



s137 grant awarding

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1. Introduction

Annually, Speen Parish Council (SPC) makes grants totalling £1,000 pa to organisations working for the benefit of the community in Bagnor, Marsh Benham, Speen, Stockcross and Woodspeen only. Grants are made out of money provided by the council tax payers of Speen Parish and accordingly the Parish Council has a responsibility to satisfy itself that grants will provide benefit to the local community.

2. Regulatory Framework:

The Local Government Act 1972 section 137 makes provision for Parish Councils to provide financial support, up to a fixed amount, for the benefit of residents of the Parish. The total annual amount available to a Parish for this purpose is prescribed by Government and is a 'resident rate' times the number of residents on the Parish Electoral roll.

Under this legislation, the council has no obligation to spend all or any of the money available under S.137. This money is not 'gifted' to the council; it forms part of the Precept which the council makes on West Berkshire District Council. The cost of any grants or donations is therefore reflected in residents' Council tax bills.

3. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- outline the SPC's approach to grant requests and awarding
- ensure grants are awarded based on consistent specifications
- ensure our s137 grant fund management is open, transparent, fair and supports local organisations benefitting Speen Parish residents directly and demonstrably.

4. Scope

- 4.1 The scope of this policy is the grant operations of SPC. This policy sets out the requirements that must be satisfied before grant applications will be considered.
- 4.2 This policy is fully supported by the council. It lays out grant awarding guidelines to be followed in order to ensure community grant requests are funded appropriately.
- 4.3 This policy confirms that SPC will continue to award grants following these guidelines for the forthcoming year until the next review date

5. Eligibility:

- 5.1 Grants are restricted to applications made by groups only and on matters that benefit Parish residents. Applicants must set out how the community in Speen Parish will benefit directly from the work funded by any grant. They must be able to show that the grant will make the parish a



better place to live, work and/or visit. This is particularly important where an application is made by an organisation working regionally or nationally.

5.2 S137 awards are open to established voluntary or community groups, as well as new or informal groups of Parishioners who are by the date of application to become formally constituted. To be eligible for the award of a grant under Section 137 an organisation **ideally** should satisfy all of the following.

- be established for charitable, benevolent, social, cultural, recreational or philanthropic purposes
- have a constitution, or set of rules, which define its aims, objectives and operational procedures
- be able to provide a copy of its latest annual accounts including Balance Sheet showing cash at bank and reserves. Accounts are to be checked and signed by a person independent of the group.
- have a bank account operated by a minimum of at least two joint signatories.

However, it is recognised that smaller organisations within the SPC community may not be compliant with the above e.g. a local parent-led toddler group. In that instance, awarding of a grant, and waiving the above requirements, will be subject to council considering and agreeing the demonstrable benefits to the local community of Speen Parish.

5.3 Grants will not be made under any circumstances to:

- individuals
- commercial organisations
- projects that are the prime statutory responsibility of other government bodies
- political parties
- projects that improve or primarily benefit privately owned land or property
- applications from organisations whose prime activities are fund raising
- local groups where fund-raising is sent to a central HQ for redistribution

6. Procedure

- 6.1 The council reserve the right to refuse to fund an application.
- 6.2 The decisions made by the council are final. There is no appeals process.
- 6.3 The council may consider grants annually, six-monthly, quarterly or monthly. Unless to be considered monthly, grant application deadlines will be published on the website.
- 6.4 A copy of this policy will be given to all grant applicants, either electronic or hard copy.
- 6.5 Grant applications must be made on the official SPC s137 grant application form. No grant request will be considered without a completed form. All questions on the application from should be fully answered and additional appropriate information, as above, which supports an application, should be provided wherever possible. The Clerk can supply the s137 application form.
- 6.6 Grants will be made only for prospective funding and cannot be made to cover money already spent *i.e.* retrospective funding.
- 6.7 Grants for specific purposes, which can be directly attributable to SPC, are preferred e.g. where SPC funds a particular item or project which can be advertised as such.



- 6.8 Grants are normally made for one year's expenditure at a time and should be spent within the year for the purpose for which they were given. SPC reserves the right to request unspent monies are returned to council funds.
- 6.9 Grants should not be added, wholly or partly, to reserves unless part of a previously approved programme of funding for a particular project.
- 6.10 The Council will only consider one grant application per organisation per financial year unless there are extenuating circumstances. Each application will be required to be accompanied by a new application form.
- 6.11 Repeat grants year on year will only be granted for projects that the council considers of specific value to the Speen Parish community.
- 6.12 A recipient of a grant **must** provide evidence of how the grant was spent in the form of a written report or letter, supported by financial evidence where available. The report must be received by the Clerk within 12 months of receipt of the grant. This council reserves the right to make this report public on the council's website as proof of how the s137 monies were spent.
- 6.13 Recipients of grants will be expected to acknowledge receipt in writing for council audit purposes.
- 6.14 Recipients are expected to acknowledge Speen Parish Council's support on all promotional materials, press releases and/or stationery.
- 6.15 Unfortunately the Council may not be able to fund all projects as there may be more applications that there is money available. However all applications will be considered carefully.
- 6.16 All groups will be treated equally and on their own merit.
- 6.17 Councillors will be expected to declare their interests in any specific application and act according to the SPC Code of Conduct.

7. Authorisation of Policy on behalf of Full Council:

The undersigned approves this policy on behalf of Speen Parish Council.

Signature:

Name (print):

Position:

Date: ____/____/____