# Verwood Town Council
# Grant Aid Policy

**Background Information**
The contribution made by many organisations and individuals to the wellbeing of the local community is recognised by the Council as important to our society.

The purpose of any grant given by Verwood Town Council is to support initiatives in the local community and to help create opportunities for the residents of the Parish of Verwood and Three Legged Cross that are not, as a matter of course, funded by the Council. Applications will be considered for day-to-day running expenses or for a specific purpose.

The Budget Setting meeting of the Council sets an amount from which grants will be allocated during the following financial year. Once the Grants budget is exhausted, the Town Council will only consider emergency requests for assistance and generally only from organisations to which it has close links.
**Grants are awarded twice a year at the end of April and October. The deadlines for applications are 14th February and 14th August respectively. Any grant aid requests received after these dates will be considered at the next application date.**

There is a limited budget available each year and guidance will be given to applicants as to how much money is available in a specific financial year. It is important that all questions on the application form are fully answered and that any appropriate additional information, which supports an application, is provided. It is expected that applicants will seek advice from the Town Clerk on these matters.

Separate arrangements are in place for those organisations subject to a Service Level Agreement to provide services to the community.

**Conditions of Funding**
<u>Eligibility of Applicants</u>
1. Verwood Town Council will award grants, at its discretion, to community organisations who can demonstrate a clear need for financial support. The organisation must be either non-profit making or charitable. The organisation must have clearly written aims and objectives, a written constitution and membership rules, copies of which should be submitted as part of the application. An organisation is normally required to have a bank account in its own name with two authorised representatives required to sign each cheque or payment.
    a. An organisation may only make one application for a grant in any financial year except in very exceptional circumstances.
    b. Applications by religious groups which do not relate to the fabric of their place of worship will only be considered where a clear benefit to the wider community can be demonstrated irrespective of their religious beliefs.
    c. Applications from education, health or social service establishments will be considered only where the organisation can demonstrate that it is working in partnership with other groups or where there are benefits to the wider community within the Parish. However, applications for core funding will not be considered.

2. Applications will also be considered from young ambassadors who are representing their sport/art/culture at a national level. Grants will only be considered where an appropriate sports/arts body, which is recognised by Sport England/Arts Council, has made an application on behalf of an individual. Applicants must reside in the Parish. Applicants must be under 25 years of age (although grants may be made to older applicants in special circumstances i.e. differently abled sportspeople/artists. Grants will be awarded towards travelling and accommodation expenses, training/coaching fees or the purchase of sports/arts clothing and equipment. All applications must be countersigned by the individual's sporting/arts body. Grants normally range from £100 to £250.

Applications will **NOT** be considered from:

1. Individuals other than young ambassadors as set out in paragraph 2 above.
2. A political party.
3. Organisations intending to support or oppose any particular political party or to discriminate on the grounds of race, religion, sexual orientation or gender.
4. Private organisations operating as a business to make a profit or surplus.
5. "Upward funders" i.e. local groups where fundraising is sent to a central HQ for redistribution.
6. Organisations with significant unallocated reserves (i.e. more than one third of expenditure), subject to confirmation.
7. Applications will not normally be considered from national organisations or local groups with access to funds from national 'umbrella' or 'parent' organisations; unless funds are not available from their national bodies or the funds available are inadequate for a specified project.

<u>Use or Purpose of Grant</u>

The Council will only award grants where the use of purpose of the grant benefits Verwood and Three Legged Cross and their residents. The benefit could include but is not limited to:

1. Providing a service
2. Providing Activities
3. Enhancing the quality of life
4. Improving the environment
5. Promoting the Parish in a positive way

Applications WILL NOT be considered:

1. For projects that benefit single individuals apart from young ambassadors as set out in paragraph 2 above
2. No grants will be made retrospectively
3. For prize money
4. For action against another local authority or campaigns to influence public opinion

**Application Procedure**

Requests for capital grants of £1,000 and over should be accompanied by a description of the proposed scheme and timescale in which it is anticipated to be completed. (N.B Schemes which will be implemented within the current financial year, must be accompanied by costing and estimates from a bona fide company or contractor. Grants in excess of £1,000 will not be paid until the work is complete and relevant invoices are produced.)

Organisations requesting financial assistance also should submit:

1. A completed application form, which includes:
    a. Details of the project or activity, for which the grant is sought including timescale(s).
    b. Details of the benefit to the local community within the Parish.
    c. Details of the number of beneficiaries and what proportion of members/beneficiaries are residents of the Parish. Details of any restrictions placed on who can use/access their services.
    d. Confirmation that it complies with its equality obligations under the various pieces of anti-discrimination legislation.
    e. A copy of their trading account and balance sheet for the last financial year, or for new initiatives a budget forecast (Note: The organisation must demonstrate a clear need for financial support).
    f. A copy of their written constitution, together with details of their aims and purposes.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: All questions on the application form should be fully answered and additional appropriate information, which supports an application, must be provided in order for the request to be considered by the Town Council.**

**Assessment Procedure**

A grant request, once received in writing will be considered. Each application will be assessed on the facts as presented and will be considered at a meeting of the Finance and Policy Committee. Completed applications and supporting documents must be received by the closing date for each round, no late information will be accepted. To ensure as fair a distribution as possible of available funds, the Council will take into account the amount and frequency of any previous awards. Due account may also be taken of the extent to which funding has been sought or secured from other sources or fund-raising activities. No commitment to award grants in future years will be made.

The Council may make the award of any grant subject to such additional conditions and requirements as it considers appropriate. The organisation will receive notice of the outcome of their application within three weeks of the Council meeting.

**Successful Applications**

a. The grant will be paid by bank transfer. It must be acknowledged promptly by the organisation, stating the amount granted and acceptance of any additional conditions and requirements imposed, including a copy of the relevant bank statement.
b. Organisations receiving grants are required to advise their users/members that a grant has been received from Verwood Town Council.
c. Any grant must only be used for the purpose for which it was awarded unless the written approval of the Town Council has been obtained for a change in use of the grant monies, and any unspent portion of the grant must be returned to the Town Council by the end of the financial year following the year in which it was awarded.
d. The Town Council reserves the right to request feedback or receipts to demonstrate how the money has been spent and/or to inspect the outcome of the expenditure.

Adopted by Verwood Town Council 29/05/2012
Amended 12/11/13