



Adopted by the Council at its Meeting held on 9 May 2019

Community Grant Funding Policy

Each year Bridgwater Town Council allocates a specific amount of money to be made available as grants to organisations, clubs, societies and groups who help to build a sustainable community and economy for the residents of Bridgwater. In awarding grants the Town Council is aware of its responsibility for ensuring that public funds are properly managed.

Basic requirements

All grants are restricted to voluntary or non-profit making organisations that can demonstrate that the funding will:

- meet an identified need
- deliver a viable project or service
- mainly benefit residents of the Parish of Bridgwater

Applications must be made on the appropriate form, which can be downloaded from the Council's website or obtained from the Town Council Office, and submitted to the Town Clerk with the requisite documents. Incomplete applications will be returned for completion. Please bear in mind that applications will be reviewed shortly before issuing the meeting agenda, so any delay caused by incomplete forms may mean that the application will not be considered until the following meeting.

Applicants will be invited to attend the next available meeting of the Finance & Policy Executive Committee, which meets every other month, to explain their application in person.

Successful applicants will be required to:

- acknowledge receipt of the grant;
- acknowledge Bridgwater Town Council's support in any publicity material;
- complete a Town Council Grant Monitoring Form within 12 months of the award date to demonstrate how the grant was spent; and
- make an oral report to the next available Bridgwater Town Assembly Meeting.

Requests for regular core funding

Applications for regular core financial assistance of no more £20,000 per annum are reserved for Bridgwater Art Centre, Hamp Community Association, Sydenham Community Centre and Victoria Park Community Centre that can provide:

- Details of your organisation's bank account;
- A copy of your constitution;
- A copy of your certified audited accounts for the last two years. In the case of smaller organisations, income and expenditure statements for the last two years certified by a qualified accountant may be submitted instead. Where such statements have not been certified, they must be signed by two persons from within the organisation who have been appointed to act as auditors; and
- A business plan that sets out what activities you have planned over the next three years and how they will be funded.

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a service level agreement. Each agreement will last for one year only and any further grant assistance within this period will be subject to a further agreement being drawn up.

Requests for regular annual funding

Applications for regular financial assistance of no more £2,500 per annum are welcome from organisations, clubs, societies or groups that can provide:

- Details of your organisation's bank account;
- A copy of your constitution;
- A copy of your certified audited accounts for the last two years. In the case of smaller organisations, income and expenditure statements for the last two years certified by a qualified accountant may be submitted instead. Where such statements have not been certified, they must be signed by two persons from within the organisation who have been appointed to act as auditors; and
- A business plan that sets out what activities you have planned over the next three years and how they will be funded.

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a service level agreement. Each agreement will last for one year only and any further grant assistance within this period will be subject to a further agreement being drawn up.

Requests for Ward grants

Applications for Ward grants for up to £1,000 will be welcomed from organisations, clubs, societies or groups within the Town Council Ward they operate, for further information please contact the office. Funding will be considered for organisations that can provide:

- Details of your organisation's bank account;
- A copy of your constitution;
- A copy of your latest audited accounts and balance sheet. In the case of smaller organisations, a recent income and expenditure statement certified by a qualified accountant may be submitted instead. Where such statements have not been certified, they must be signed by two persons from within the organisation who have been appointed to act as auditors; and
- A project plan that sets out how the money will be spent and what the outcomes of the project will be.

Normally the maximum grant awarded will be for 75% of the project's costs, unless clear evidence is provided that the remainder cannot be raised from elsewhere.

The grant scheme is unable to support:

- Routine running costs, including salary or administration costs (*Core funding exempt from this condition*);
- Charities operating overseas or established to help persons outside the UK;
- Organisations with a closed or restricted membership;
- Organisations with party political links;
- Projects which discriminate on the grounds of race or religion;
- Applications to cover costs that have already been incurred; and
- Services which should be provided by statutory funding

Applicants should be aware that:

- All grant aid is subject to Council Officers being satisfied with the accounts and/or financial status of the applicant;
- The Council may attach special conditions to a grant which must be fulfilled before any payment can be made. Grants may be paid in stages over a period of time as a project progresses and evaluation and monitoring procedures take place;
- Applications from organisations with substantial unallocated resources will not be considered a priority for funding;
- Grants must be restricted to the purpose for which they were given;
- Organisations are generally restricted to one application for grant aid during each financial year (1 April to 31 March). However, the Council may consider additional applications during the same financial year if surplus grant funding is available;
- Applications from schools, religious groups etc. will be considered where a clear benefit to the wider community can be demonstrated;
- Applications for grant aid will be considered by the Finance & Policy Committee which meets bi-monthly (dates can be found on the website). For the application to be considered at the next available meeting all relevant paperwork will need to be submitted to the Town Clerk a minimum of 10 days prior to that meeting;
- The Council reserves the right to request a copy of quotations and other documentation as evidence of the expenditure that will be incurred. It would therefore be beneficial if quotations could be included as part of your supporting documentation; and
- For our own publicity material, the Council may require photos with agreement from participants and may use the name of the organisation and project.

For further information regarding any aspect of this policy please contact the Town Council Office at:

The Town Hall, High Street, Bridgwater TA6 3AS or Tel: 01278 427692 or email: townclerk@bridgwater-tc.gov.uk