

## **Approach to Grant Funding**

### **1. Background**

The Parish Council supports local clubs, societies and community organisations with grant funding.

The Council has defined processes for small grant requests (up to £1,000) and large grant requests (over £1,000), which are detailed here:

<https://derryhillandstudley-pc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Application-for-small-grant-funding-approved-July-24.pdf>

<https://derryhillandstudley-pc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Large-grant-application-form-approved-July-2024.pdf>

Previously, the Council has been able to draw on funding from either Community Infrastructure Levy receipts or the Sun Edison fund. Following the implementation of the Community Government Review changes, funding for grants will need to be funded from the Precept, until such time as the Forest Gate Solar Farm community fund becomes operational.

The Parish's Precept for 2025/26 included a budget of £5,000 for Grants to Community Groups. This was based on the annual average of grants awarded to community groups in Derry Hill and Studley between April 2021 and July 2024.

With a finite budget for the current financial year, the Committee is asked to consider whether there needs to be a change in the overall process.

### **2. Options**

#### Option 1 – Continue with current process

This option would be to continue with the current process of considering grant applications throughout the year, as and when each is received.

The risk with this process is that the available budget may be expended part-way through the year. The Council may therefore find itself unable to fund subsequent applications, which might be considered better value.

#### Option 2 – Set an annual deadline for grant applications

This option would be to publish an annual deadline for grant applications. Applications would be considered together. Any remaining budget would be available for subsequent grant applications on a first come, first served basis.

This option has the advantage that, if the available budget is over-subscribed by grant applications, the Council will be in a position to prioritise applications and/or part-fund applications. The disadvantage might be that the deadline could encourage community groups

to submit applications which were not ready, or to put in unnecessary requests in order to avoid missing out.

Option 3 – Set two annual deadlines for grant applications

This would be similar to Option 2, but with two annual deadlines.

- A Tranche 1 deadline (apply by August for decision in September).
- Any unused funds would then be carried over to a Tranche 2 deadline (apply by February for decision in September).

The benefit of a later (March) window would be that the Council may choose to make more money available in the event of underspending against other cost codes.

**3. Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Committee considers the options and determines any changes to the Grant Application Process which it considers appropriate to recommend to Council.

Cllr John Barnes