

## **MALVERN TOWN COUNCIL GRANTS POLICY**

### **1. Introduction**

Malvern Town Council recognises the immense value of voluntary and community activity and its contribution to residents' well-being, the local economy and the sustainability of a wide range of services which benefit visitors and people living and working in the town. The following policy and procedures are based on the principles of fairness, responsiveness to local need, and ensuring that public money is spent in a responsible manner.

The Council's financial support is provided by way of Grants, which are decided against criteria set by, and which can be amended from time to time by, Malvern Town Council.

In order for this Council to be able to assess applications rationally and objectively, many of which will inevitably be totally dissimilar in content, it is both necessary and helpful to assess all applications received against a range of criteria. These are designed to be a general indication of need, but are not exclusive and can be flexibly applied.

The Town Council's Policy on Community Grants is based on the principle of promoting the development of partnerships which encourage and enable local community organisations to deliver local projects to the residents of Malvern. 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 grant given will benefit Malvern residents.
- Organisations should not make a presumption that funding will continue on a year-to-year basis.
- Grants will not be given for staffing costs.
- Grants are awarded at the discretion of the Council.
- In the case of applications in which the Town Council's grant will form part of overall funding, applicants should try to demonstrate that they can obtain some other funding, but failing this, a decision will be at the discretion of the Committee.

### **2. The Aims of the Council's Grant-Making Policy**

Malvern Town Council provides grant funding to support the following aims:

- To enable local people to participate in voluntary groups and activities.
- To help Malvern'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 that meet the needs of people experiencing social and economic difficulties.
- To ensure that there is equality of access and opportunity for all Town residents to the services it provides and funds.
- To improve or enhance the local environment.
- To achieve value for money.

The Town Council defines a voluntary group as a non-profit making organisation, set up and run by a voluntary, unpaid management committee.

### **3. Application and Determination Process**

Information about Grants will be available on the Malvern Town Council website at [www.malverntowncouncil.org](http://www.malverntowncouncil.org).

Applications for both Large and Small Grants will be invited in July/August of each financial year, and will be presented to the September meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee.

Original applications will be available on file for scrutiny by any Councillor. The Town Clerk will provide a summary of all Annual Grant applications for members of the Policy & Resources Committee prior to the September meeting. Visits to applicants' organisations may be arranged via the Town Clerk.

All organisations in receipt of grants will be required to provide a short report in March of each following year indicating how the grant was used and the benefits arising.

### **4. The eligibility of applications will be assessed against the following criteria:**

- If the applicant has received funding in the previous year the Council must be satisfied that the applicant has delivered that project to a satisfactory level.
- Applicants must answer all the questions on the relevant application form.
- Applications must demonstrate direct benefit to the residents of Malvern.
- The funding requested must be commensurate with the benefit obtained by the residents of Malvern.
- Frequency of applications should be taken into account.

### **5. Malvern Town Council will not normally fund the following:**

- Organisations that do not provide a service to the Malvern community.
- Individuals.
- 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.
- Animal welfare with no community or charitable element.
- Projects that take place before an application can be decided.
- Organisations that have a closed or restricted membership.
- Grants to cover general running costs.

## **6. Small Grants**

These grants are limited to £500 per organisation, and are offered on a one-off basis to support a particular project, event, activity or the purchase of equipment. Small Grants are subject to the following criteria:

- Small Grants cannot be used to support general running costs.
- Small Grants must be spent within 1 year of being awarded. Any unspent monies left after this time must be returned.
- Small Grants are awarded on an annual basis, and an award made is not an indication that funding will be continued in future years.
- Groups wishing to receive a Small Grant will need to complete a Small Grant Application Form and provide additional supporting information.
- A small grant can only be used for the purpose stated in the application, and the Council reserves the right to reclaim any grant that has not been used for the specified purpose of the application.
- Applications for projects where the work has already been completed will not be considered.
- Should, for any reason, the organisation disband, or the project not be completed, the Council may ask for all or part of the monies to be paid back.
- Only one application per year will be accepted from any organisation.

## **7. Large Grants**

These grants are available to community organisations which provide a significant service to the community. Large Grants are subject to the following criteria:

- Large Grant applications may be made for any amount over £500.
- In the case of the total amount budgeted for these Grants being exceeded, any applications will be referred to Full Council for approval.
- Large Grants cannot be used to support the groups' normal running costs or to fund salaries, or to provide match-funding to other funding bodies.
- Groups wishing to receive a Large Grant will need to complete a Large Grant Application Form and provide additional supporting information. The Council may hold a meeting with the group to discuss its needs and the level of Town Council support requested. Groups in receipt of a Large Grant will be required to make an annual report to the Town Council.
- A Large Grant can only be used for the purpose stated in the application, and the Council reserves the right to reclaim any grant that has not been used for the specified purpose of the application.
- Should, for any reason, the organisation disband, or the project not be completed, the Council may ask for all or part of the monies to be paid back.
- Additional grant conditions may also be attached to any funding the Council agrees, 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.

## **8. Special Grants**

Special Grants are for amounts over £500 and are subject to the general eligibility criteria described in section 4 and 5 above. Additionally, Special Grants will be subject to:

- The backing of a Notice of Motion submitted to Full Council by a Member.
- Applicants demonstrating why they have been unable to submit their application under the regular timetable for Annual Grant applications, as detailed in section 3 above.

## **9. Multi-Year Funding Agreements**

Organisations which are beneficiaries of Special Grant funding may request a three-year funding agreement. The Council will not make any automatic allowance for inflation, but will instead set the grant level at the same amount for the three year period.

## **10. Payment Timetable**

- Successful applicants for both Small and Large Grants will receive their award in the October / November following application.
- Applicants for Special Grants will receive funding in line with Council agreement on payment scheduling.
- All grants will only be paid following written request. Grants will only be paid by cheque, made out to the named organisation on the grant application.

## **11. Monitoring and Reporting Requirements**

Groups are expected to provide Malvern Town Council with written evidence of how the money has been spent and the benefit it has brought to the people of Malvern. Evidence should include copies of invoices and receipts, plus attendance numbers, photos, and press cuttings where applicable.

This information should be submitted within 1 month of the event/project end, or by the end of February each year, whichever is sooner, so that it can be reported at the Annual Town Meeting.

A schedule of awarded grants will be published on the Council's website annually.