



## Seaford Town Council

### Discretionary Grants Policy

<b>Policy Ref.</b>	F7
<b>Date Last Adopted</b>	March 2024
<b>Date of Next Review</b>	2027 - 2028
<b>Possible Prompts for Earlier Review</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Change in internal processes or recommended best practice / legislation</li></ul>
<b>Previous Adoption Dates</b>	March 2023 May 2021 August 2017 May 2015
<b>Author</b>	Responsible Financial Officer

# Discretionary Grants Policy

## 1. INTRODUCTION:

### DEFINITION:

A grant is any discretionary donation made by the Town Council to an external organisation, for the specific purpose it is applied for and is generally for the well-being of the Seaford community.

### OBJECTIVES:

The Town Council is committed, through this policy, to promote Seaford as a vibrant, active and sustainable community, and contribute to the development of projects and activities (including services) that benefit that community.

In doing so, the Town Council is aware of its responsibility for the use of public funds and for the distribution of these funds to be managed in accordance with the law and proper standards.

### RULES:

- 1.1 Financial grants are awarded by the Town Council's Finance & General Purposes Committee (F&GP) once a year; the timetable for the process is covered in section 5.
- 1.2 The Town Council operates a fully documented and transparent policy for awarding grants to ensure fairness and equality throughout the process.
- 1.3 The Town Council offers two types of financial grants:
  - large grants (£501, up to £3,000), and
  - small grants (up to £500).
- 1.4 There are different application forms for small or large grants and the applicant must ensure they are using the correct form for their requirements; the two forms are available from the Town Council's website when that years Grants scheme is running. Town Council staff can advise applicants as to which form to use.
- 1.5 The complete application and supporting documentation must be received on or before the closing date as advertised. Applications submitted without the necessary supporting documentation will not be able to be considered.
- 1.6 Only one application can be submitted from an organisation each year.

- 1.7 All applications will be considered at the same time but based on their individual merits. The final decision of assessment of applications and the level of any grant offered lies with the F&GP Committee.
- 1.8 The F&GP Committee will award a grant at a figure it deems suitable, taking into account the contents of this policy and not necessarily the figure that has been applied for.
- 1.9 Grants will be judged against clear and consistent criteria, and the successful applicants are required to adhere to a number of conditions set out below in this policy.
- 1.10 The Town Council reserves the right to reclaim any grant not being used for the purpose specified on the application form.
- 1.11 The following **are not** eligible to apply for grants;
- a. Individuals, businesses, commercial organisations, religious groups\* or political parties
  - b. Projects that are the statutory responsibility of other authorities
  - c. Applicants who have a outstanding loan with or are financially indebted to the Town Council
  - d. Applications seeking funding to cover the salary costs of activities.
- \* unless the religious group can evidence that the project or activity will benefit the wider community, with no barriers as a result of religious beliefs
- 1.12 Applicants are encouraged to apply to ensure their application is determined by the Town Council prior to the need for the funding. Retrospective applications for projects or activities delivered up to a maximum of three months prior to the submission deadline may be considered by the Town Council, but there is no guarantee an award will be made, and **applicants should not progress with their project on the assumption the Town Council will approve their request.**

## 2. LARGE GRANTS

- 2.1 The maximum large grant amount that can be awarded by the F&GP Committee is £3,000. Exceptionally, grants over £3,000 may be considered but must be of benefit to potentially the whole town.

- 2.2 To be eligible to apply for a **Large** grant from the Town Council, the applicant must be able to provide and/or meet all of the following criteria;
- a. Be a voluntary/community group providing a service or activity for the benefit of the residents of Seaford;
  - b. Applications must be made in the name of the organisation to which financial assistance is to be granted and all details on the application form must be completed.
- 2.3 Documentation Requirements - applicants are required to submit the following, with the table showing whether this is part of the application form or a separate document to be submitted:

	<b>Document</b>	Application Form	Separate Document
a	A written statement of how the grant is to be used	Y	
b	A written set of rules, constitution, or other governing document. They shall be current and properly authorised		Y
c	The latest bank statement showing details of a bank account held in the name of the applicant organisation		Y
d	The accounts of the organisation, including Balance sheet if available, for the previous financial year prior to the date of application, and indicate expenditure, income, assets and liabilities		Y
e	Proof of funding obtained from other partner bodies if appropriate	Y	
f	A copy of the organisation's Public Liability Insurance to the value of at least £1 million		Y
g	In the case of an organisation starting up, a projected budget is to be submitted along with a supporting business plan and risk		Y

	<b>Document</b>	Application Form	Separate Document
	management plan, for their first year of operation, in lieu of annual accounts		
h	Grants requested for maintenance or improvement purposes must be supported by a minimum of two estimates for the work specified		Y
i	A policy to ensure the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults (where appropriate)		Y
j	An Equality and/or Equal Opportunities policy (this policy may be contained within their constitution or other governing document)		Y
k	Details of how the organisation will assess the effectiveness of the activity or project	Y	

### 3. SMALL GRANTS

3.1 Small grants are awarded up to a maximum of £500.

3.2 To be eligible to apply for a **small** grant from the Town Council, the applicant must be able to provide and/or meet all of the following criteria;

- a. Be a voluntary/community group providing a project or activity for the benefit of the residents of Seaford;
- b. Applications must be made in the name of the organisation to which financial assistance is to be granted and all details on the application form must be completed.

