SECTION 137 GRANT POLICY

A policy for dealing with and determining Grant Applications

1. Definitions

A grant is awarded by Ringmer Parish Council for particular defined purposes which will benefit the Parish or residents of the Parish and is not directly controlled or administered by the Parish Council.

2. Power

The law requires that Section 137 grants must be "in the interests or will directly benefit the area or its inhabitants, or part of it, or some of it" and "the direct benefit should commensurate with expenditure". Similar considerations will apply when considering applications for other grants.

Section 137(4)(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 (the 1972 Act) for Parish Councils in England for 2026 – 2027 is £11.60 per electorate. The calculation used is £11.60 x the electorate of Ringmer. E.g. £11.60 x 4,100 = £7,560. This cap should not be exceeded.

The Section 137 ruling which is capped can be superseded if Ringmer Parish Council gains the General Power of Competence.

3. Background

a) Any grants made available are funded directly from the Parish Precept.

b) The Parish Council receives no other significant monies from any source which can be used for the purpose of awarding Section 137 Grants. Whilst the Parish Council may receive Section 106 or Community Infrastructure Levy funds, these cannot be used for grant/donation applications.

4. Policy

a) Every October/November Ringmer Parish Council determines and agrees the budget for the next financial year. It is during this process Ringmer Parish Council agrees how much of the precept to use to award grants.

b) Any grant made by the Parish Council must directly benefit the Parish of Ringmer and its Parishioners. The Parish Council cannot make donations to individuals without being able to exercise the General Power of Competence. When awarding a grant to an individual best practice would be to award the grant if there is direct community benefit. (Thus, the Parish Council cannot for example make a grant to a disaster appeal unless the disaster in some way affected the Parish or a substantial number of Parishioners.) Projects managed by Ringmer-based organisations delivering outcomes in Ringmer parish may be prioritised. Awards may provide up to 100% of the cost of the project, but projects that can demonstrate matching funding from other sources may be prioritised.

c) All proposed expenditure must be detailed in the Parish Council's annual budget to enable the Parish Council to calculate the precept.

d) The organisation/group making a grant request should be a non-profit making or voluntary organisation where membership is open (i.e. no discrimination of membership on grounds of race, sex or religion etc.)

e) The Parish Council will not fund events or activities which can be funded by the relevant participants or which can or will be self-supporting by means of donations, or grants from other organisations.

f) The Parish Council will consider applications for funds in situations;
   - Where there is no other way of obtaining the relevant funds;
   - The funds will enable the relevant organisation or group to access or "unlock" funds or assistance from third parties; and
   - Monies have been donated or raised but these are insufficient, and funds are needed to bridge the resulting gap.

g) The Parish Council will endeavour to provide assistance and support where appropriate to organisations and groups in the Parish wishing to access grants and other funds from third parties and local authorities.

5. Applications

a) An application form for a grant or donation is available on the Parish Council Website. The completed form should be sent to the Clerk who will arrange for those applications that meet the Parish Council's criteria to be considered at the next Office and Finance Committee meeting.

b) The small grant/donation available is payable up to a maximum of £500. Ringmer Parish Council reserves the right to consider larger applications via Section 137 of the Local Government Act or to exercise the General Power of Competence if the Parish Council is eligible to do so.

c) Only one grant/donation will be given to any organisation or group, or for any particular project in any financial year. (1st April to 31st March).

d) Grants/donations cannot usually be awarded after the relevant event or project has been completed.

6. Conditions

a) The Office and Finance Committee will assess applications with reference to the benefit to Ringmer residents.

b) Where a request for a grant/donation is agreed, the committee shall determine the amount, using the figure stated by the applicant as a guide only.

c) The grant or donations shall be used only for the stated purpose otherwise the monies shall be returned to the Parish Council, except where the Parish Council's prior written consent has been given for the funds to be used for another purpose.

d) The Parish Council may request that applicants provide written feedback explaining how the grant/donation has benefited their organisation/group. If feedback is required, this will be communicated in the decision letter/email.

e) The Parish Council reserves the right to request that applicants provide proof of legitimate use.

f) The Parish Council reserves the right to request repayment of any grant/donation where an applicant does not comply with these conditions.

7. Notes

a) The Parish Council's decision is final and there is no right of appeal.

b) The Parish Council reserves the right to decline any application without giving reasons for its decision.

c) The Parish Council will not commit to any continuing expenditure.

d) Nothing in this Policy prevents the Parish Council from providing a grant for donation to a group, organisation or project without application where the Parish Council considers that the giving of such a grant or donation will bring benefits to residents of the Parish.

e) Where a Member of the Parish Council is a Member of an organisation/group applying for funding, that Member must declare, in accordance with its Code of Conduct an interest in the matter and refrain from voting. Advice may be sought from the Monitoring Officer.

f) The Committee has delegated powers to award grants up to £5,000.

Community Infrastructure Levy Applications - Ringmer Parish Council Pot

There is a separate form and criteria for Community Infrastructure Levy applications. Ringmer Community Groups and Organisations should use the new form and guidance document available on the Parish Council website or by contacting the Parish Office. Ringmer Parish Council are mindful that applications to the District Pot will require support from the Parish Council. If you require this in writing, please contact the Clerk for the Parish Council to consider this as a whole at a meeting, where Parish Council can agree to support your application in the minutes as well as write a supporting statement.

Next review due:	**July 29**
Policy amended:	**8th July 2025**
Adopted at Full Council meeting:	**9th August 2022**