

Brington and Molesworth Parish Council

GRANTSⁱ AND DONATIONSⁱⁱ POLICY

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PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

Brington and Molesworth Parish Council's policy and procedure for grant- and donation-making are described - principles and implementation. The Parish Council regularly receives requests for grants i.e. monies for a specified purpose. It has, in the past, made decisions through full council but without a formal policy and procedures to guide applicants and Councillors. This document should support applicants and help us ensure equal treatment of applications.

Note: The cost of any grants or donations awarded by the Parish Council is reflected in Brington and Molesworth residents' council tax bills.

Our Parish yearly budgeting process is completed in November/December and offers of grants or donations for the following financial year cannot be made until council approves the budget plan. Applications for donations or grants must therefore normally be made no later than 30th September each year, for consideration as part of setting the Council's following year budget and therefore its Precept.

Agreed grants therefore cannot normally be paid before 1st April in the following financial year. If the sum agreed depends upon the receipt by the Parish of the second instalment of the Precept the award may be split into payments in April and October.

Brington and Molesworth Parish Council will where possible, also include a sum in the Precept to maintain a fund for small donations which may be applied for in-year; further details of how to apply for such donations are set out in this policy.

The Parish Council also has powers to initiate grants or donations to local organisations in line with Section 137 of the Local Government Act and some other restricted circumstances.

Grants and donations will be limited to those organisations which demonstrate a need for assistance, who provide equality of access and opportunity, and who provide adequate information to enable the Parish Council to make an informed decision.

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This document has been prepared to provide transparency and support for potential applicants, council tax payers and Parish Councillors. Its contents has been developed by reference to grant and donations policies and procedures in many other Parish Councils.

PRINCIPLES WE FOLLOW WHEN WE AWARD GRANTS OR DONATIONS

Our awards are open to established voluntary or community groups, as well as new or informal groups of parish residents who are, or intend by the date of application, to become formally constituted.

Anyone wishing to make an application for a donation or grant, whatever size, should read this document carefully. If they are eligible to apply for assistance, they should complete the application form and return it to the Clerk to the Parish Council.

The parish council's aim is to ensure that all our award-making activity is:

- fair
- competitive
- legally compliant

and supports organisations which benefit the residents of our parish.

PARISH COUNCIL POWERS and SECTION 137

A parish council has a number of powers granted under various Acts of Parliament which enable it to spend money.

In addition, if a council lacks a particular power it may consider the use of the statutory power of Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, which permits it to spend *up to a nationally defined limit* on anything which in the opinion of the council is in the interests of the parish, or any part of it, or is in the interest or all or some of its inhabitants. The total value of all Section 137 awards is limited to a figure per head of the electorate on the electoral role on 1st January before the commencement of the financial year. The parish council has no obligation to spend all or any of the money available under S.137.

The money for S137 awards is not 'gifted' to the parish council; it comes from the Precept.

Funding to support recreational facilities is covered by separate legislation.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

To be eligible for the award of a grant or donation under Section 137 an organisation must:

- be established for charitable, benevolent, social, cultural, recreational or philanthropic purposes
- have a constitution, or set of rules, which define its aims, objectives and operational procedures
- be able to provide a copy of its latest annual accounts and/or most recent bank statement. Accounts are to be checked and signed by a person independent of the group
- have a bank account operated by a minimum of at least two joint signatories

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These same criteria will be applied by Brington and Molesworth Parish Council to grants or loans to support recreational facilities as defined under Section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, to help ensure fairness between a wide range of activities that may benefit residents and/or the community amenities of the parish.

WHAT CAN BE FUNDED?

- the project should be something that makes the local community a better place in which to live, work or visit
- it should substantially benefit a significant number of people who live in the parish
- there must be clear evidence that local people support the project and are involved in carrying it out
- applications do not have to be from groups that already exist
- each group may normally only make one application per financial year
- applications will be considered for day-to-day running costs and individual projects.

THE FOLLOWING ARE NOT ELIGIBLE

- support for individuals or private business projects
- projects that are the prime statutory responsibility of other government bodies
- projects that improve or benefit privately owned land or property (other than that owned by registered charities), or organisations not registered as charities or not considered not-for-profit (not profit-taking)
- projects that have already been completed or will have been by the time the grant or donation is made
- religious or political groups or activities
- national organisations, except where it can be demonstrated that the donation or grant will substantially benefit residents of the Parish

CONDITIONS OF SUPPORT

The Council may make the award of any grant or donation subject to all or some of the following conditions. Required conditions will be at the discretion of the Council and shall take into account each organisation's individual circumstances.

- In order to fully understand your project or activity the parish councillors may wish to visit your project or activity, prior to the project or activity commencing. They may also wish to conduct a site visit once your funded project is underway.
- As a minimum, you will write to confirm receipt of the grant or donation payment for audit purposes, or as the payment is handed over you will sign a form or receipt at the same time.
- Funding must only be used for the purpose agreed with the parish council and if the monies are not spent on the items agreed, the balance must be returned, except where the Council's prior written consent has been given for the funds to be used for another purpose.

