

# Grants Policy

February 2018

## 1. Introduction

Mole Valley District Council (MVDC) recognises the significant contribution made by the voluntary, community and faith sector (VCFS) in providing projects and services that improve the social, environmental and economic well-being of our District. MVDC operates a grants process which provides the following funding to organisations who help the Council to meet its priorities and who build capacity within communities:

- *Partnership Revenue Grants* – grants above £5,000 are available to our partner organisations to deliver services that support Council priorities. Applications are accepted on a three yearly cycle.
- *Small Grants Community Fund* – grants up to £5,000 are available to charities, community and voluntary groups for revenue costs. Applications are accepted on a quarterly basis.
- *Christmas Promotional Activities* – grants are provided for town centre Christmas promotional activities. Applications will be accepted from a representative organisation for each town centre on a three yearly cycle.
- *Closed Churchyard Grants* – grants are provided for organisations responsible for maintaining churchyards closed to burials. Applications are accepted on a three yearly cycle.
- *Capital Grants* – grants up to £25,000 are available for capital projects such as improvements to community buildings. Applications are accepted on a yearly basis.
- *Thomas Flack Trust Fund* – grants up to £25,000 are available for capital and revenue projects which benefit the residents of Leatherhead, Ashted, Bookham and Fetcham. Applications are accepted on a yearly basis.

## 2. Eligible Applicants

- 2.1. Grants are generally available to registered charities, voluntary and not-for-profit organisations. Organisations that are not eligible include those that are trading as a commercial business, local authorities, organisations that are traditionally funded by a local authority, councils and community interest companies (CICs). Awards will not be made to private individuals.
- 2.2. The Council will target its support to those organisations that contribute towards the achievement of its general priorities and objectives. Applications for grants over £5,000 must demonstrate that at least one of the Council's priorities, as set out in the Corporate Strategy, will be met. Our priorities are reviewed annually to ensure that they remain relevant both to the Council and the community.
- 2.3. Grant support will only be provided for the benefit of Mole Valley residents and where local needs are met. Grant support is not normally available to national organisations unless they have a local operation dedicated to the District.
- 2.4. Grants will not normally be awarded for projects designed purely for places of worship. Consideration will, however, be given to applications for assistance towards Church Halls and other Community Halls where use and/or hiring is open to all.

- 2.5. In submitting an application, the Organisation must provide evidence that it has adopted a Constitution and that a properly constituted committee of management has been appointed.
- 2.6. The Council must be satisfied that the applicant has the necessary expertise and resources to see the project through to successful completion.
- 2.7. Organisations will not be eligible if they have sufficient undesignated reserves or funding from other sources to cover the costs of the project or service being applied for. Applicants will be expected to have a written Reserves Policy in accordance with Charities Commission guidelines to justify the level of reserves being held.

### **3. Eligible Activities**

- 3.1. Grants will not be made in respect of completed projects/work, or in lieu of expenditure to which applicants are already committed.
- 3.2. Applications for grant awards to supplement statutory funding are not eligible.
- 3.3. Grants are not generally available for parties, entertaining, prizes or other non-essential expenditure.
- 3.4. The Council does not pay grants to directly fund permanent staff positions but consideration will be given to maintain a number of hours of service delivery, or exceptionally towards posts on fixed-term contracts.
- 3.5. In considering any application, the Council will have regard to existing facilities/projects of a similar nature designed to meet the same needs.
- 3.6. Membership of the organisation making the application should be open to all, with no application for membership being refused on anything other than reasonable grounds.
- 3.7. Grants will not normally be awarded where applications are made for the same project or service within 3 years of a previous award being made for the same project or service.

### **4. Eligible Applications**

- 4.1. Applications should be completed in line with the guidance document which is available with the application forms.
- 4.2. All completed applications accompanied by the required supporting documentation (as outlined on the grant application form and in the guidance document), received before the publicised deadline, will be considered. Applications received after this date will be considered in the next funding cycle.
- 4.3. Applications will not be accepted from organisations that have previously failed to provide adequate monitoring data and who have been notified that they are ineligible.

### **5. Funding Conditions**

- 5.1. The Council encourages all applicants to raise funding through as many sources as possible. Particular weighting will be given to applications where significant funding has

already been raised from other sources. Consideration will be given to applications where it is demonstrated that a Council grant will help to attract or unlock significant additional funding from other sources.

