

Thame Town Council

Grant Awards Policy

1. Aims

- 1.1 To promote a vibrant and active community in the Parish of Thame, enhancing and maximising the range of services and activities for the Town.

2. Legal Powers

- 2.1 Grants may only be allocated where there is a specific power in law to do so. When recommendations are made by the Grant Award Panel and a resolution passed to award a grant, the power by which it is awarded must be identified by the responsible Council Officer.
- 2.2 Where no specific grant making power exists in other legislation, and where, in the Council's opinion, the grant will benefit its area or any of its inhabitants, the General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011 will be agreed.

3. Panel

- 3.1 The Panel consists of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the Chairman of each of the Standing Committees, who meet once a year to consider the applications for grant aid.
- 3.2 The funds are modest, so when considering applications, the Panel look at how the application benefits the majority of the community and aligns with any Town Council Strategy.
- 3.3 The Panel presents its recommendation to the Community Services Committee for approval at the beginning of each civic year. Subject to timescales endorsement may sometimes go direct to Full Council.
- 3.4 The following criteria are used to assess applications:
- a. Is the organisation in Thame or, if outside the parish, does it serve a significant proportion of residents within the parish?
 - b. What benefit does it provide to the town and its inhabitants?
 - c. Would there be a significant adverse effect to the community, if the applicants were unable to continue or were hampered by lack of funds?
 - d. Have other sources of funding been secured or being sought for the project?
 - e. Is there a more appropriate source of funding the organisation should be directed to, thus relieving the demand on the Council's resources?
 - f. Is the application for capital or revenue costs?
 - g. If revenue, has the organisation received similar funding in the previous three years?
 - h. Funding priority will be assessed in the following order: -
 1. Capital Projects
 2. Community Project Seed funding for the first year.
 3. Revenue support – (but Salaries/staff costs will not be funded).

- 3.5 The Panel may require successful application to provide progress reports. There may also be a request for a site visit and/or meetings with the applicants to discuss the viability of the proposed project.

4. Funding Requests

- 4.1 Applications are only accepted from charities or non-profit making organisations. Applications from Commercial organisations will not be considered.
- 4.2 The Council is prevented by statute from giving financial assistance to individuals, charities operating overseas, or to funds established to help persons outside the UK.
- 4.3 Applications are not considered from “upward funders”, i.e. local groups whose fund-raising is sent to the central headquarters for redistribution.
- 4.4 Applications are not considered from national organisations or local groups with access to funds from national “umbrella” or “parent” organisations. Sporting organisations must demonstrate that they have been successful in obtaining funding from their national bodies, South Oxfordshire District Council and/or Oxfordshire County Council for the project before applying to Thame Town Council.
- 4.5 Applications are not considered for retrospective funding for event/projects that will be completed before the Council’s decision is made (projects that have started will be considered; however, we will not be able to fund any retrospective costs.)
- 4.6 Applications from religious groups are considered where an ongoing benefit to the wider community can be demonstrated, irrespective of their religious beliefs. Applications will not be considered that aim to support or promote the religious/political beliefs/interests of an individual or organisation.
- 4.7 Applications from education, health or social services establishments are considered where the organisation can demonstrate that it is working in partnership with other groups and where there are ongoing benefits to the wider Thame community.
- 4.8 The Town Council will not fund applications where the sole aim is to raise money for charity or to distribute money to others, whether they be individuals or organisations. Applications must relate to a specific project or need that can be demonstrated to benefit the wider Thame community.
- 4.9 Organisations requesting funds for buildings must provide evidence of a business plan, all necessary consent, such as planning permission, compliance with any restrictions on the property title, and security of tenure for a minimum of 7 years from the date that the grant is considered. Proof of adequate insurance with a reputable insurance company must be provided.
- 4.10 Organisations cannot apply to this scheme for projects we have awarded grants within the last **three** years.
- 4.11 The maximum funding an organisation can request is 20% of the available budget.

5. Financial Requirements

- 5.1 Grants may be claimed at any time during the financial year the award is made i.e. April – March. Evidence that the money has been used as specified in the grant application must be provided within the same timeframe.

- 5.2 If a grant exceeds **£2,000** the Council will require a written report within twelve months of the date of the grant, this could be in the form of an annual report, presentation or set of accounts.
- 5.3 It is essential that the application include the information and documents requested on the form. In the case of a newly formed organisation, they are requested to provide a business plan and budget.
- 5.4 Grants awarded are conditional and may only be used for the specific purpose(s) declared in the grant application, and in accordance with any further conditions detailed in the grant award confirmation letter. If the identified expenditure, project or activity does not proceed, or if any of the conditions cannot be met, the awarded grant may not be released to the applicant, or the awarded grant must be returned to the Town Council.

6 Publicity

- 6.1 The Town Council requires acknowledgment of its contribution in any publicity material.
- 6.2 Some grants may be more formally recognised with a presentation from the Town Mayor.

7 Opening and closing dates

- 7.1 Thame Town Council open for applications once a year. We publish the opening and closing dates on our website, weekly e-newsletter and on social media. We will be open for a minimum of six weeks and subject to committee deadlines will usually make a decision within 8-10 weeks of the closing date.
- 7.2 Draft Administrative Timeline for 2025/26 to announce recipients at the Annual Town Meeting 19 March 2025.

Grant applications open: Monday 13 January 2025
Grant applications close: Monday 17 February 2025

Grant Award Panel meet: 24 February 2025
Report to Full Council: Wednesday 26 February 2025
Ratified by Full Council: Tuesday 4 March 2025

Announce Recipients: Wednesday 19 March 2025 (Annual Town Meeting)
Awards arranged: April 2025