



Okehampton Town Council

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Grant Policy

This Policy will become effective for the 2024/25 financial year onwards.

Okehampton Town Council has the power to give financial help to local organisations to assist them to achieve their aims and purposes where they can demonstrate a benefit to the residents of Okehampton. The Council has a policy of only assisting truly local properly constituted community groups, and this is interpreted to mean those organisations based in Okehampton or national bodies with an independent branch in Okehampton.

The Grants budget is a discretionary limited amount and once it has been allocated the Council will not be able to consider any further applications during the financial year. Grants are considered twice yearly at meetings of the Policy & Resources Committee, with the meeting dates being published on the Council's website www.okehampton.gov.uk.

Applications for consideration in the Spring must be received by the Friday of the 2nd week of March and those for consideration in the Autumn must be received by the Friday of the 2nd week of September.

Okehampton Town Council may retain an emergency fund for applications received outside these dates, with those organisations applying for assistance at that time being required to indicate why this is so.

Each Grant application will be considered on its own merits. It should not be assumed that a successful outcome in one year will lead to a follow-on grant in a subsequent year.

Two categories of grant are available:

Small Grants – applications for amounts up to £500 that will enable or enhance the organisation's ability to fulfil its purpose.

Large Grants – applications for amounts exceeding £500 that support an organisation in its basic service delivery and where community needs are being met. Depending upon the amount requested, Full Council may be required to ratify the decision.

All grant applications must meet the application criteria as follows and the burden of provision of evidence of community benefit falls to the applicant:

Application criteria for both large and small grants:

- Grants may only be awarded to properly constituted voluntary groups, not-for-profit organisations and charities where evidence of a direct benefit to the residents of Okehampton can be demonstrated.
- The Council is unable to consider Grants to individuals, commercial organisations, profit-making organisations, community interest companies or political groups
- Grants will only be awarded to religious groups if it can be shown the activity will be open to residents of any religion, or none.
- Award of grants that will contribute to repair or maintenance of church property is prohibited by the Local Government Act, with some exceptions, for example

cemeteries and town clocks. The applicant of a grant of this nature is advised to contact the Town Clerk for advice prior to submission.

- Applications must be submitted directly from the activity organiser(s) and not through a third party and payment of any grant awarded must be directly to the activity organiser(s).
- Retrospective applications will not be considered, for example for past events, or items already purchased.
- Any amount awarded is at the discretion of the Council and successful applicants may be awarded less than the amount applied for. Applications may be refused where it is felt the application criteria has not been met.
- There should be no assumption that a successful application will guarantee approval in subsequent years.
- A maximum of one application per financial year (1st April to 31st March) will be considered.
- Applicants are encouraged to apply to other local organisations where appropriate, including Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council if it meets their application criteria.
- Applicants need to be aware that all grants must directly benefit Okehampton Town residents and not just those from the wider area. Evidence of user numbers is required to be provided where both Okehampton Town residents and those from other areas will benefit.
- Grant monies not used for the purpose stated on the application or are found to duplicate successful applications to other funders, may be required to be repaid to the Council.
- Recipients of grants must complete, within 8 weeks of the completion of the project or event for which the grant was awarded, a feedback form or report to the Town Council. This can include photographs, receipts or other evidence of how the grant benefited the residents of Okehampton. **Future grant applications will not be considered unless a feedback form has been received.**

Application Procedure

All grant applications must be made on the application form (available on the website, or from the Town Hall) and returned to the Town Clerk with additional information for those over £500.

All applications must include:

- a statement of accounts for the most recent accounting year
- a copy of the governing document
- a copy of the current year's budget
- costings if applying for a specific project
- confirmation that other funding has been/will be applied for

Additionally, grant applications of over £500 must be accompanied by a letter, describing:

- the reason for the application
- the amount requested
- the benefit to Okehampton Town residents
- where there is a wider area of benefit, details of how many Okehampton Town residents will benefit.

All applications will be checked against the criteria by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Policy & Resources Committee along with the Town Clerk. Those that meet the requirements will then be considered by the Committee.

All applicants must disclose any close connection the organiser/s have with anyone who would directly benefit financially from the award of the grant.

The Council reserve the right to use feedback for public information purposes and to refuse an application which in their judgement does not fit the criteria. There is no right of appeal.