



Northampton Town Council

Community Grants Policy

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Introduction

1.1 Northampton Town Council has a commitment to encourage, support and promote volunteer organisations and charities within its area for the benefit of the Town. The Town Council makes an annual budget provision for Community Grants to help meet its aims.

1.2 Community grants come from taxpayer funds and key principles of this policy are to ensure that grant expenditure is open and transparent and that any grants awarded are proportionate to the benefits they are expected to achieve.

1.3 Decisions related to Community Grants have been delegated to the Community Services Committee acting initially through its Grants Sub-Committee. This policy is designed to act as guidance for both applicants and councillors when considering applications.

1.4 Applicants are encouraged to look at alternative sources of funding in addition to these schemes.

1.5 The Town Council seeks to provide grants which meet the following outcomes:

- a. Any purpose which will enhance the economic, social and environmental well-being of their ward or part.
- b. Providing information to constituents, or seeking the views of constituents, whether about the Council or about any other matter affecting the economic, social or environmental well-being of the Council's area.

- c. Contributes towards a particular policy objective which the Council may determine from time to time.

Grant Schemes

The Town Council operates two separate grant schemes:

2.1 The **Councillors' Community Fund** is for grants nominated by individual Ward Councillors and will generally be for amounts not exceeding £2,500. Applications for this scheme will be considered three times per year.

2.2 The **General Community Grants Scheme** is for grants generally of a value in excess of £2,500 which will benefit a greater proportion of the area served by the Town Council than a single Ward. Applications for this scheme are considered annually by the Grants Sub-Committee as part of the budget setting process for the Council, as set out in 5.5, and payable from April 1st.

Eligibility

3.1 The schemes are only open to: Community Organisations, Local Charities and Community Interest Companies.

3.2 Bodies must have a bank account in their own name.

3.3 Projects must deliver a clear benefit to the residents of Northampton.

3.4 The Town Council will not fund: hospitality, salaries, religious organisations (unless for non-religious activities), core school expenditure or projects with party political links.

3.5 The Town Council will prioritise grants to bodies serving residents mainly contained within its area and will not normally award grants to bodies serving the whole of the area of the former Borough of Northampton and beyond. Such bodies will generally be directed to the West Northamptonshire Council and/ or the relevant town or parish council.

3.6 The Town Council reserves the right not to make grants to those who apply. No commercial organisation, Individuals or schools will be considered for a general grant. No regional or national charities will be considered unless it is for a specific project in or benefit to the area of Northampton Town Council.

Applying for a Grant from the Councillors' Community Fund

4.1 Each Town Councillor has been allocated an annual sum of £3,000 (in some cases £4,200) from which they can nominate bodies to receive grants in accordance with this Policy. A majority of persons benefitting from the award of the grant will normally reside within the boundary of that Councillor's Ward. Councillors may, however, join with colleagues and nominate a body serving an area greater than one Ward. Unspent funds will be carried over every year throughout the relevant Councillor's term of office.

4.2 Applications will be nominated by individual Ward Councillors (whose details and contact information can be found at <https://www.northamptontowncouncil.gov.uk/councillors.html>) and include all information requested on the form which is available at <https://www.northamptontowncouncil.gov.uk/grants.html>. An application will not be presented to the Grants sub-committee until it has been endorsed by the Ward Councillor and all required information has been provided.

4.3 Applicants must supply the previous financial year accounts and a recent (within three months) bank statement. New/start-up organisations should submit a financial statement containing their proposed budget.

4.4 Where expenditure on a single item would exceed £500 the applicant should demonstrate that best value has been sought; this may be by submitting quotations.

4.5 Applicants requesting up to £200 may submit a simplified request detailing the project they are undertaking and what the funds will be spent on. Clauses 4.3 and 4.4 do not apply to donation requests.

4.6 Councillor nominated grant applications will be considered three times per year by the Grants sub-committee.

Applying for a General Community Grant

5.1 Applications should be made on the application form via the Town Council website, you can find this at <https://www.northamptontowncouncil.gov.uk/grants.html>. Please include all information requested on the form. An application will not normally go to the Grants sub-committee until all required information has been provided.

5.2 Applicants must supply the previous two years of accounts and a recent (within three months) bank statement. If this is not possible then please explain why and instead submit recent bank statements

5.3 Where expenditure on a single item would exceed £500 the applicant should demonstrate that best value has been sought; this would normally be by the submission of quotations.

5.4 Applicants may attend the sub-committee meeting where their grant will be considered to answer any questions which may arise.

5.5 The deadline for applications to be considered for this scheme shall be set by the Town Clerk to correspond with the Council's budget setting cycle. The deadline date shall be published as soon as practicable.

Grant Evaluations

6.1. Recipients receiving a grant in excess of £200 shall provide an evaluation within twelve months of receipt of the grant on the prescribed form.

6.2. Receipts for all expenditure above £200 shall be provided as part of the evaluation to demonstrate the grant was spent appropriately.

Conditions of Grants

An application under both schemes shall indicate agreement to the following conditions.

7.1 Recipients shall complete an evaluation as required.

7.2 The Council reserves the right to reclaim funds not spent in accordance with the approved grant application, left unspent after one year of receipt or in full/partially for breach of conditions.

7.3 Northampton Town Council expects organisations to co-operate in gaining press and other publicity for events/facilities funded by the grant.

7.4 Recipients of more than £1,000 must use the Town Council's logo and the wording 'supported by Northampton Town Council' on all correspondence and publicity relating to the project supported by the grant.

7.5 Recipients must advise the Council prior to disposing of any resources or equipment funded/part-funded/supplied by the Council as part of a grant application within two years.

7.6 The Council may apply any additional conditions it deems necessary as part of the grant award

7.7 The Grants sub-committee reserves the right to monitor the application and use of any grant awarded and may withhold, withdraw or recover the grant if the purpose for which the grant is awarded ceases, or its aims and objectives vary to the extent that the application would not have been eligible for consideration at the time of the application. Any misuse of grant aid funds will result in appropriate legal action.

7.8 Where an organisation receives a grant it shall be on the condition that Members of the Grants sub-committee may visit its premises, the site of the project and/or event.

7.9 Any grant awarded will be expected to be taken up within six months of the date of the award being made unless a written application for an extension is made to the Grants sub-committee by the first day of the month in which the six-month period expires, and the extension is allowed. In this event, a date will be specified by which the expenditure must be made. If any grant aid is not expended by the specified date(s) the grant will be recovered.

7.10 Where an application will be used as matched funding to lever in additional funding from other sources, the Council's grant will not be released until confirmation is received that all funding to enable the project to proceed has been achieved.

Receipt of Grant

8.1 Successful applicants will be required to enter into an agreement to the grant conditions contained within this Policy prior to the grant being released.

8.2 Payments shall be made to the organisation within four weeks of receipt of the agreement

8.3 Payments shall only be made to an organisation. The Council will not issue grants to an individual.