

Didmarton Parish Council

Addendum to Grant Policy

Applications for Funding for Significant Community Projects from the Parish Council Community Projects Fund

Didmarton Parish Council has an adopted Grant Awarding Policy from which local groups and organisations can apply for funding for a variety of reasons that will be of direct benefit to a proportionate number of local parishioners. The parish council is constrained by law (Local Government Act, s137) as to how much it can give in grants for which there is no other legal power to make a financial payment. The s137 limit is set by Central Government as a specific amount, per elector per year, multiplied by the number of electors.

Each year, the parish council must set and agree a budget which informs how much the parish council can demand as its annual precept (the parish council part of council tax). As part of the budget, the parish council considers the need for public funds to be available to help support local community groups, including the Didmarton Village Hall and Community Committee (DVHCC), in their provision of facilities and services for the benefit to the local community. This fund is kept by the parish council in an earmarked reserve called Community Projects.

The purpose of the Community Projects reserve is primarily to part-fund more significant capital projects rather than assist with day-to-day expenditure on issues such as routine maintenance. As such, it is possible that amounts required from the fund may exceed what the council can reasonably and lawfully spend from within its s137 capped limit.

In the event of a community group wishing to apply for a more significant contribution from the parish council towards a particular community project, a slightly different approach will be required to lawfully allow the parish council to make a larger payment permitted by a specific legislative power. This would allow for the parish council to make uncapped expenditure as it sees fit.

The process for a Community Projects funding application will effectively necessitate the same requirements for the award of a grant, and the same application form will be used. This includes the expectation that 3 quotes will have been sought for any work to be undertaken, details of what matched funding the group will be submitting for the project, and that grants from other sources will have been sought and applied for where appropriate (see Grant Awarding Policy and application form for full details of requirements). Parish council funding is not to be viewed as an easy alternative to obtaining funding from other available sources.

The process is as follows.

1. The Grant Awarding Policy will apply to Community Project funding applications and its requirements should be adhered to as part of an application for Community Projects funding.
2. Funding will not be approved retrospectively.
3. Prior to any application process for Community Project funding, the applicant will contact the clerk to the parish council for advice as to how best make an application. If the council has to return an unacceptable or insufficient application for more preparatory work to be done, or

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extra information to be provided, it is likely there will be a 2-month delay until the application can be reconsidered at the next parish council meeting. Effective communication and early planning will reduce the likelihood of unnecessary delays in decision making by the council.

4. Any applications will need to be submitted at least 2 weeks before the parish council meeting at which it will be considered. This will allow time for it to have a final check by the clerk for any remedial change requirements, and for it to be lawfully included on the agenda.
5. If the parish council resolves to approve a Community Project funding application, it will minute the specific power under which the grant will be made. *For example, Local Government (Municipal Provisions) Act 1976, s19(3) states that a local authority may contribute by way of grant or loan towards the expenses incurred or to be incurred by any voluntary organisation in providing any recreational facilities which the authority has power to provide by virtue of subsection.*
6. Once the parish council have considered a Community Project funding application and agreed to contribute a specific amount for a community project, the responsibility for management of the project and payment for it will remain with the community group or organisation.
7. On successful completion of the project, the community group will inform the clerk to the parish council, in writing (email will suffice) that the project has been completed to their satisfaction. Confirmation will be provided to the parish council as to the final amount paid by the community group for the completed project. Payment from the Community Projects reserve will then be made by the clerk to the groups official bank account.
8. Once the group have received Community Projects funding from the parish council, they will provide the parish council with a receipt for accounts and auditing purposes.
9. VAT is unlikely to be able to be reclaimed by the parish council under Community Projects funding arrangements.
10. It is accepted by the parish council that unforeseen circumstances may require some deviance from the requirements of the Grant Awarding Policy and Community Projects Funding Addendum. This will be exceptional; however, the parish council reserve the right to resort to a flexible application of this policy if prevailing circumstances dictate that it is a prudent and sensible course of action.

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