

Ecclesfield Parish Council – Community Groups Small Grant Programme – Draft Policies and Principles

Ecclesfield Parish Council is committed to helping local groups make a difference to our community.

One of the ways we do this is by providing financial support via grants to support and encourage community groups to undertake activities that meet the needs of and benefit the residents of the Parish.

The Grant programme is open for the whole of the financial year and grant applications can be made at any time during it (subject to available funding).

In general, the following principles will apply

- Assistance will be given on the basis of need, merit and contribution to the Parish. Applicants must clearly show how any grants or assistance awarded will benefit the people and or the environment within all or part of the Parish.

Who can apply to the Ecclesfield Parish Council Community Groups Small Grant Programme?

Any local voluntary, community and self-help group based in or who serve the Parish of Ecclesfield and have (and can provide, if required):

1. Aims and Objectives.
2. Constitution or set of rules if it has one.
3. A bank or building society account in the name of the group.
4. Approved accounts if it has been in existence for at least 18 months (newly formed groups in existence for less than 18 months which are embarking on worthwhile projects will be given special consideration).
5. Public Liability Insurance cover.

In addition, if they have previously received a grant from the Council that they have satisfactorily returned a monitoring form and/or returned any unspent monies for that project in the specified timescales.

Ward Based element

- Each ward will be allocated an indicative amount of grant funding.
- This will be based on the overall grant programme being divided equally by the number of Parish Councillors and multiplied by the number of Councillors in each ward.
- The Council will monitor the number and amount of grants awarded by each ward.
- Progress will be reported to every Finance and Premises Committee meeting, who reserve the right to take action if required if it considers, for example, any ward is not fully benefiting from the programme.

Process

- Under normal circumstance we aim to process each application within 4 weeks of submission
- After you submit your application, a member of a Council staff will check your application form and enclosed documents to see if they are Council complete and legible. We aim to do this in 14 days.
- What information will I have to provide?

- The aims and objectives of the group.
- A copy of your Constitution or set of rules and your annual report if applicable.
- The most recent copy of your approved accounts.
- Copies of any permissions required for third party use. (e.g., licences or land rent).
- A copy of your current public liability cover (the Council reserves the right to request a further copy of your public liability cover during the period of the grant).
- Details of any reserves you hold and if these are earmarked for specific expenditure.
- Details of any grants the group has received from the Council or another body in the last five years.
- Details of any other financial support you have secured or are applying for in support of the activity, including the group's own.
- Where possible, an accurate figure of the number of people that would benefit from the grants and how many of these live in the Parish.
- Copies of quotations for any items such as equipment, courses, or activities that you are seeking to spend the grant on.
- If your application is not complete it will be returned to you for completion. It is your responsibility to ensure that the application form is completed correctly and ensure that all the requested material in support of your application have been provided. Grants will not be considered until we have received a completed grant application form and all supporting documents.
- You may be contacted for clarification and or additional information.
- You will be asked to attend the Finance and Premises Committee to present and ask questions on your application.
- The Finance and Premises Committee determine whether an application should be supported and, if successful, the amount to be awarded. This is then normally approved or rejected by Full Council at its next subsequent meeting.
- We aim to notify you of the decision of Full Council, normally by email or letter, three days after it is made.
- Grant applications will be assessed using the following criteria:
 - A completed application form.
 - Nature of the group – how it is set up, structured and its track record.
 - Your finances and the financial need for funding.
 - How much funding we have available.
 - What need/demand there is for your activity in all or part of the Parish.
 - Support and involvement of the residents of the Parish in the group and activity.
 - Efforts and ability to secure other sources of funding.
 - The extent to which it benefits all or part of the Parish.
 - The extent to which it provides value for money for the residents of the Parish.
 - The group's previous grant history (if applicable).
- Successful grants will be paid by BACS transfer to the group applying for the grant.
- Please note the funds available in the form of grants are limited and a bid might be successful, but a group may still only receive a percentage of the grant requested.

In general

In order for the Council to be able to rationally and objectively assess applications 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.

- Grants will only be awarded to a group throughout the financial year up to a value of £2,000 (normally the limit for starter groups¹ is £1,000). This does not prevent a group making more than one application but the total amount they will receive in a single financial year is £2,000 (normally £1,000 for starter groups).
- They must also be able to clearly demonstrate that the activity they are seeking funding for will primarily directly benefit all or part of the Parish and this benefit is commensurate with the amount sought.
- Grants will not normally be awarded to organisations based outside of the Parish unless they can clearly demonstrate the activity they are seeking funding brings substantial and direct benefits to all or part of the Parish.
- Grants will only be provided to not-for-profit organisations with clearly stated aims and objectives. Individuals or for-profit groups may not apply.
- Grants are for one-off purchases or events and not for on-going running costs such as salary costs, utility bills, rent or fees.
- Applicants must clearly indicate the full scope of the activity they are seeking funding for and details of who will benefit from the grant.
- We cannot give grants for activities which the law prevents parish councils from supporting such as an activity which another statutory body such as schools or Sheffield City Council is legally required to provide or repairs to some churches.
- Applicants will be requested to demonstrate why the activity or benefit to the group would not take place if the grant was not approved.
- Must be able to demonstrate equality of access and opportunity.
- Applicants must list any other grant funding the group has received from other funding bodies in the last five years including from the Council.
- They must also state if they are applying or received any other fundings in support of the project including any self-funding.
- Organisations should not make a presumption that funding will continue on a year-to-year basis.
- Applicants must state any reserves they hold and if these are earmarked for specific expenditure (NB Grants will not be awarded to organisations who it is considered already hold surplus funds).
- Applications will not be considered if submitted by an organisation that it is considered operates an excessively restrictive membership policy, i.e., one that does not discriminate on the grounds of race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, gender etc.
- Retrospective applications will not be considered.
- Grants will not be given for the promotion of a party-political viewpoint or for the promotion of a particular religion.
- Any grant must be used by the original applicant and must not be distributed to any other organisation, unless specifically authorised by the Council.
- Any award must be made payable to the organisation applying for the grant.
- The Council reserves the right to pay a grant in stages.
- Grants must be spent within 6 months, unless alternative arrangements have been made with the Council.

¹ Defined as a group that has been set up in the last year.

- Any unspent Grants, full or partial must be repaid to the Council unless otherwise agreed. Failure to do so may result in legal and other action by the Council and affect future grant assistance.
- Full and proportionate recognition must be given to the Parish for any contribution given to the activity; this might include listing on any advertising, promotional material, website and social media.
- Groups awarded a Grant will be expected to complete an end of grant report and submit receipts, (no screenshots) and photographic evidence, no later than 6 months after the end date stated on their application and may be required to attend a Council meeting to give a verbal update. Failure to submit a completed end of grant report within 6 months may affect future grant assistance.
- Awards must be used solely for the purpose detailed in the application; the Parish Council may take action to recover any money that has not been spent in accordance with the application.

Appendix 1 Definition of a Not for Profit Body

Please tick to confirm what kind of group you are (tick only one):

Unincorporated association²

A registered charity, if so:

Please state your charity number:

²An 'unincorporated association' is an organisation set up through an agreement between a group of people who come together for a reason other than to make a profit (for example, a voluntary group or a sports club). Most voluntary or community groups are an incorporated society though many are not aware of this. More information about what is an unincorporated association can be found at [Unincorporated associations - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)