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- Funding must be spent within the financial year awarded and cannot be added wholly or partly to your reserves.
- If your project costs are more than you anticipated on your application, any shortfall must be met by you. Brington and Molesworth Parish Council will not be in a position to make up any shortfall.
- The need to provide evidence of expenditure (receipted invoices) to the Clerk to the Council on completion of your project will be at the discretion of the Council – based on the amount given and the purposes given. This evidence of expenditure should be equal to, or more than, the total of the amount of the grant detailed on your application.
- Any unused funds at the end of the financial year in which the grant is paid out must be returned to the Brington and Molesworth Parish Council Clerk.
- You must acknowledge Brington and Molesworth Parish Council's support in all publications, publicity and annual reports.
- You should show the funding awarded separately in your published financial accounts and Brington and Molesworth Parish Council should have access to your financial records, on request, where appropriate.
- A representative of your organisation may be asked to give a report at the Annual Parish Meeting (held on an evening between March and May each year) on how you spent the money and, if appropriate, how your project went.

WHEN TO APPLY

Brington and Molesworth Parish Council prepares its annual budget during November and December each year. Organisations should therefore apply for grants or donations no later than the end of September in time to be considered for the main bids for inclusion in the Parish Council budget. Any award granted would then become available for payment after April the following year.

This is a competitive process against other bids and the quality of each bid is important.

All groups will be treated equally. If an organisation has had a grant previously, they are not guaranteed to receive financial support again but are not excluded from applying again. A fresh application will be required each time.

Whilst ad-hoc requests can be made at any time, there is no guarantee that any funds will remain available. Any unused 'grant/donation funds' will be rolled over into the next financial year within the Council accounts to be used for the benefit of the Parish.

HOW WILL DECISIONS ON GRANT APPLICATIONS BE MADE?

All applications (other than small in-year applications) will be judged after the September annual closing date, providing all information required has been supplied.

The total sum available for all grants and donations may vary year upon year.

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If there are repeat applications for grants from the same organisation year-on-year then such grants will not exceed three consecutive years unless the applicant can demonstrate that other attempts at funding have been made during that time for the same purpose as that for which the grant is requested.

The minimum amount that can be applied for is £25.

The decisions will be made by Brington and Molesworth Parish Council. The Council's decision is final and there is no right of appeal. The Council reserves the right to decline any application without giving reasons for its decision. The Council will not commit to any ongoing expenditure.

Where a request for a grant/donation is agreed, the Council shall determine the amount, using the figure requested by the applicant as a guide only.

Unfortunately, we may not be able to fund all projects as there may be more applications than there is money available, however all applications will be considered carefully.

Due account will be taken of the extent to which funding has been sought or secured from other sources or own fund-raising activities.

The Council will normally only consider one grant or donation application per organisation per financial year.

GRANT SPEND

A recipient of a grant over £200 must provide evidence of how the grant was spent, in the form of a written report, supported by financial evidence e.g. invoices, where available.

In-year monitoring of the use of Parish Council grants donations may take place.

The written report must be received by the Clerk within 12 months of receipt of the grant.

The report will become a document available to public inspection under the provisions of Section 228 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

Failure to comply with this requirement may affect future consideration of grant applications.

Brington and Molesworth Parish Council reserves the right to recover the grant and/or moveable equipment purchased with grant monies if the organisation ceases to exist, if the grant is not used for the purposes specified, or if the conditions of the grant are not complied with.

DONATIONS APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applications for donations i.e. sums where the purpose of the funding is not specified in detail, will not be considered unless the Brington and Molesworth Parish Council Grants/Donation Application form has been completed.

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Applications will normally only be considered from non-profit organisations whose work benefits Brington and Molesworth Parish and its residents.

Applications from individuals cannot be considered.

Donations which would benefit an individual resident of Brington and Molesworth may, under exceptional circumstances, be considered for example, where a charity has been formed to raise funds for specialist equipment or treatment. Any such charity must apply for the donation and must satisfy the Council that it has already sought and received funding from other sources.

The Council will only consider a single donation to an organisation. If an organisation seeks funding for a similar project in the future it must apply for a grant i.e. specify the purpose in detail, not a donation.

The total donation fund will be set by the Parish Council each year as part of its Budget-setting process. Donations will not normally exceed £200.

Payment for an approved donation application(s) will be authorised as soon as is possible

Evidence may be requested in the form of invoices, or receipts, to demonstrate that the donation was used for the approved purpose

GRANTS POLICY DISTRIBUTION AND MAINTENANCE

The Clerk will retain the master copy of the policy.

Copies of this policy will be distributed to all Brington and Molesworth Parish Councillors.

A copy of this policy will be made available to all grant/donation applicants

The policy will be reviewed annually by the Finance Advisory Group and at least once during the first year of each 4-year term of the Parish Council.

