

Longhirst Parish Council

Donations Policy

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Adopted: 05 March 2020

1 Aim

- 1.1 This policy sets out the guidelines used by the Parish Council when considering requests for funding. Requests will only be considered for activities that enhance the well-being of Parish residents.

2 Definitions

- 2.1 A donation is for general purposes; a grant is for a defined purpose. This policy covers both, and the general term 'award' may be used.

3 Types of Funding

- 3.1 The Local Government Act 1972, section 137 gives power to local authorities to incur expenditure for certain purposes "... which in their opinion is in the interests of, and will bring direct benefit to, their area or any part of it or all or some of its inhabitants ..."
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1972/70/section/137>
- 3.2 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 s36, sub-section 2.b added the requirement that the benefit obtained should be commensurate with the expenditure incurred.
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/42/section/36>
- 3.3 If the Council determines it is eligible to use the General Power of Competence, all donations made by the council will be made under the Localism Act 2011 sections 1 to 8.
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/part/1/chapter/1>

4 Amounts Available

- 4.1 The Local Government Act 1972, section 137 sets out what activities Town & Parish Councils can fund and how much they can give, but all funding is discretionary. The Parish Council is unlikely to allocate the maximum amount set out in legislation.
- 4.2 The amount that the Parish Council usually sets aside is circa £1,000 per financial year (and is mainly to cover a set of predetermined donations). This amount is agreed in the prior financial year (usually at the meeting in November or January).

5 Criteria

- 5.1 The Parish Council is keen to offer support to suitable charities and other good causes, but as monies come directly from the precept all funds are therefore limited; all awards are also open to scrutiny and must therefore meet strict criteria.

- 5.2 As stated above funding must be for activities that enhance the well-being of Parish residents, with priority as follows:
- a **Local organisations carrying out activities wholly within the Parish for the benefit of residents specifically, and in particular activities that benefit the most needy in the area such as the young, the elderly or the disabled.**
 - b County-wide or regional organisations carrying out activities that benefit parish residents.
 - c National organisations carrying out activities that benefit parish residents.
- 5.3 In addition to the above criteria, the amount requested should be proportionate to the benefit being obtained.
- 5.4 Consideration should also be given to the overall income level of the organisation making the request and the impact that the Parish Council's contribution will have. For example larger organisations would likely receive a smaller proportionate grant and therefore the impact of the Parish Council funds would by its nature be lessened (though this does depend on the nature of the activities proposed).
- 5.6 No support will be given to the following:
- a Political campaigns.
 - b Individuals - unless that individual is carrying out a service which benefits wider residents.
 - c Religious causes - though in some cases funding to religious organisations could be made where there is a specific purpose and a clear benefit to the wider community.
 - d Donations will not be made where activities have already been completed

6 Process

- 6.1 Applications can be made in writing (by post or email) preferably to the Clerk, or to any of the Councillors.
- 6.2 Applications can be made at any time of year and will be put on the agenda for the next available Parish Council meeting. Requests that are urgent can be circulated by email or other means to the Councillors for a decision.
- 6.3 **There is no specific form but applicants are advised to give an explanation of the direct benefit to the parish of any activity, along with the amount requested.**

- 6.4 Requests will be acknowledged usually by the Clerk, and the applicant advised of the likely timetable for a decision. The Clerk will also advise the applicant of the outcome as soon as possible after the meeting.
- 6.5 Generally only one application per organisation or individual would be expected in any given year.

7 Annual Donations

- 7.1 The Parish Council reserves the right to award funding on an annual basis where it considers that an organisation's activities directly benefits residents on an on-going basis.
- 7.2 Any such awards must be discussed and agreed at a full Parish Council meeting, and the same criteria will apply as for other awards (set out in Section 5).
- 7.3 These awards are usually discussed in principle at the budget setting meetings in November or January in preparation for the coming year.
- 7.4 It should be noted that an award in one year does not automatically guarantee funding in subsequent years.

8 Refund of Award

- 8.1 If the activity is cancelled or otherwise does not take place, or if the organisation is dissolved before the funds have been used, then the Parish Council will request the return of those funds.

9 Conflict of Interest

- 9.1 If a Parish Councillor is a member of a group or organisation applying for an award then that member must declare their interest and refrain from any voting (though their views can be sought). It may be necessary for the Councillor concerned to leave the meeting during the final discussion on whether or not to give an award.

10 Decisions and Appeals

- 10.1 The decision of the Parish Council is final - there is no appeal process.

Appendix 1 - Decision Matrix

Targets / Impacts on ...	Local organisation	County-wide / Regional organisation	National organisation
Most needy residents (young, elderly, disabled)	VERY HIGH	Medium	Low
Residents of village generally	High / Medium	Medium / Low	Low
Mainly non-residents (depends on the mix)	Medium / Low	Low	Unlikely