

Full Council – 22nd November 2023

Agenda Item 11. GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS

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, the bulk of applications are normally received at the same time. The Council may then receive other applications sporadically across the year, these are dealt with as ‘out of process’, but these later applications are minimal.

So far this financial year, only half the Earley Town Council grant budget has been spent and, after advertising that grant monies were still available, only three additional applications have been received.

The timeframe of the current application process is: -

December/January - Application Intake
Late March - Decision
May - Funds paid

Review

All councillors were invited to join a Grants Working Party which would review the current system and make recommendations for change to the Policy & Resources Committee. Any changes agreed will need to be ratified by Full Council.

Considerations

The Grants Working Party, consisting of Cllr Bradley, Cllr Matthews and the Deputy Town Clerk, discussed how the current once a year 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, this could be because they are not aware that grants are available from the Town Council. The Working Party agreed that now the Council has social media this will help advertise Town Council grants to a wider audience. They also agreed that the application process should be more flexible, to encourage more organisations to apply.

Policy & Resources Committee Recommendations: -

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

Start Date: For the new process to start as of June 2024, as there are still grant monies available for financial year 2023/2024.

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

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

Members to discuss and **RESOLVE** accordingly.