

Mepal Parish Council

Website www.mepalparish.org

Email: clerk@mepalparish.org

GRANT AWARDING POLICY

Annually, Mepal Parish Council (MPC) offers modest grants to small organisations and local groups in Mepal working for the benefit of the community in Mepal. Grants are made from money provided by the council taxpayers of Mepal Parish in the form of a precept from ECDC and accordingly the Parish Council has a responsibility to satisfy itself that grants will provide benefit to the local community.

The overall grants budget will be set annually as part of the general budget setting process and the individual grants awarded will be expected to be no more than the total available.

Unfortunately, this may mean that the Council may not be able to fund all project grant applications as there may be more applications than there is money available. However, all applications will be considered carefully. The Parish Council can only award grants using certain legal powers. Where there is no statutory power the Parish Council may use Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 to give grants to community organisations. This power may only be used if its use will benefit some or all its residents and where the benefit obtained is commensurate with expenditure incurred and the expenditure and benefit must be balanced.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

To be eligible for the award of a grant under Section 137 an organisation must:

- be established for non-profit making charitable, benevolent, social, cultural, recreational, or philanthropic purposes. Grants will not be made to individuals and would not normally exceed 50% of the cost of the project or activity. Due to the limited funds available, Grants will not normally be made to National Organisations or Public Institutions.
- have a constitution, or set of rules, which define its aims, objectives, and operational procedures.
- be able to provide a copy of its latest annual accounts and be able to demonstrate that the accounts are checked and signed by a person independent of the group.
- have a bank account operated by a minimum of at least two joint signatories.

WHAT CAN BE FUNDED?

- The project should be something which makes Mepal a better place in which to live, work or visit.
- The group/applicant should be based in Mepal
- The grant should benefit people who live in Mepal.
- There must be clear evidence that local people support the project and are involved in carrying it out.
- Each group may only make one application per financial year.
- Preference will be given to organisations making use of parish facilities and/or having sought external funding prior to their application

THE FOLLOWING ARE NOT ELIGIBLE

- support for individuals or private business projects.
- subsidisation of the annual running costs of any organisation.
- national organisations not based locally.
- applications from schools for an activity that takes place within the school day
- projects which include overseas travel.
- projects which are the prime statutory responsibility of other government bodies.
- projects which improve or benefit privately owned land or property.
- projects which have already been completed or will have been completed by the time the grant is made.
- Grant applications from organisations holding large general bank reserves.

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CONDITIONS OF SUPPORT

The Parish Council may make the award of any grant subject to all or some of the following conditions. Required conditions will be at the discretion of the Parish Council and consider an organisation's individual circumstances.

- To fully understand your project or activity, parish councillors may wish to visit your project or activity, prior to it commencing. They may also wish to conduct a site visit once your funded project is underway.
- Funding should be used for the purpose outlined in the application and if the monies are not spent on the items agreed, the Parish Council may ask for grants to be returned.
- Funding cannot be added wholly or partly to your reserves.
- A lower award may be offered if there are insufficient funds to meet the whole funding application.
- If your project costs are more than you anticipated on your application, any shortfall must be met by you.
- The Parish Council would encourage groups to demonstrate fund raising activities as part of the grant application process.
- The Parish Council would ask that you acknowledge its support in your publications, publicity, and annual reports.

WHEN TO APPLY

The Parish Council considers applications annually in November. All applications should be sent to the clerk before the last Friday in October. Only application forms received by these dates will be considered at the Full Council meeting in November. Applications must be made on the form available on the Parish Council Website, together with appropriate full financial accounts, supporting financial information or evidenced projected costings. The application form can be emailed to you on request to the parish clerk if you are unable to download from the website.

The total of the grants awarded will not exceed the agreed annual budget unless the Parish Council agrees to make an award under exceptional circumstances. All applications will be considered on their merits but in general, grants will be awarded for specific projects or events. The Council is unable to give grants towards running costs or salaries.

All groups will be treated equally. If an organisation has had a grant previously, they are not guaranteed to receive financial support again, but are not excluded from applying again in a different financial year. A fresh application will be required each time.

HOW WILL DECISIONS BE MADE?

All applications will be considered after the closing date and only application forms received by this date will be considered at the first Full Council meeting held after this date with its decision being final. Unfortunately, the Parish Council may not be able to fund all projects as there may be more applications than there is money available. However, all applications will be considered carefully. Due account will be taken of the extent to which funding has been sought or secured from other sources or the applicant's own fund-raising activities and of year end balances. Funding decisions will also be based on the number of direct Mepal beneficiaries.

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HOW TO APPLY

Applications should be downloaded from the website here: <https://www.mepalparish.org/parish-council/grants/>

GRANT PAYMENTS

All Grant payments will be conditional upon submission of audited accounts, supporting documentation or invoices/receipts detailing costs of expenditure for projects or events for which the funding is being sought. These must be addressed to the Parish Clerk and dated after the date of approval.

All grant recipients are required to provide the Parish Council with a brief report, including photographs (if applicable) of how the grant has been utilised, how it has assisted the organisation and what it has achieved. This will appear in the Newsletter and website and recognition of the grant from Mepal Parish Council must be made in any publicity material.

If the grant is put to purposes other than those for which it was awarded without the approval of the Parish Council, the recipient organisation will be required to repay the grant to the Parish Council.

All invoices to be settled directly with suppliers by the Parish Council must be sent within 28 days of the event. This will ensure that any unspent funds can be re-distributed to other applicants.

The Parish Council reserves the right to refuse any grant application which they consider to be inappropriate or against the objectives of the Parish Council.

First Approval 26 May 2022

Re-approval 22 May 2023

Revised Approval 30 May 2024