

# Deopham & Hackford Parish Council

## Donation Policy

**Adopted: 6 September 2023**

**Date of next review: September 2026**

### **About the Scheme**

The Parish Council has a small amount of money each year to allocate to organisations that benefit the parishioners of Deopham and Hackford. The total amount available is set each year when the Council sets its budget and may be distributed as a whole or amongst multiple recipients. Applications will be considered which support the objectives of the council, for example (but not restricted to) reducing rural isolation and deprivation; improving road safety; the support of youth activities; the support of sporting activities and improving services and facilities for the local community. Those organisations applying need not necessarily be based in the parish but must show evidence of our parishioners and the local community benefiting from the project.

This policy does not guarantee that there will be funds available each year for the purpose of making donations. This will be determined during the annual setting of the budget. If the Council allocates funds for the purposes of making donations in the budget then this policy will apply.

### **Power to Donate**

In June 2023 the Parish Council adopted the General Power of Competence, this being:

*The General Power of Competence gives a local authority the power to do anything which individuals generally may do, provided it is not prohibited by other legislation (Localism Act 2011).*

This allows the Council to make donations to individuals, organisations or charities.

This policy is adopted on the basis of the Council meeting the eligibility criteria for the General Power of Competence and adopting such powers at subsequent Annual Parish Council meetings each May. Should the Council no longer adopt the General Power of Competence the terms of this policy shall be covered by Section 137 rules (see below).

### **Section 137**

Where there is no declaration or qualification for the General Power of Competence, the Parish Council can continue to use Section 137 (Local Government Act 1972) rules which permits Parish Council's to contribute to UK charities, public sector funds and also relevant public appeals. In summary:

*The basic power is for a local council to spend money subject to the statutory limit on purposes for the direct benefit of its area, or part of its area, or all or some of its inhabitants.*

No individuals or non-charitable organisations can be awarded money from a Parish Council via Section 137 rules. The Parish Council is restricted on how much can be awarded under Section 137; it

is an index-linked amount per head of the relevant population (as per the electoral roll on 1<sup>st</sup> April each year) multiplied by an amount set by the government each year. In 2023-24 this is £9.93 per elector. Whilst Section 137 rules restrict the Council to a maximum amount which can be spent per financial year this is not the amount of money which the Council may make available for donations. This will be detailed in the Council's budget.

### **Scope of the Scheme**

Whilst the Council can donate to individuals under the General Power of Competence it is unlikely requests of this nature will be considered. Requests for donations are preferred from either local organisations or charities and the purpose of the donation must be to the benefit of the local community.

Each year the Council will set a budget for donations. The amount can vary year on year and is at the discretion of the Council as to how much this will be. The total amount available can be distributed to one organisation or split across multiple organisations. Each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis and on a first come first served basis. All requests should be submitted to the Council via the Parish Clerk at [deophampc@gmail.com](mailto:deophampc@gmail.com)

Donation requests will be considered at the next full Council meeting. The Council reserves the right to request further information on what benefits to the local community will be before considering a request. Representatives from the organisation may also be invited to attend the Council meeting at which the request is being considered to answer questions on the donation request prior to a decision being made. Should the Council feel there is not sufficient information to consider a request it will be rejected. The Council may choose to make a donation, reject the request or they may put the decision on hold in anticipation of additional requests later in the year. Donations will not be made retrospectively. The Council's decision is final and there is no appeal process.

Only 1 request per organisation per financial year will be considered. Whilst no time limit is put on the use of the donation it is expected that any donation will have been used within 1 year from the date of award and the organisation should make every effort to utilise the donation as quickly as possible for the benefit of the local community. If the recipient is not able to use the money for the purposes of which it was awarded then it must be returned in full (or partially subject to evidence of the purpose of any expenditure) to the Parish Council.

Donations will not be awarded to fund activities of a political nature, nor activities considered to be the responsibility of the principal authority or another constituted organisation. Donations will not be awarded for the general day to day running costs of an organisation unless significant benefit to the local community can be demonstrated. This is at the discretion of the Council.

The Council may ask for further details on the constitution and management of the organisation and for evidence of their financial structure (including a bank account in the name of the organisation) and financial processes to ensure that any money donated will be used for the benefit of the local community.

The outcome of any request will be emailed to the organisation and payment will be made by either cheque or bank transfer. All donations must be used for the purpose for which the application was made.

The Council may ask for evidence following a donation that the money has been spent for the purposes it was requested and may also request feedback on the subsequent benefits this has brought the community. Recipients of any donations from the Parish Council may be invited to the Annual Parish Meeting, where they will be requested to provide a brief report on how the donation has been used. The Parish Council may also request permission to publish details of the donation on either the Council's website and/or social media.

All donation requests must be sent to:

Parish Clerk

[deophampc@gmail.com](mailto:deophampc@gmail.com)