

## Curry Rivel Parish Council Grants Policy

### Adopted 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2023

#### 1. Introduction

Curry Rivel Parish Council has a proud history of supporting village organisations with grant funding. The power to do so is provided by the parish council's General Power of Competence. The Council will exercise due diligence to ensure that grant money is spent wisely, distributed fairly, and that grants are lawful, reasonable and prudent.

Curry Rivel also follows the Local Government Act 1972, s 137 rules that allow a local authority to spend a limited amount on activities which the authority considers 'will bring direct benefit to the area, or any part of it or all of some of its inhabitants'. These include the requirements at Annex A.

#### 2. Source and amount of parish council funding available

Most grants are funded directly from the parish precept. Therefore, councillors must consider whether it is likely, on balance, that parishioners would agree that the money should be used for the grant purpose being applied for.

A parish council is not obliged to give any grants and amounts will vary from year to year. The affordable amount available is unlikely to exceed 10% of the annual precept. Individual grants will not normally exceed £2,500.

#### 3. Contribution limitation

Before asking the parish council for a grant, you should look to see if your project is already eligible for a grant from other sources <https://www.sparksomerset.org.uk/somerset-funding-portal>

Your organisation should expect to contribute to, or fund-raise towards your project, so applicants should explain why the grant amount requested is needed.

A parish council grant must be 'necessary' for the project. Applicants are asked to supply a copy of their latest accounts and a recent bank statement. An organisation that already has uncommitted surpluses will need to say why those cannot be used to fund their project.

A parish council may be able to reduce the cost of a grant by reclaiming VAT. Therefore, the parish council reserves the right to buy goods and to donate them instead of giving money.

#### 4. Good governance

Parishioners have a right to expect that the parish council will only give grants to organisations that are well-run and have procedures in place to prevent fraud. Central to this is the requirement that they must have a Constitution or set of Rules. Templates are widely available online and the clerk may also be able to advise.

Another requirement is that your organisation must have its own bank account. (The parish council is not permitted to give a grant to an individual) The bank account must also require more than one signature. Banks have not made this easy, but it remains an unacceptable risk for a parish council to pay a grant into an account from which one individual may withdraw money without reference to anyone else.

#### 5. Alternative options

Should an organization be unable to fulfil the governance requirements above (perhaps it is just setting up) then:

- They could partner with another organisation who may formally agree to ring-fence funds within their bank account, **and/or**
- As mentioned above, a parish council can purchase goods and immediately donate them.

## 6. Reviewing applications and making the decision

The clerk will:

- Review applications and request further clarification, or additional information required.
- Circulate the application form with a summary of key additional information to councillors.
- Invite organisations to present their application at a parish council meeting.
- Complete a marking form at the meeting to record the reasons for a decision.

At the meeting Councillors:

- May ask questions, or request that further information is supplied.
- May defer a decision to future meeting to allow time for an organization to answer any key points.
- May decide to impose conditions to a grant award.

Decisions:

- Will be confirmed by email to the applicant when the draft minutes of the meeting are 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.

## 7. Monitoring and Reporting

You should be ready to supply evidence of what a grant has been spent on and how the project has benefited the community. This may include receipts and photographs and information suitable for the parish council website. Grants must be acknowledged by the organisations on their own websites / in social media and at presentations made at the Annual Village Meeting in that year.

## 8. Other relevant documents The Grant Application Form and Marking Form re part of this Policy

Annex A

# 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 are about to become one).
2. We are located Curry Rivel **OR**, our project is beneficial to a **significant** number of residents there.
3. If we are a national organisation there is a local Curry Rivel 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.

### 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. A government body already has a statutory responsibility for funding our project.
9. Our project includes overseas travel or operations.