

**QUEEN CAMEL PARISH COUNCIL****Clerk:** Elaine Owen, Innes House, Kingsdon, Somerton, Somerset, TA11 7LL**Tel:** 07726 245 101**e-mail:** [clerk@queencamelpc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@queencamelpc.org.uk)    **website:** [www.queencamelpc.org.uk](http://www.queencamelpc.org.uk)

## **Queen Camel Parish Council Grants Policy**

### **Adopted 17<sup>th</sup> October 2022**

#### **1. Introduction**

Queen Camel Parish Council has a proud history of supporting village organisations and projects with grant funding. The power to give grants is provided by:

##### **1.1 Section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976**

This empowers a parish council to contribute, by way of grant towards voluntary organisations who are providing recreational facilities. Examples include playing fields and village halls.

Grants (or loans) may be made for any amount, limited only by affordability that the council chooses to budget for. Such monies may be carried forward if unspent and earmarked in the reserve for the purpose.

##### **1.2 Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972**

This enables a local council to incur expenditure “in the interests of and will directly benefit its area or any part of it and some or all of its inhabitants”. Section 137 is used when there is no other specific power available.

The parish council may, for example, use this power to provide flower planters and plants, to make grants to voluntary bodies, put on fundraising events, help organisations providing not for profit public services, and give grants to charities. Typical grants made in the past by Queen Camel have supported maintenance of the churchyard, children’s and youth activities. Examples of other activities that are permitted can include village histories, prizes and community events that directly benefit parish residents.

Section 137 expenditure is limited to a specified amount that is set by the government each year at a rate per elector. For Queen Camel in 2022 it was £8.82 x 678 electors = £5979.96.

It is possible to earmark S-137 grants within the reserve, but that will reduce spending available the following year as the annual cap is absolute.

#### **2. Source of the Funds**

##### **2.1 Grants from parish precept.**

Small grants and those that fund recurring annual costs are most likely to be funded from precept.

The affordable total amount available for grants is unlikely to exceed 20% of the annual precept. Individual grants will not normally exceed £2,500.

A parish council is not obliged to give any grants and donations and amounts will vary from year to year. Any money unspent in the parish council budget for grants at the end of the year moves into the Reserve about which there are specific Rules.

##### **2.2 Solar Farm Community Benefit Fund**

Grants from the solar farm are most likely to be given for capital or long-lifespan equipment costs.

Solar Farm payments began in 2015 with the parish council receiving £6684 per year and funding will end in 2030. Planning permission for a second solar farm has been approved that would provide a lump sum of £15,000. This fund is not available until the solar farm begins its 40 years of operation. Both agreements specify the same

limitations on what the money may be used for:

*“The Community Body agrees to use the Payment for charitable, educational, environmental, amenity or other purposes within the areas of the Community. Wherever possible, the Payment shall be applied towards the promotion of sustainable energy and uses. For the avoidance of doubt, the Payment shall not be used for political, religious, entertainment or hospitality purposes, or for any purpose adverse to the Operator’s interest in the scheme.”*

### **3. Contribution limitation**

Organisations should expect to contribute to their own activities and to fund-raise towards their project requirement, and therefore the parish council will not supply 100% grants. The proportion of funding granted will vary according to the circumstances of each project

If an organization already has an accumulated surplus then it will need to explain why it requires the grant of the size requested.

### **4. Procedure for reviewing applications**

Applications will be scheduled for a parish council meeting once the clerk has completed a review of the application and any clarifications have been received.

There is no guarantee that an application will be included at a particular parish council meeting.

To assist large projects, the parish council may set up a sub group with least one Councillor and those making or supporting a project proposal. A sub group does not have to meet in public.

### **5. Decisions**

The Clerk will invite applicants to present their application in person. Limits may be set on the number of people who can represent the application and how long they may speak for. Councillors may ask questions or request that further information is supplied.

In general the larger the grant applied for, the more information organisations should expect to have to supply in support of their application and the more rigorous the examination of the application will be.

To aid consistent decision making a marking grid will be used to assess the projects which shall be completed by the clerk at the meeting and subsequently agreed by the Chair along with the minutes.

The Parish Council must satisfy itself that granting the application is lawful, reasonable and prudent. Solar fund spending must provide “long-term benefit to the community” and be compliant with funder’s conditions.

Council may decide not to make an award at first presentation and request that the application is re-scheduled to allow time for clarification or more information to be provided.

Decisions made at meeting will be notified by letter to the applicant once the draft minutes of the meeting have been published.

- Successful applicants will be informed of any conditions relating to payment.
- Unsuccessful applicants will receive feedback, including advice as to whether they may re-apply.

### **6. Monitoring and Reporting**

Organisations should be ready to supply written evidence of what a grant has been spent on and how the project has benefitted the community. This may include receipts and photographs and information suitable for Queen Camel Parish council Website. Grants must be acknowledged by the organisations on their websites and social media or at presentations made at the Annual Village Meeting in that year.

### **7. Other relevant documents** The Marking Grid and Grant Application Form are part of this Policy

## Grants application checklist

### Part A – Applicants must be able to say YES to all of the following:

1. We are an organization established for charitable, benevolent, social, cultural, recreational or philanthropic purposes (or we are about to become one).
2. We are located in the parish of Queen Camel **OR**, our project is beneficial to a **significant** number of residents within Queen Camel.
3. If we are a national organisation there is a local Queen Camel group.
4. There will be a direct benefit to our users.
5. We do not discriminate on race, religion, age, gender, disability or other minority characteristics.
6. We can demonstrate that our organization is properly managed and responsibly run.
7. We will ring-fence any grant or donation for the purpose agreed and will provide an account of expenditure to the parish council, including copy invoices if requested.
8. We have a bank account that requires two signatories
9. We can spend any grant before 31 March of the year following the year of the award.
10. We accept that the entire cost of a project may not be available, and are willing to contribute to the project through our own fundraising activities.
11. We accept that the parish council may choose to purchase, and then donate items, so that VAT can be recovered. We will assist by providing 3 quotes for the parish council to choose from.

### Part B - Applicants must be able to say NO to all of the following:

1. We are a political organisation.
2. Only one individual will benefit.
3. The grant is to improve privately owned land or property.
4. We operate as a business.
5. We have access to funds for this project from a parent national body.
6. Grant money would be used to boost our reserves, for office costs, marketing and publicity, rent, salaries or other expenditure that does not directly benefit our users.
7. We have already spent the money we are asking for.
8. Our project will be complete by the time the grant is made.
9. A government body already has a statutory responsibility for funding our project.
10. Our project includes overseas travel or operations.
11. Our project has already received funding from Queen Camel Parish Council this financial year.

### Part C - Applicants may be asked to provide:

1. A copy of your written constitution, or set of rules.
2. A copy of your latest, independently audited, annual accounts and a recent bank statement. Draft accounts or a budget that will provide an up-to-date picture of your finances may be requested.
3. Evidence that local people support the project and will be involved in carrying it out.
4. Evidence that the project will make the local community a better place in which to live, work or visit.
5. An estimate of the number and characteristics of the people who will benefit.
6. Information about any similar applications you have in progress with other funders.