3.3 Documentation Requirements – applicants are required to submit the following, with the table showing whether this is part of the application form or a separate document to be submitted:

	<b>Document</b>	Application Form	Separate Document
a	A written statement of how the grant is to be used	Y	
b	A written set of rules, constitution, or other governing document. They shall be current and properly authorised		Y
c	The latest bank statement showing details of a bank account held in the name of the applicant organisation		Y
d	The accounts of the organisation, including Balance sheet if available, for the previous financial year prior to the date of application, and indicate expenditure, income, assets and liabilities		Y
e	Proof of funding obtained from other partner bodies if appropriate	Y	
f	A copy of Public Liability Insurance if the grant is to be used as a public event		Y
g	In the case of an organisation starting up, a projected budget is to be submitted along with a supporting business plan and risk management plan, for their first year of operation, in lieu of annual accounts		Y
h	Grants requested for maintenance or improvement purposes must be supported by a minimum of two estimates for the work specified		Y
i	A policy to ensure the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults (where appropriate)		Y
j	An Equality and/or Equal Opportunities policy (this policy may be contained within		Y

	<b>Document</b>	Application Form	Separate Document
	their constitution or other governing document)		

#### **4. AWARDING CRITERIA**

4.1 Applications will be considered using the following criteria;

- a. Has the applicant met the documentation requirements?
- b. Has the applicant specified how the grant will be used?
- c. Has the applicant specified who will benefit from the grant within the Seaford community?
- d. Is the applicant a voluntary or community group? And are they Seaford-based? If not, are they offering a significant proportion of their services within Seaford or a service not offered by others within Seaford?
- e. Does the funding fit in with the Town Council's Strategic Plan? (In the event insufficient funds are available to meet all grant requests, priority will be given to organisations matching the Town Council priorities)
- f. Does the grant help promote Seaford town?
- g. Is the grant contributing to something that has not already been funded in the past by Seaford Town Council? Annual events are excluded from assessment against this criteria

4.2 The key points of the consideration against the above criteria for each application will be recorded, ensuring a record of the justification behind the outcome of the application should this need to be scrutinised.

#### **5. PROCESS FLOW CHART**

5.1 Seaford Town Council will publicise the timescale for awarding grants.

5.2 Application forms will be available for download from the Town Council's website [www.seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk)

5.3 Forms should ideally be submitted electronically by email to [finance@seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:finance@seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk) but may also be submitted by post or handed in to the Town Council offices.

- 5.4 Town Council Officers will assess the application for compliance in accordance with this policy as soon as practicably possible after receiving the application. Where the application does not meet the eligibility criteria or has not provided the correct supporting documentation, Officers will attempt to contact the named contact on the application to inform them of this, but it is ultimately the applicant's responsibility to return a completed form along with all necessary supporting documentation before the closing date.
- 5.5 Applications will be reviewed by the Grants Working Group – which is open to all F&GP Committee members to attend. The group will assess each application against this policy, making recommendations for consideration by the F&GP Committee.
- 5.6 The F&GP Committee will consider the recommendations made by the working group at its next scheduled meeting and make the final decision on the outcome of the grant applications.
- 5.7 After agreement of the recommendations by all the F&GP Committee, appropriate arrangements will be made for payment of the agreed grants, including presentations by the Town Council.

## **6. AWARDING GRANTS**

- 6.1 Grants will be paid by BACs, to the organisation named on the application form.

## **7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

- 7.1 All applicants will be supplied with a grant evaluation form with the grant which must be completed as soon as possible. Future grants may not be awarded until this is returned.
- 7.2 If grant money is not spent, either for the purpose it was given or within the relevant financial year, the grant or any remaining monies must be returned to the Town Council. Organisations can request any unspent grant is carried forward but must provide details of the reasons for this request. The F&GP Committee will consider this at its next available meeting and if approved, the spending deadline will be extended until the end of the next financial year.
- 7.3 Where an organisation requests a grant to be carried forward to the next financial year, they are then not permitted to apply for a new grant in that same financial year.



- 7.4 Where an organisation requests a grant to be carried forward, in addition to providing reasons, they must produce all updated documentation that is requested on the application form.
- 7.5 If for any reason the organisation disbands during the period of the grant, the Town Council may ask for all or part of the monies to be paid back.

## **8. TRANSPARENCY AND PUBLICITY**

- 8.1 The Town Council will publicise the availability of discretionary grant-aid widely throughout the community.
- 8.2 The Town Council will report annually on the total spends on grants and list the groups in receipt of a grant and the use made of the grants.
- 8.3 In awarding grants the Town Council recognises and supports the valuable contribution made by the voluntary sector to the well-being of the community.
- 8.4 Organisations receiving a Town Council grant must acknowledge the Town Council in any relevant publicity or publications by using any promotional material provided by the Town Council.
- 8.5 For large grants recipients, representatives of the organisation will be asked to provide a presentation to the next annual Town Forum on the use of the grant.
- 8.6 All successful applicants for large and small grants will be invited to attend the next annual Town Forum to demonstrate their successes, their services and the benefit experienced by the grant.

## **9. GRANT FUNDING AGREEMENTS**

- 9.1 The Town Council may decide to enter into grant funding agreements with individual organisations. These agreements are administered outside of this policy and determined by the Finance & General Purposes Committee, being subject to Full Council approval if costs would be incurred outside of budget.
- 9.2 When assessing entering into a funding agreement, the Town Council will however be mindful of certain aspects of this policy, namely:
  - 1.11 a, b and c (not d\*) – eligibility criteria
  - 4.1 b, c, d, e, f and g (not a) – awarding criteria

\* recognising that a request for a grant funding agreement may stem from service delivery relying upon the funding and as such, the likelihood that this may include staffing costs.

- 9.3 The grant funding agreement itself will set out the documentation, monitoring, reporting and publicity requirements.