

MIDDLETON CUM FORDLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Donations to Organisations & Charities Policy

A parish council has several powers granted under various Acts of Parliament which enable it to spend money. Where there is no declaration or qualification for the General Power of Competence, the Parish Council can continue to use Section 137 (3) rules which permits it to contribute to UK charities, public sector funds and also relevant public appeals. The Section 137 amount 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. This money is not 'gifted' to the parish council; it forms part of the Precept which the parish council makes on the District Council. The cost of any grants or donations is therefore reflected in residents' council tax bills.

Where the Parish Council has resolved it has, and qualifies for, the General Power of Competence, it can make contributions to non-charitable organisations if it is deemed for the benefit of the community.

- 1) There is no maximum sum set aside each financial year for donations, each case is considered individually however it should be considered against the precept and available funds as to not expose the Council to any undue risk. The size of individual grants should be modest. Except in exceptional circumstances grants to individual charities should be limited to a maximum of 1% of the precept in any one year. The total amount awarded in grants to charities should normally not exceed 5% of the precept in any one year.
- 2) All applications for donations must be made in writing and submitted to the Clerk.
- 3) All donation applications must be decided by a full parish council meeting.
- 4) Middleton-cum-Fordley Parish Council must satisfy itself that the donation will benefit the area and a significant number of residents. Ideally there should be clear evidence of local need or demand for the proposed activity from the requesting organisation.
- 5) Middleton-cum-Fordley Parish Council reserves the right to ask for any of the following documentation:
 - i. Summary of the applicant's accounts for the last financial year.
 - ii. Bank statements are not a suitable replacement for accounts, although the Council reserves the right to request these additionally before a decision is made
 - iii. Details of the applicant's organisation, committee and meeting structure, appointed officers, etc. Councillors must feel confident that appropriate management mechanisms and financial controls are in place within the applicant's organisation.
 - iv. Other funding sources applied for in relation to the donation concerned.

- v. The above documents must be provided for any request which falls within a new financial/tax year. Documents need only be provided once if there are multiple requests within the same tax year, however the Council reserves the right to request additional information.

Conditions for organisations/charities

1. Donations will not be made retrospectively.
2. Donations will not be awarded to fund activities of a political nature, nor activities considered to be the responsibility of the principal authority.
3. Donations will not be awarded to organisations that make, or attempt to make, profit for the benefit of members or owners over and above revenue expenditure, e.g. running costs, staff costs, premises maintenance and general overheads.
4. Organisations applying for donations should be properly constituted, with appointed officers.
5. Donations will only be considered accompanied by sufficient and appropriate documentation, including financial records. If there is insufficient documentary evidence the application will not be considered.
6. If the organisation / body is unable to use the donation for the stated purpose, monies must be returned to Middleton-cum-Fordley Parish Council by the end of the same financial/tax year.
7. The donation must be used for the purpose for which the application was made.
8. All donations are awarded at the Parish Council's discretion. The decision of Middleton-cum-Fordley Parish Council is final and there is no right of appeal.
9. Recipients of any donations from the Parish Council should acknowledge receipt and provide details of how the money has aided their group. This could be in the form of a report for the Annual Parish Meeting held in April/May.
10. Any of the conditions to this policy cannot be overruled, replaced or nullified by a tabled motion, or an amendment to any motion, in any Parish Council Meeting.

Agreed at PC meeting 11 December 2024.