

IN YEAR GRANTS POLICY – NEWPORT TOWN COUNCIL

Background:

In February 2012 Newport Town Council considered that a formal Policy be produced, regarding the handling of grant requests. The purpose was to provide guidance to councillors in order that they could provide a generally consistent approach, ensuring grant funding is targeted appropriately and that public money was spent well.

SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

Applications for grant funding must be made on the form prepared by the Town Council and submitted to the Town Clerk.

- The Town Council can agree to change the application form at a council meeting.

Grant applications will be considered at designated Town Council meetings and should arrive no later than 10 days before the meeting¹.

CONSIDERATION OF APPLICATIONS

Eligibility

The Clerk and the Mayor are delegated to sift all applications prior to submission to Full Town Council using the following guidance criteria:

1. Applications should demonstrate a need for seed² or crisis³ funding.
2. Applications should contain sufficient information to allow an objective decision to be reached by the Town Council.
3. Applications should be for local community groups.
4. Where applications will also benefit non-Newport residents, evidence should exist that demonstrates other sources of appropriate funding are being or have been pursued.
5. Applications should not be considered for retrospective grants.
6. Applications from groups that have recently⁴ received a Town Council Grant should demonstrate an overriding or particularly novel reason.
7. Applications should cover activities to which the Town Council has a legal power⁵ to contribute.

In exceptional circumstances The Town Mayor can exercise some discretion when considering whether an application is eligible for consideration that does not readily fall within the guidance criteria. Examples may include:

1. National charities that are conducting activities in the Town, primarily for the benefit of the residents.
2. Participation in civic events.

¹ To enable the application to be sifted and then forwarded to members prior to any meeting.

² Seed Funding – To assist new community groups in starting up or, existing groups starting up a new or one-off venture.

³ Crisis Funding – Should be used to address items that could not have readily been foreseen. Consideration will be given to the expertise of the applicant.

⁴ Within the past 24 months.

⁵ The legal right to choose to do something.

CONSIDERATION OF APPLCIATIONS BY FULL TOWN COUNCIL

Eligible applications will be distributed with the (grants designated) Town Council meeting agenda, for consideration by the Town Council.

A list of non-eligible grants should be tabled at the meeting.

At the beginning of the agenda item to discuss grants, members should firstly consider whether each application is worthy of discussion⁶:

- Consider if the application has sufficient information to make a judgement.
- Consider if there is sufficient community benefit to be gained to grant public money raised through direct taxation of residents.

At this stage the Town Council can choose to identify those applications that it will not consider. In practice it is probably only fair to consider every request provided that at least one member present is supportive of, as it does not necessarily follow that discussion will lead to an award of a grant.

Levels of Grants

The meeting should identify a provisional amount (if any) of funding for each application. Once all the applications have been considered the total amount should be tallied to see if there are sufficient funds in the budget.

If the provisional total is within the budget then the Town Council can vote to approve the grants en masse or modify the provisional proposal.

If the provisional total exceeds the budget the Town Council may:

- Vire funds from other budgets⁷
- Reconsider all the provisional amounts to ensure that grants budget is not exceeded.
- Make part payment of one or more grant applications and inform the applicant(s) to the Town Council may be able to assist further if they are able to find additional funding.

SUMMARY

The policy is intended to be a guide and can be re-written at the will of the Council. The policy cannot override existing or future legislation. Where the policy is silent, vague or becomes redundant in part, members should follow the spirit of the policy ' To strive for equitable treatment, the opportunity to be considered and the responsible spending of public money.

Authority: Adopted by resolution - NTC Minute 289/11-12 (dated 11 April 2012)

⁶ There is a high probability that at least one member may be aligned to a particular community group by nature of being a member and members should consider whether they have a personal interest.

⁷ Caution should be exercised