

2016 (Revised, 2018)

Introduction

This document replaces the previous Grants Policy. The previous Policy included a reference to the 'Small Sparks Grants Programme'. In some respects, the separate references to both schemes were confusing and contradictory. The purpose of this revision is to remove reference to 'Small Sparks'. Whilst the principles of 'Small Sparks' have been maintained, they are now incorporated into a single Grants Policy and all references to the name 'Small Sparks' have been removed. Please see Appendix A. below, which explains more about the Grant Scheme

General

Grants will only be awarded which, in the opinion of the Council, may be of benefit to all or some of the inhabitants of the parish. Before making any contribution, Council will establish that:

- a) The application is from a bona-fide (or newly formed) organisation, properly constituted and administered.
- b) At least 4 Ruspidge and Soudley residents need to be actively contributing and your activities need to take place within the Parish and for the benefit of Parishioners
- c) There is a need.
- d) The grant will be used for stated purpose.
- e) Where appropriate, the organisation concerned is making its own efforts to raise funds.
- f) **The awarding of Grants will only be considered by the Council upon receipt of a completed Grant Application Form.**

If the grant is made under Section 137 of the Local Government Act as amended, it is important that the grant given is...

"In the interests of the area or its inhabitants, and (will) benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure"

In some cases, Council may impose conditions before contributing, or may consider making a loan as well as, or instead of, a grant.

The following criteria will assist organisations in deciding if they are eligible for assistance:

- a) Applications will only be considered from voluntary and or charitable organisations.
- b) The organisation must provide benefits to the public that are either free or on reasonable terms.
- c) The Parish Council is keen to assist in the provision of facilities that improve the quality of life for parishioners. However, organisations should not apply for grant aid simply to improve their finances. In such cases grants WILL NOT be made.
- d) Normally, only one grant application will be considered per year from any organisation.

Grant applications will fall into one of four main categories, and will be considered on this basis:

(a) Minor, (b) Major, (c) Central, (d) Emergency

Minor Grants

Minor grants will be considered by the Council and will be up to a maximum of £250. Where appropriate, the amount of Grant will be reviewed annually.

Major Grants

Major grants will be considered by the Council and will be up to a maximum of £500.

Major grant applications should be supported by the following additional criteria:

- a) Preference will be given to applications for assistance with specific projects, particularly when a grant from the Parish Council will attract aid from (in cash or kind) other sources.
- b) Where appropriate, applicants must submit a copy of their latest statement of accounts, preferably audited, including full details of any other financial assistance such as investments.
- c) Applications involving land and all buildings should show some security of tenure.
- d) Where grant aid is sought for a specific project, a budget for the scheme must be provided. Where applicable, this should show any applications made to other bodies for grant aid.
- e) Applications should be made as early as possible to enable investigation and/or forward planning by The Parish Council.
- f) If planning permission is required for any project for which an application is made, no grant will be awarded until planning approval has been gained.
- g) Applicants may be required to attend a Parish Council meeting to present their case.

Central Grants

Organisations eligible for central grants are:

- Ruspidge Welfare Trust (Trustee - Ruspidge and Soudley Parish Council)
- Ruspidge Memorial Hall Committee
- Soudley Village Hall & Recreation Ground Committee

Major and Central Grants will be paid upon sight of invoices and guaranteed for a specified period.

Ruspidge Memorial Hall Committee and Soudley Village Hall & Recreation Ground Committee

The Parish Council wants to support these organisations.

- Delegates from Council will attend their meetings.
- They should send minutes of meetings to the Council.
- They should be invited to present reports to the Annual Parish Meeting

Emergency Grants

Emergency Grants will be considered on their merit.

Appendix A

What is the Grants Scheme?

It is a simple fact; communities are more resilient and are better places to live when people know each other and do things together. The demands of modern life have colluded to create circumstances where this is no longer the experience of many of us.

The Grant Scheme demonstrates the Parish Council's commitment to support the reinvention of more connected communities and offers matched funding support to groups of citizens who care about something enough to want to do something about the thing they care about. That might be starting a club or sporting team, doing something purposeful with and for children & young people, improving their local surroundings, or running a community event – the possibilities are too many to state. However, the over-riding criteria will be that the group of people care enough to really do whatever 'it' might be. It's worth saying that we have not invented this idea. There are hosts of Small Sparks initiatives around the UK and overseas and they have proved invaluable in re-connecting people and communities and making towns and villages better places to live.

MATCH FUNDING?

This is means of enhancing your bid by demonstrating that you will contribute to the total cost. A contribution may be in the form of cash, goods, equipment or venue. In this context you means funding (or equivalent) derived from another source, i.e. subscriptions/membership fees you will collect; contributions from businesses (in the form of equipment for example) who wish to support your project, etc. Whilst not a requirement for a grant, the inclusion of match funding is a good way of demonstrating to the Council that you are serious about making your project work.

HOW MUCH CAN YOU APPLY FOR?

You can apply for a Grant of up to a maximum of £500

DOES MY BID QUALIFY?

You will need to be committed to involving more local people in your project or activity and to complete a Grant Application Form. If your Grant is approved, and prior to release of funds, you will be required to sign up to the conditions attached.

Approved: 10th April 2018