



MELTON PARISH COUNCIL

FRM(21)43.04

TO REVIEW THE COUNCIL'S APPROACH TO GRANT GIVING IN 2021/22

Background and summary

This report invites Finance Employment and Risk Management (FERM) Committee to review the Council's approach to grant giving, both in the context of the Council year 2021/22 and also in terms of setting up a structure for grant giving in future years.

Up until 2019 the approach was to set grant budgets as part of the budget setting process before the start of the financial year. Then in late August / early September notice was given both on posters and the website, inviting applications to be made on a standard form, usually by the beginning of October, for consideration at the October FERM Committee, which would make recommendations to Full Council in November. The standard application form contains notes explaining the criteria for grant giving. Appended to this report is the application form used in 2020, when because of Covid, the process was delayed until even later in the year.

Grant budgets are included in the Council's budget for 2021/22. However they need to be reconsidered in the light of circumstances and in particular a timescale for grant giving established if grants under s137 Local Government Act 1972 are to be offered in this financial year.

The issues are set out in the body of the report.

Report and recommendations

1. Under s142 Local Government Act 1972 the Council has the power to contribute towards or provide parish newsletters. Melton PC assists with funding for the production and distribution of the *Melton Messenger*, a community magazine published by St Andrew's Church, which includes news from the wider community, including the Parish Council. In 2020/21, the Council budgeted for a grant of £1,150, but only gave £400, to reflect the suspension of the printed version due to Covid. In 2021/22 the budget is £1,200, and whether and when to pay this amount needs to be considered and a suitable recommendation put forward to Full Council.

2. Under s137 Local Government Act 1972 the Council has the power to incur by resolution expenditure which is in the interests of the area or its inhabitants subject to an annual limit prescribed by law. For 2021/22 the limit is £8.41 x the number of electors in the parish. Given the size of Melton (3531 electors as at December 2020) it has never been a risk that the limit (about £29.6k) will be exceeded. This power can be used to make grants to voluntary organisations where there is no other specific power that applies; e.g. grants to Citizen's Advice would not be made under s137 as there is a specific power – s142(2A) Local government Act 1972. [Note: the power does not apply where a Council declares by resolution that it has the general power of competence when it can do anything that generally individuals of full age can do. However there are limits; councils must not do anything under the power of competence which would be *ultra vires*, or outside their powers generally.] In 2020/21, there was no budget set for grant giving, however the Council used the underspend on the grant to the Melton Messenger to make two small grants totalling £659. For 2021/22 there is a budget of £350, £249 of which has been expended in a grant to contribute to the cost of printing the Local Food Project leaflet. FERM Members are invited to consider whether to recommend an increase to the budget, or that the Council does not make grants this year.
3. In terms of the future administration of grants and publication of the Council's grant-giving arrangements, it would be helpful if the framework can be standardised for future years, in terms of both how it will operate and when within the Council year, with only the amount available to be left for annual variation in the light of the agreed budget. Councillors are invited to consider this aspect and make recommendations to Full Council.

William Grosvenor

Clerk and Executive Officer to the Council

7 October 2021

APPENDIX: GRANT APPLICATION FORM USED IN 2020



MELTON PARISH COUNCIL

GRANT APPLICATION 2020

Name of Organisation	
Building Name and/or No:	
Street:	
Village:	
Town:	
Postcode:	
Telephone No:	
Email Address	
Purpose of Organisation:	
Contact Name:	
Position in Organisation:	
Contact Telephone No [if Different]	
Contact Email Address [if Different]	

Purpose of Grant Application

[Please set out in no more than 250 words why you are applying for a grant]

What will be the benefit to the people of Melton of your project?

What is the total cost of the project you are seeking a grant to help with?

£

By what date do you anticipate the project will be completed?

What is the level of the grant you are asking for from Melton Parish Council?

Signed: _____

Applicant

Date: _____

NOTES:

1. The budget for grants is set by Melton Parish Council in January each year
2. The budget year in which the grant will be payable is the financial year 1st April to 31st March following the setting of the budget
3. Grants would normally be payable to organisations rather than individuals working for the benefit of the residents of Melton
4. Projects that the council would wish to support would normally be of a capital rather than a revenue nature
5. Grants to individuals will not be considered
6. All applications must be on the prescribed form, be in hard copy, either hand or electronically written and accompanied by a copy of the organisations latest approved accounts
7. Once the budget for any given year is expended no further applications will be considered
8. Applications would not normally be considered within three years of a previous successful application
9. As a general guide grants will not exceed £500 and in order to assist as many organisations as possible may well be substantially lower
10. All applications will be considered on their own merits but where there is an equality of merit the budget may be split equally between all applicants
11. The deadline date for applications is 31 December 2020. Completed applications should be sent to the Clerk to the Council, Melton Parish Council, 17 Riduna Park, Station Road, Melton, Woodbridge IP12 1QT or via email to clerk@melton-suffolk-pc.gov.uk
12. Council will acknowledge receipt of an application by email
13. Full Council will consider all applications received by that date on 13th January 2021 and make a decision
14. Applicants will be allowed to attend the meeting of Full Council via Zoom as this is held in public
15. All applicants will be advised of the decision of council by email following the meeting in January
16. Grants approved will be paid to the applicant organisation as soon as possible following the decision
17. The decision of Melton Parish Council on whether or not to approve a grant application will be final and no dialogue will be entered into over the reasons for the decision taken