

# SUTTON BENDER PARISH COUNCIL

## GRANTS AND DONATIONS POLICY 2025-26

*Fully revised Policy Adopted by Sutton Benger Parish Council at the Parish Council Meeting on 9 July 2025 Minute No.073.25 (Previous policy originally Adopted October 2014)*

### Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Sutton Benger Parish Council has a consistent approach to awarding Grants and Donations to support groups, organisations and charities primarily for the benefit of the local community.

### Definitions

*A DONATION is effectively a gift, freely given, to a charity or local organisation to enhance its ability to provide its service to the community.*

*A GRANT is usually awarded for a particular defined activity or piece of work, e.g., a small village project, and means that the money should be used for that specific purpose and nothing else.*

*SECTION 137 EXPENDITURE. Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 is a statutory power which allows councils to incur a limited amount of expenditure every year on something they consider is in the interest of or will directly benefit the parish that is not covered by any other specific category of expenditure the council is authorised by Act of Parliament to fund (e.g., grass-cutting, etc.). The annual S137 is set by the government – for 2025/26 it is £11.10 per elector.*

For the purposes of this policy, Donations and Grants differ only in that a Donation is given without the need to be specific about how it is used whereas a Grant must be spent specifically for the purpose agreed. For example a Donation may be given to a village hall towards the general running costs without being specific about what it is spent on, whereas a Grant would be given towards the cost of specific project such as installation of a new security system.

### Eligible Applicants

Sutton Benger Parish Council will usually only consider financial grants which provide financial support for projects / schemes benefitting the residents of Sutton Benger and Draycot Cerne. The organisations will need to demonstrate a clear need for financial support to achieve an objective which will benefit the Parish by:

- Providing a service
- Enhancing the quality of life
- Improving the environment
- Promoting the Parish of Sutton Benger in a positive way

Requests for Grants or Donations to organisations based **either in or within two miles of the Parish** may be considered at the Parish Council meeting which covers the 6-month budget review (usually October of each financial year) and the final meeting of the financial year (March) provided the Parish Clerk has received it in time to be included on the agenda and the requests meet the criteria given in this policy.

Requests from organisations **operating outside the Parish** will be considered once each year at the final (March) meeting of the Parish Council. Requestors will need to demonstrate that the request will particularly benefit the parishioners of Sutton Benger.

Under exceptional circumstances, if the funds being donated have been raised from parish council / community related events specifically organised for that purpose, contributions may be made to charities and bodies providing a public service on a non-profit making basis, but only in furtherance of their work in the United Kingdom. It is unlawful for a council to contribute to an individual or a charity or a public service body operating overseas.

Exceptionally applications may be considered at any Parish Council meeting when the funds have already been ear-marked for that purpose or when the funds are required for a particular timed event.

Organisations that are not likely to be eligible for grants or donations from the Parish Council include:

- Private individuals
- Commercial organisations
- Purposes for which there is a statutory duty upon other local or central government departments to fund or provide
- "Upward funders" i.e. local groups where fund-raising is sent to a central HQ for redistribution
- Political parties
- Animal charities
- Religious organisations: unless for a purpose which does not discriminate on grounds of belief

#### **Required Input for Consideration of a Donation**

It is expected that a Donation will be unlikely to have a specifically defined purpose other than to add to the charity's ability to carry out its objective. Information required includes:

- An explanation of how the charity particularly benefits some or all of the residents of the parish of Sutton Benger.
- The Charity Commission registration number or the Industrial and Provident Society number, or a declaration that the organisation is a not-for-profit organisation.

#### **Required Input for Consideration of a Grant**

Information required before a Grant request may be considered:

- How much is requested.
- The purpose of the grant, outlining how and when it is going to be used. Grants may be made for specific village projects, in which case the project's scope and expected overall expenditure will need to be detailed.
- The amount requested must be spent within the same financial year. If the organisation / body is unable to use the grant for the stated purpose within this timeframe, unless this is as result of circumstances beyond the requestor's control, monies must be returned to Sutton Benger Parish Council. Any extension to the completion of a grant must be formally agreed by the Parish Council.
- An explanation should be given of how the grant would particularly benefit some or all of the residents of the Parish of Sutton Benger.

#### **Criteria for making Grants and Donations**

In addition to such applications, the Parish Council may from time to time consider making donations in circumstances such as recognising significant service to the community by a deceased parishioner.

- Grants may only be made to organisations that can show they provide a benefit to some or all the residents of the Parish of Sutton Benger.
- Any grants made must be within the powers granted to the Parish Council by the Local Government Act 1972 consistent with Section 137 and any other relevant legislation.
- Donations may only be made to registered charities or other non-political, non-profit making bodies.
- Any grants or donations will be made with due consideration to the financial affairs of the Parish Council.
- The Council reserves the right to decline any application without giving reasons for its decision.
- Only one application will be considered from any organisation in any financial year.
- A Grant or Donation is a one-off sum of money and if an organisation has received a grant previously they are not guaranteed to receive financial support again, although they are not excluded from applying again. A new application will be required each time.
- Grants cannot be awarded after the relevant event or project has been completed.

Where a Member of the Parish Council is a member of a group / organisation applying for funding, that Member must declare an interest in the matter and refrain from voting.

### **Application procedure**

Organisations requesting financial assistance will be invited to submit a completed application form to the Parish Council for consideration at the next scheduled meeting after the request is received, provided there is enough time to include it in the notice and all the required information when making an application has been received. Councillors may request further documentation should this be necessary for a proper evaluation of the request.

Local clubs, societies, registered charities and organisations are required to submit a Grant Application Form which is available on the Parish Council website:

<https://www.suttonbengerparishcouncil.gov.uk/>

and can be downloaded and submitted via e-mail to the Parish Clerk at:

[parishclerk@suttonbengerparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:parishclerk@suttonbengerparishcouncil.gov.uk)

### **Payment**

If the application is successful the applicant will receive a response within 14 days of the Parish Council meeting. Payment will be made by online bank transfer upon receipt of proof of expenditure.

If the grant is unable to be used for the purpose it was intended then the Parish Council will withdraw the offer or ask for the grant to be returned.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The organisation/group should provide the Parish Council with a report showing how the money was spent in advance of the Annual Parish Council Meeting usually held in May.