



Grants & Awards Sub-Committee

Date: 21 February 2022

Title: General Grants

Purpose of the Report:

To receive background information in respect of grant applications and to consider the recommendations below.

Contact Officer:

Sarah Sandiford, Deputy Town Clerk

Corporate Objective/s	n/a	
Implications:		
Financial	Yes	Remaining 2021-22 budget is £3,860.16 Applications received total £5,491.13
Human Resources	No	
Operational/Service delivery	No	
Procedural/Legal	Yes	LGA 1972 s137 Localism Act 2011
Risk/Health and Safety	No	
Environmental Aims	No	To reduce printing.

1 RECOMMENDATION/S

Should the Sub-Committee be minded, the proposals are:

- 1.1 To note the report.
- 1.2 To recommend to the Leighton-Linslade Sports Council that grant criteria and eligibility be reviewed.

2 GENERAL GRANTS LEGISLATION

- 2.1 The Town Council has operated a number of grant schemes over time, including the four-year Guaranteed Grants and the annual General Grants.
- 2.2 General Grants guidelines (**attached**) are reviewed periodically but were designed to comply with the requirements of the general power outlined in the Local Government Act 1972 s137. This legislation permits councils to spend a limited amount of money on expenditure for which they have no other specific power and to give financial assistance to “a body providing a public service or a charity”.
- 2.3 The detail of LGA 1972 s137 is reflected in the General Grant guidance, for example the requirement for grant recipients to provide a report back to the council on grant expenditure within twelve months. The legislation also stresses the importance of expenditure being commensurate with the direct benefit accrued to “some or all residents”:

137Power of local authorities to incur expenditure for certain purposes not otherwise authorised.

(1)A local authority may, subject to the provisions of this section, incur expenditure which in their opinion is in the interests of, and will bring direct benefit to, their area or any part of it or all or some of its inhabitants, but a local authority shall not, by virtue of this subsection, incur any expenditure—

(a)for a purpose for which they are, either unconditionally or subject to any limitation or to the satisfaction of any condition, authorised or required to make any payment by or by virtue of any other enactment; nor

(b)unless the direct benefit accruing to their area or any part of it or to all or some of the inhabitants of their area will be commensurate with the expenditure to be incurred.

- 2.4 Expenditure under LGA 1972 s137 is restricted by law to a sum which is provided annually. For 2021-22 this sum is £8.41 per elector, i.e. a total of £266,445.62 (£8.41 x 31,682).
- 2.5 For local councils eligible to exercise the General Power of Competence, there exist further general powers, allowing them to do “anything individuals generally may do”. This does not however override any pre-existing limitations in law, for example the LGA 1894 restriction preventing councils from expenditure on property relating to the affairs of the church.
- 2.6 Leighton-Linslade Town Council last confirmed its eligibility to exercise the General Power of Competence in May 2019.

- 2.7 Whilst grants provided by LLTC would now be more likely to fall under GPoC than the LGA 1972 s137, it is considered good practice to continue to comply with the requirements of the original legislation in terms of setting clear parameters and assessing community benefit derived from grant funding.

3 2021-22 3RD ROUND GENERAL GRANT APPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The Sub-Committee is asked to consider applications in line with general grant criteria. However, as resolved at the previous meeting on 1 November 2021 (Minute reference 31/GA), it was endorsed by Policy and Finance Committee that:

the General Grant Guidelines be relaxed only for this specific round of applications to allow for more general uses (e.g. operating costs), in order to support local charity and voluntary organisations following the Covid-19 pandemic. All other terms and conditions to continue to apply and all applications to demonstrate clear need and community benefit.

- 3.2 The attached report splits the applications received into three categories:

- (i) Applications which fit normal general grant criteria
- (ii) Applications which are for operating costs or post-Covid recovery (not usually permitted)
- (iii) Applications for sports related activities (usually referred to the Leighton-Linslade Sports Council)

- 3.3 The three sports related applications have been reviewed to determine eligibility for grant funding through the Leighton-Linslade Sports Council. Current LLSC grant criteria state that:

- The organisation has been affiliated to LLSC for at least 6 months
- A representative of the organisation has attended at least 2 LLSC meetings in the previous 12 months

- 3.4 Two of the three applicants are not members of LLSC although have been encouraged to make contact with them. Under current terms they would not be eligible to apply for grant funding through LLSC for at least 12 months. One applicant is a member of LLSC.

- 3.5 The current situation has highlighted the potential for sports related groups/organisations to “fall between the cracks”, being neither eligible for direct grant funding through the Town Council nor eligible to apply to the Sports Council. It is suggested that LLSC and/or LLTC grant criteria be reviewed to avoid this scenario (see recommendation 1.2).

4.0 FUNDING

- 4.1 Applications received total £5,491.13. The amount remaining in the 2021-22 general grant budget is £3,860.16.
- 4.2 The Sub-Committee is reminded that the budget for 2022-23 has been agreed by Council and includes provision of £10,000 for general grants.
- 4.3 The first round of general grant applications for financial year 2022-23 will be opened in March, for consideration by committee on 9 May 2022.

End.