- 5.2. Evidence must be provided that all relevant policies and practices are in place, as set out in the guidance document, before a grant is recommended.
- 5.3. Grants awarded may be subject to certain conditions which must be satisfied before payment is made. The applicant must indicate acceptance of such conditions when any offer of a grant is made.
- 5.4. It will be a condition of funding that the successful organisation mentions MVDC as a funder in their publicity material.
- 5.5. To ensure the grants awarded are adding value to our communities, recipient organisations will be required to provide a progress/end of project report detailing the outcomes that have been achieved. In respect of grants over £5,000, presentation of those outcomes will be required at the Council's Scrutiny Committee annually.
- 5.6. The three-yearly Partnership Revenue Grants will be reviewed by officers annually within that period and the Council reserves the right to recommend that the grant is terminated before the end of the three year cycle if outcomes are not being met.
- 5.7. Organisations are expected to use the grant received for the purpose outlined in their grant application. Recipients of grants should inform the Council of any problems with completing the project as early as possible. The Council would normally expect repayment of the grant in full if the project is not completed. The Council may consider requests to repay in part, or not at all if the project is not completed due to circumstances beyond the applicant's control.

## **6. Equality and Diversity**

- 6.1. The Council is committed to the provision of equal opportunities, both within the activities of Mole Valley District Council and in the community. We encourage applications from all groups of people in Mole Valley and all applications will be considered against the same assessment framework.
- 6.2. Organisations that are making a grant application must have 'due regard' to the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty, as set out in the Equality Act 2010:
  - 1) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
  - 2) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race and ethnicity, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage and civil partnership) and those who do not, including:
    - Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
    - Taking steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people

- Encouraging people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low
- 3) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

6.3. Applicants are expected to consider whether there are any equality and diversity implications when making a grant application and any negative impact must be stated. The Council conducts an Equality Impact Assessment in relation to the organisations that it recommends grants for and this Assessment accompanies the Grants Report for decision making purposes.

## **7. Support for Applicants**

7.1. Officers will be available to provide advice and guidance to applicants before an application is submitted.

7.2. Applicants will be encouraged to allow sufficient time to complete their application and to make a submission before the deadline to ensure that a complete application, with all of the required supporting documents, is submitted. Potential applicants can request pre-application advice if they are unsure as to whether their organisation or project would be eligible for a grant.

7.3. Officers will provide additional support with completing an application form when required.

## **8. Determination of Grant Awards**

8.1. Grant applications will be assessed for eligibility by Officers and when necessary, scoring criteria will be used to rank applications.

8.2. The value of previous grants awarded will be taken into consideration when determining the outcome of grant applications.

8.3. The Executive will determine all grant awards except for grants from the Small Grants Community Fund which will be determined by Officers under delegated authority.

8.4. Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application within fourteen days of the final decision being made.

## **9. Payment of Grant Awards**

Grant payments will be made as follows:

- *Partnership Revenue Grants* – paid from 1<sup>st</sup> April in the year following the application deadline. The award may be paid in quarters depending on the value of the grant award.
- *Small Grants Community Fund* – paid within two weeks of the decision date.
- *Christmas Promotional Activities* – paid from 1st April in the year following the application deadline. A claim for payment must be made in writing with evidence that the activities

have taken place. Evidence requested may include invoices from contractors/suppliers. Payment will be made for the agreed amount up to 50% of total costs.

- *Closed Churchyard Grants* – paid from 1st April in the year following the application deadline.
- *Capital Grants* – paid from 1<sup>st</sup> April in the year following the application deadline. A claim for payment must be made in writing with evidence that the work has been completed or partially completed for a part claim. Evidence requested may include invoices from contractors/suppliers and/or a surveyor's valuation. Payments, including stage payments, will be made as a percentage of the overall costs up to the total grant amount awarded.
- *Thomas Flack Trust Fund* – revenue grants will be paid from 1st April in the year following the application deadline. Capital grants will be paid from 1st April in the year following the application deadline. A claim for payment must be made in writing with evidence that the work has been completed or partially completed for a part claim. Evidence requested may include invoices from contractors/suppliers and/or a surveyor's valuation.

## **10. Changes to the Policy**

The Policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it reflects the Council's Priorities and will be amended as appropriate by Officers. If significant changes to the Policy are required, these will be agreed by the Council's Executive.

## **11. Complaints**

The Council operates a corporate complaints procedure. If there are any complaints regarding the Council's application of this policy, then they may be made and dealt with in accordance with the corporate complaints process.