation and that live within the Ditchling Parish Area,
- Details of any restrictions placed on who can use/access their services,
- Confirmation (on the application form) that it concurs with the Parish Council's Equal Opportunities Policy, or give details of their own policy,
- Organisations 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.

Assessment Procedure

As part of its budget setting process, the Parish Council allocates an amount to be used for grants and donations during the next financial year (April to March). The amount will vary depending on the Council's financial position at the time, but as an indication, the council awarded grants totalling £2,000 over recent years.

The grants budget will then be published on the Council's website and social media. Organisations will be invited to make applications using the application form available from the Parish Council Office or website.

Applications will then be considered by the Parish Council at its meeting in January. Decisions on all applications will be made at that meeting after which the applicant will be formally notified of the decision and, in the case of an award, any conditions attached to the grant.

In the event that the grants budget is not fully taken up in January, the balance will remain in the Council's budget and organisations will be able to make applications at any time in the remainder of the financial year. Details of remaining funds will be published on the Councils website.

Once the grant budget is exhausted, no further applications will be considered until the following year unless a grant is required for emergency purposes in which case the council may wish to draw upon its contingency budget.

Information for Applicants

1) It is a condition of any grant application that the group or project must bring direct benefit to the residents of Ditchling. All applications must clearly demonstrate how this will be achieved. The scheme provides start-up awards for new as well as grants for existing organisations. Applications will be considered for day-to-day running expenses and individual projects.

2) Grant application forms are available from the Clerk or from the Parish Council website. Application forms must be submitted along with the latest set of the group's audited accounts. It is important that all questions on the application form are fully answered and that any appropriate additional information, which supports an application, is provided.

3) Grant applications cannot be made retrospectively.

4) Applications WILL NOT be considered from:

1. Organisations intending to support or oppose any particular political party or to discriminate on the grounds of race or religion.

2. Private organisations operated as a business to make a profit or surplus.

3. "Upward funders", i.e. local groups whose fund raising is sent to their central HQ for redistribution.

4. National Charities.

5) Applications will not normally be considered from national organisations or local groups with access to funds from national "umbrella" or "parent" organisations, unless funds are not available from their national bodies, or the funds available are inadequate for a specified project.

6) Applications from religious groups will be considered where a clear benefit to the wider community can be demonstrated irrespective of their religious beliefs. Compliance with this requirement will need to be demonstrated throughout the project.

7) Schools will only be grant aided for environmental purposes or if, in the opinion of Ditchling Parish Council, their application is for the benefit of the wider community.

8) Applications from education, health or social service establishments will be considered where the organisation can demonstrate that it is working in partnership with other groups and where there are benefits to the wider community within the parish.

9) It must be understood that any grant must only be used for the purpose for which it was awarded unless the written approval of Ditchling Parish Council has been obtained in advance for a change in use of the grant monies, and that any unspent portion of the grant must be returned to Ditchling Parish Council by the end of the financial year in which it was awarded. The Parish Council may request proof of expenditure.

10) Ditchling Parish Council reserves the right to request any further information that it deems necessary to assist the decision making process. Account will be taken of the amount and frequency of previous awards and of the extent to which funding has been sought or secured from other sources or own fund-raising activities

11) Ongoing commitments to award grants or subsidies in future years will not be made. A fresh application will be required each year.

12) The size of any grant awarded is at the sole discretion of Ditchling Parish Council.

13) Ditchling Parish Council reserves the right to refuse any grant application

Only one application for a grant will be considered from any organisation in any one financial year

Assessment of Applications

Applications will be assessed using the following criteria:

High priority will be given top projects where there is a tangible or visible outcome. These could be capital projects such as those involving physical improvements to buildings, the landscape or local ecology and which brings direct benefits to specific members of the community, such as users or members of the organisation concerned, or to local residents generally. Equal priority will also be given to non-capital or revenue projects involving specific support for organisations planning to introduce a new scheme or expand an existing scheme for its members or other users such as recruiting and training volunteers, buying in specialist coaches or a marketing campaign to recruit new members.

Low priority will be given to proposals which simply provide financial support or subsidy to an organisation for its annual ongoing running costs and which produce little or no tangible benefit for specific members or user groups or for the community generally.

Notwithstanding the above the Council will look more favourably at applications which include some complimentary or match funding. This could come from the applicant organisation itself or from a third party such as a national or local charity, professional body, government organisation, commercial sponsor or public or private donations. Applications which require the Parish Council to provide all or nearly all the funding for a scheme will therefore be viewed less favourably.