



STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

GRANT APPLICATIONS POLICY

1. General Principles

- a) Stotfold Town Council is committed to providing assistance and support to eligible local community groups, faith groups, not-for-profit organisations and organisations working in Stotfold and supporting its local residents. These grants aim to provide support for residents connected to improved wellbeing and opportunities to ensure inclusivity and equality of opportunity for all.
- b) Stotfold Town Council is funded by its residents via the Council's precept and therefore has only limited, pre-agreed budget available for the purpose of grant funding. The level of funding available may vary each year depending on the Council's agreed budget.
- c) Stotfold Town Council is committed to following best practice in grant giving in order to provide sustainable funding and support to voluntary and community groups, whilst providing value for money for local taxpayers and ensuring that public money is spent in a responsible manner.
- d) Stotfold Town Council has two grant award periods – April and October annually.
- e) In order for Stotfold Town Council to be able to assess applications objectively, it must assess all applications received against a range of criteria and will be presented to and decided on by the Governance & Resources Committee.
- f) The following eligibility principles will apply:
 - Assistance will be given on the basis of need, merit and contribution to local community.
 - Applicants must clearly show how any assistance given will benefit the people living in Stotfold or will benefit the environment of Stotfold.
 - Any grant awards will be subject to monitoring and evidence of agreed expenditure and resulting benefit. Photographic evidence may be requested.
 - Organisations should not make a presumption that funding will continue on a year-to-year basis.
 - Any funds awarded must only be spent on the activity/purpose for which it was awarded.

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

- a) Stotfold Town Council provides grant funding to support the following aims:
 - To enable local people to participate in voluntary groups and activities;
 - To help the town's voluntary groups to improve effectiveness and equality of opportunity
 - To ensure provision of services, needed by the town's residents, via the voluntary and charity sectors;
 - To support organisations which meet the needs of people experiencing social and economic difficulties;
 - To improve and enhance the local environment, arts and culture (The Town Council defines a voluntary group as a non-profit making organisation, set up and run by a voluntary, unpaid management committee.).

3. Grant Application Eligibility

a) Applicants must meet the following criteria:

- The organisation is based in or has significant local activity in Stotfold.
- The work of the organisation directly benefits a number of residents of Stotfold.
- The organisation has a written Constitution with clearly defined aims and objectives.
- The local organisation has a clear financial need. (Account will be taken of how much money the organisation has, including any special reserves set aside for particular projects and local fundraising efforts. Additionally, if the balance is high in relation to spending, then an explanation is required, justifying the reasons why the organisation is still applying for a grant.)
- The organisation has its own bank account with at least two authorised signatories.
- The organisation is non-party political and non-profit making.
- Individuals will not be funded.

4. The Grants Process

- a) All funding requests must use an updated application form which can be downloaded from the Town Council's website and applicants should provide all information requested.
- b) The amount of money available for grants may vary each financial year, depending on the overall budget. The level of funds available for grant applications in any given year can be obtained from the Town Clerk and applicants are advised to speak with the Clerk for guidance ahead of submitting applications.
- c) Completed applications will be considered by the Town Council's Governance & Resources Committee at the appropriate point of the grant award schedule.
- d) Applicants may be asked to send a representative to attend the Committee meeting in support of their application. A calendar of all Council meetings can be found on the Town Council's website.
- e) The Governance & Resources Committee may defer making a decision on an application if it feels more information is required from the applicant.

5. Payments and decisions

- a) All applicants will usually be notified of Council's decision following the relevant meeting of the Governance & Resources Committee.
- b) Successful applicants for grants will normally receive their award four to six weeks after the decision of the Governance & Resources Committee.
- c) Successful applicants will be invited to attend a meeting of Stotfold Town Council to receive their awarded grant.
- d) In some circumstances the payment date(s) may differ and this will be set out in the grant award confirmation letter.
- e) Grants will be paid by cheque made out to the named organisation.

6. Monitoring and reporting requirements

- a) Groups are expected to provide Stotfold Town Council with written evidence of what the money has been spent on and the benefit it has brought to the people of Stotfold.
- b) Such evidence of how the money has been spent may include copies of invoices and receipts, plus attendance numbers, photos, press clippings, etc. where applicable.

- c) This information should be submitted within 1 month of the event/project end or by the end of the project, provided written confirmation has been received by the Town Council as to expected finish date of the relevant project or expenditure point.
- d) The grant can only be used for the purpose stated in the application and the Council reserves the right to reclaim any grant not being used for the specified purpose of the application. However, if a group wishes to change the purpose of the grant they must seek approval by writing to the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee who will consider whether or not to approve the change.
- e) Organisations are responsible for ensuring that they are in compliance with all applicable legal and statutory requirements (including those relating to health and safety and equalities).
- f) Should the organisation, for any reason, disband or the project is not completed, the Council may ask for all or part of the monies to be paid back.
- g) Acknowledgement of the financial support received from the Council is required where possible on documentation and any promotional material, including websites.
- h) In order to receive payment, organisations/groups must have a bank account into which grants can be paid; payments will not be made to private individuals.
- i) All successful applicants must complete an evaluation form within the stated time periods.
- j) Additional grant conditions may also be attached to any funding from Stotfold Town Council and these will be set out in the award confirmation letter.
- k) Failure to comply with any conditions attached to a grant may result in the grant being recalled or affect future grant assistance.