

GRANT POLICY



Somerton Town Council is funded by the residents of Somerton, subject to funds being available the Town Council may provide financial support to community organisations working in Somerton for the benefit of the community, whilst providing value for money for local taxpayers and ensuring that public money is spent in a responsible manner.

The level of funding available may vary each year dependant on the Councils budget.

Somerton Town Council is committed to following best practice in grant giving in order to provide sustainable funding and support to voluntary and community groups, the Town Council defines a voluntary group as a non-profit making organisation, set up and run by a voluntary, unpaid management committee.

In order for this Council to be able to assess applications rationally and objectively, it is both necessary and helpful to assess all applications received against a range of criteria.

In general, the following principles apply:

Assistance will be given on the basis of need, merit and contribution to the local community.

Applicants must clearly show how any assistance given will benefit the people living in Somerton or will benefit the environment of Somerton.

Any assistance given will be subject to ongoing monitoring and subsequent evaluation of the outcome of the grant.

Organisations should not make a presumption that funding will continue on a year to year basis.

Grant may be provided for revenue or capital projects, core or project costs.

The Aims of the Council's Grant Making Policy:

To enable local people to participate in voluntary groups and activities.

To help the Town's voluntary groups to improve their effectiveness.

To ensure the provision of services, needed by the Town's residents, via the voluntary sector.

To support organisations which meet the needs of people experiencing social and economic difficulties.

To ensure that there is equality of access and opportunity for all Somerton residents to the services it provides and funds.

To improve or enhance the local environment.

To achieve value for money.

The Grants Process

To apply for a Town Council grant you must be a charity, community group or local voluntary organisation with a constitution and dedicated bank account, operating or providing a service to the community in Somerton. All funding requests for amounts over £200 must use our application form and applicants should provide all information requested. Requests for amounts of less than £200 may be made by letter or email.

Criteria for approval of grant requests

Adherence to our grants process and meeting the requirements of our grant giving policy.

Level of benefit to Somerton and the impact the grant will make.

Evidence of a well managed group including previous experience and track record.

Financial sustainability and viability of group and/or project.

Evidence of partnership working.

Evidence that funding has been sought from other sources and the level of match funding available.

Evidence of compliance with previous grant award conditions.

Somerton Town Council will not fund the following:

Organisations that do not provide a service to the community in Somerton.

Individuals or appeals supporting an individual.

General appeals.

Statutory organisations or the direct replacement of statutory funding.

Political groups or activities promoting political beliefs.

Religious groups where funding is to be used to promote religious beliefs.

Arts & sports projects with no community or charitable element.

Medical research, equipment or treatment.

Animal welfare.

Projects that may take place before an application can be decided.

Organisations that have a closed or restricted membership.

Equipment or other costs that have already been purchased or incurred prior to the application being considered.

Grant Types Somerton

Small grants

These grants are usually for less than £500 and are normally offered on a one off basis to support a particular project, event, activity or the purchase of equipment. They are also open to new groups wishing to start up and receive a small contribution towards their running costs.

Small grants must be spent within 1 year of award. Any unspent monies left after this time must be returned.

Revenue grants

These grants are available to community organisations which provide a significant service to the community. They are given to support the groups' normal running costs and can also be used for match funding to other funding bodies. In principal revenue grant funding can be awarded for up to 3 years. These grants are dependent on an annual review when the continuation of the grant will be considered in respect of any change in the circumstances of either the applicant or the Town Council. Groups wishing to receive a revenue grant need to complete an application form and provide additional supporting information. Groups requesting a revenue grant are requested to submit an application by the end of October for payment in the following financial year commencing in April. Where the Council are no longer able to support a funding request this will be advised by the end of December.

A council representative may hold a meeting with the group to discuss its needs and the level of Town Council support requested. Groups in receipt of a revenue grant will need to complete an annual monitoring form and may be asked to attend a review meeting to ensure that funding continues to meet the Town Council's priorities.

Urgent grants

In exceptional circumstances Somerton Town Council will consider applications for urgent funding. Groups wishing to apply must complete an application form which will be considered at the next available full council meeting. A covering letter should explain the reason for urgency.

Grant application forms can be downloaded from the Council's website or are available from the Clerks office.

Payments and decisions

All applicants will usually be notified of Council's decision following the meeting.

Payment Timetable Successful applicants for grants will normally receive their award four to six weeks after the decision was approved by the Council.

In some circumstances the payment date(s) may differ and this will be set out in the grant award confirmation letter.

Grants will be paid by cheque, or bank transfer made out to the named organisation.

Monitoring and reporting requirements

Groups are expected to provide Somerton Town Council with written evidence of what the money has been spent on and the benefit it has brought to the people of Somerton.

Such evidence of how the money has been spent should include copies of invoices and receipts, plus attendance numbers, photos, press clippings, etc. where applicable. This information should be submitted within 1 month of the event/project end or by the end of March each year whichever is sooner, so that it can be reported at the Annual Town Meeting.

The grant can only be used for the purpose stated in the application and the Council reserves the right to reclaim any grant not being used for the specified purpose of the application. However, if a group wishes to change the purpose of the grant they must seek approval by writing to the Council who will consider whether or not to approve the change.

Organisations are responsible for ensuring that they are in compliance with all applicable legal and statutory requirements (including those relating to health and safety and equalities). Should for any reason the organisation disband or the project is not completed the Council may ask for all or part of the monies to be paid back.

Acknowledgement of the financial support received from the Council is required on documentation and any promotional material, including websites.

In order to receive payment organisations/groups must have a bank account into which grants can be paid; payments will not be made to private individuals.

Only one application per year will be accepted from any organisation. All successful applicants must complete an evaluation form within the stated time periods.

Additional grant conditions may also be attached to any funding from Somerton Town Council and these will be set out in the award confirmation letter.

Failure to comply with any conditions attached to a grant may result in the grant being repaid or affect future grant assistance.

Policy Adopted at Full Council Meeting – 8th September 2015.