HOW TO APPLY

Applications should be made in writing. Please apply to the Clerk for the application form.

This policy was agreed and adopted by Brington and Molesworth Parish Council at its meeting of

Date 20 April 2022

Signed

(Parish Council Chairman)

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APPLICATION FOR GRANT/DONATION

Brington and Molesworth Parish Council is empowered under **Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972** to incur expenditure which in the opinion of the Council is in the interests of the parish, or any part of it, or is in the interest or all or some of its inhabitants.

This Application form is available as a Word document to be used if you wish to prepare the submission on a computer. Contact: clerk@bringtonmolesworth-pc.gov.uk

The boxes on the Word version of this form will expand as you type.

Name of organisation	
Name of person making application and Position in the organisation	
Is your organisation a registered charity? If yes, please provide charity registration number	
Contact Address	
Contact telephone no.	
Email address	
Describe the overall aim of your organisation and the activities or services it provides	
Explain the direct benefit to Brington and/or Molesworth of your organisation's activities, including the number of parish residents who have benefitted in the past	
Details of the project or activities, including commencement date and total expected duration	
Overall cost of the project or activities, including VAT Detail the cost of each item covered by your funding request (please use a separate sheet if needed)	If your organisation is VAT registered please provide VAT number

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Amount sought from Brington and Molesworth PC	
Details of any other own or external funding. Information on efforts to generate income from other sources must be submitted.	
Demonstrate clearly how the grant/donation will provide direct benefit	
Detail how many people of Brington and Molesworth will benefit	
Have you applied to Brington and Molesworth Parish Council in the last 5 years? If so give brief details.	
Any additional information that supports the application	

To support your application, if for a sum over £200, please supply the following:

- A copy of your constitution and, if appropriate, membership rules.
- A copy of your organisation's audited accounts or accounts that have been examined by a suitably qualified person (or in the case of a newly formed organisation, a detailed budget and business plan). *These will be reviewed to ensure there is a genuine need for a grant/donation.*
- Copies of written estimates or catalogue pages if grant for equipment or capital costs
- A copy of your Child Protection Policy (if applicable).

See attached sheet for signatures of the submitting organisation.

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When completed, please make a copy of this application and send the original, with all supporting papers, to the Brington and Molesworth Parish Council office (address overleaf).

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Signature by or on behalf of the applicant(s)

We confirm the information given in this application is accurate and that the organisation undertakes to inform Brington and Molesworth Parish Council of any changes in the organisation's circumstances that would affect this application.

We confirm that any grant awarded by the Council will be spent only on the purpose for which it was given.

Signed.....

Dated

Position in Organisation.....

Signed.....

Dated

Position in Organisation.....

Please return the completed form to:

Ms Ramune Mimiene (Clerk)

Brington and Molesworth Parish Council, 8 Bernard Road, Brampton, Huntingdon PE28 4RW

Please address any queries on this policy, procedure or applications to:

clerk@bringtonmolesworth-pc.gov.uk

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For Council use only

Record of Decision and actions - to be completed by Parish Clerk

Organisation/Group:

Does this application clearly come within the Powers and Duties of Parish Councils? If so, which?	
Grant or Donation?	
Date discussed at full Parish Council and Minute number	
Decision – Approve/Reject	
Amount of Grant or Donation agreed by Council	
Date organisation/group notified of decision	
Date payment made to organisation/group	
Date receipt for payment returned to the Brington and Molesworth Parish Clerk	
Date Report Due (if a grant)	
Reminder set to prompt timely delivery of report	
Date Report Received (if a grant)	

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REVIEW The policy will be reviewed annually no later than June every other year and, if changes are proposed, they will be taken to full Council for discussion before implementation.

VERSION CONTROL

Date amended	Reason for version change	Amended by
April 2022	V1	Document adopted by PC
June 2024	V2	Reviewed, no changed made

References, last accessed 29th April 2019:

- NALC The Good Councillors Guide
- Local Government Act 1972 Section 133
- Local Government (Miscellaneous Provision) Act 1976 Section 19
- Grant and donation policies, procedures and application forms accessed from local and national Parish Councils

WORKING DEFINITIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF THIS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

ⁱ A GRANT is money which may be given by the Parish Council to an organisation for a pre-specified purpose. Larger sums of money (over the specified donations threshold in the policy) would normally be given as a grant, to secure its application for a defined purpose with the safeguards for the receiving organisation and council tax payers which are set out in this document.

Any grant money not spent on the specified purpose(s) must be returned by the receiving organisation at the end of the financial year (31st March).

ⁱⁱ A DONATION is money which may be given by the Parish Council for use at the discretion of the receiving organisation, not necessarily for a pre-specified purpose.

Donations are limited as set out in this document. As they are lower value they should and generally will be managed with few requirements for reporting and without a requirement to repay any balance at year-end.

Note - similar conditions are applied by donors to grants and donations received by Brington and Molesworth Parish Council.