

Policy & Resources Committee Meeting – 8th November 2023

Agenda Item 8.3. GRANT WORKING PARTY

On 31st October 2023, the Grant Working Party met to review the current grant application process and consider whether any changes could be made to the process, the policy and the application form.

Current Process

The current grant process is advertised on an annual basis, applicants are required to complete an application form and provide a set of accounts as supporting documentation. There is no cap to the amount that can be requested and all applications are considered on an individual basis.

By having an annual application process, a bulk of applications are normally received at the same time and the Council may then receive other applications sporadically across the year, which are dealt with as ‘out of process’, but these later applications are minimal.

This financial year has found that only half the grant budget has been spent and after advertising that grant monies are still available, only two additional applications have been received.

The timeframe of the current application process is: - December/January - Application Intake
Late March - Decision
May - Funds paid

Considerations

The Working Party discussed how the current annual intake may deter some groups/organisations from applying, as they may not have the necessary information or plans in place when ETC’s application period is open. Also, the same applicants tend to apply every year and applications are not being received from new groups/organisations which could be because they are not aware that grants are available from the Town Council. The Working Party agreed that now having social media may help advertise Town Council grants to a wider audience.

The grant application form was reviewed and it was agreed that the form contains adequate questions but needs to be reformatted and to include a question asking how groups/organisations promote green/environmental initiatives. The Grants Policy was also reviewed and it was agreed that it needs to have more set out sections with clear bullet points, making it easier to follow and more inviting.

Recommendations

Intake – The frequency of application intake be increased to three times a year being June, November and March. This would allow for a controlled rolling intake throughout the year, that would fit in with P & R Committee meetings for consideration and for payment awards to be made within the financial year.

Priority - Priority be given to applications from groups/organisations who encourage environmental/green initiatives, provide services/support for mental health, provide services/support for the elderly.

Application - To be updated, as an administrative action by an ETC Officer.
Forms

Policy - To be updated, as an administrative action by an ETC Officer and presented at the next Policy & Resources Committee at its meeting on 24th January 2024, for recommendation to Full Council on 7th February 2024.

Timeframe - As there are still grant monies available for financial year 2023/2024, for the new grant application process to start in June 2024.

Advice - As the grant application process normally opens in December each year, for applicants that make contact to be advised that the Town Council is in the process of reviewing its grant application process, but that there are still grant monies available for financial year 2023/2024.

Members to **AGREE** which recommendations, if any, to be put to Council at its meeting on 22nd November 2023 for consideration and adoption.