Stone Town Council

Grant Award Policy 2026 (Amended Draft)

1. Introduction

Stone Town Council recognises the significant contribution that local community and voluntary groups make to the wellbeing of the Parish.

The Council's Grant Award Policy is designed to provide financial support to local not-for-profit groups, organisations, and residents delivering projects and services that directly benefit the residents of Stone.

All grants awarded under this scheme must demonstrably support one or more priorities set out in the Stone Strategic Plan 2025–2028.

The aim of the scheme is to encourage and support community-based initiatives that:

- Deliver measurable benefit to the residents of Stone;
- Align clearly with the Council's strategic priorities; and
- Contribute to a vibrant, healthy, inclusive and sustainable community.

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2. Purpose of the Grant Scheme

The Town Council's annual grant scheme supports projects that contribute directly to one or more of the Council's Strategic Plan priorities, including:

- Community engagement, inclusion and civic pride;
- Health and wellbeing, including initiatives that reduce isolation;
- Youth engagement, skills development and participation;
- Environmental protection, biodiversity and sustainability;
- Safe, welcoming and accessible public spaces;
- Strong governance and positive community leadership.

Grants are available for projects, activities, or initiatives that directly benefit the residents of Stone Parish.

Projects must demonstrate clear and tangible outcomes within Stone.

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3. Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible to apply, organisations must:

- Be a not-for-profit or charitable organisation delivering community services in Stone Parish;
- Submit a brief description of the organisation's aims and objectives;

- State the date the organisation was established;
- Provide details of how many of the organisation's members or beneficiaries reside in Stone Parish;
- Declare any grants received from Stone Town Council or other funding sources within the last three years;
- Clearly outline the purpose of the grant, including the total cost of the proposed project;
- Demonstrate how the project aligns with one or more priorities within the Stone Strategic Plan 2025–2028;
- Submit a full set of the organisation's accounts with the application. Failure to include accounts will result in the application being rejected as incomplete;
- Demonstrate how the project will specifically benefit Stone residents;
- Confirm a commitment to appropriately acknowledge the Council's support.

Applications from Organisations Operating Beyond Stone

Where an organisation operates across a wider geographical area (e.g. borough or county-wide), the application must clearly demonstrate that:

- The majority of the grant-funded activity will take place within Stone; and/or
- The primary beneficiaries of the funded activity will be residents of Stone Parish.

Applications that cannot clearly demonstrate meaningful local impact will not normally be prioritised.

Applications from Individuals or Informal Groups

The Council may accept applications from individual residents or groups of residents proposing an activity or event that supports the Council's strategic priorities.

As informal groups may not have a formal constitution, unless funds can be paid into a bank account requiring a minimum of two signatories, the Council may pay suppliers or service providers directly. No funds will be paid directly to an individual without appropriate safeguards.

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4. Grant Award Limits

To ensure fair and equitable distribution of the available budget across as many projects as possible, grants will usually not exceed £500.

In exceptional circumstances, the Council may consider awarding a higher amount where:

- The project delivers significant strategic benefit;
- The need for additional funding is clearly evidenced; and
- Funds are available within the approved budget.

Each application will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

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5. Grant Conditions

All successful applicants will be required to:

- Attend a meeting of Stone Town Council to publicly accept the funding, where appropriate;
- Provide written feedback within an agreed timeframe outlining:
    - How the grant was used;
    - The measurable outcomes achieved;
    - How the project contributed to the Council's Strategic Plan priorities; and
    - How it benefited residents of Stone;
- Attend the Annual Parish Meeting, where requested, to present an update;
- Acknowledge Stone Town Council's support in promotional materials, social media posts, or press releases relating to the funded project.

Failure to comply with these conditions may affect eligibility for future funding.

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6. Strategic Plan Alignment (Gateway Requirement)

All applications must clearly demonstrate alignment with one or more priorities set out in the Stone Strategic Plan 2025–2028.

Applications that fail to demonstrate clear strategic alignment will not normally be funded, regardless of overall score.

Projects that provide strong, measurable contribution to the Council's strategic objectives will be prioritised.

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7. Application Process

Applications must be submitted using the official Grant Application Form and include all required supporting documentation.

Incomplete applications will not be considered.

The Council reserves the right to request further information where necessary.

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8. Decision-Making Process

All applications will be reviewed by the Town Council.

Decisions will be based on:

- Eligibility and completeness;

- Strength of alignment with the Strategic Plan;
- Clear evidence of direct benefit to Stone residents;
- Measurable impact and outcomes;
- Value for money;
- Financial need;
- Previous funding history and accountability (if applicable).

Appendix A – Grant Funding Scoring Table – will be used to assess each application.

All decisions are final and remain at the discretion of the Council.

Appendix A – Grant Funding Scoring Table (Amended)

Each application will be scored using the criteria below. For each section, score between 0 (poor/no evidence) and 5 (excellent), unless otherwise stated.

Maximum total score: 45 points.

Assessment Criteria	Description	Score Range
1. Community Benefit to Stone (Weighted)	Demonstrates a direct, measurable and meaningful benefit to residents of Stone Parish. Clear evidence of number and type of local beneficiaries.	0–10
2. Alignment with Strategic Plan	Strong and explicit alignment with one or more priorities within the Stone Strategic Plan 2025–2028.	0–5
3. Project Purpose & Measurable Impact	Clearly defined project with realistic, measurable goals and positive outcomes.	0–5
4. Financial Need & Value for Money	Detailed and realistic budget. Clear evidence of need and responsible use of public funds.	0–5
5. Contribution of Other Funding	Evidence of additional funding sources or fundraising efforts, reducing sole reliance on the Council.	0–5
6. Accountability & Past Performance	Full accounts provided. Where previously funded, evidence of proper use of funds and timely reporting.	0–5
7. Organisational Strength & Governance	Demonstrates appropriate governance, leadership and capacity to deliver the project.	0–5
8. Local Involvement & Participation	Significant involvement of Stone residents in planning, delivery or participation.	0–5

Strategic Alignment Gateway:
Applications scoring 0–1 under “Alignment with Strategic Plan” will not normally be recommended for funding.