



POLICY ON DONATIONS FROM PARISH COUNCIL FUNDS

1. Staplehurst Parish Council currently has a budgetary expenditure heading covering donations to third parties. Similar criteria may be applied to S137 grants. However, these would normally be on a larger scale and would likely be more project based and could well be longer term, therefore there is a separate S137 Grant policy.
2. The criteria for making a donation are based primarily on whether the Parish Council considers that a service or action has led or will lead to a benefit to the Parish as a whole or to individuals residing or working in the Parish.
3. It is noted that certain donations have been made on a regular basis whereas others have been of a one-off nature. However, as part of its annual budgetary and precept setting process Staplehurst Parish Council will review all donations it wishes to make regardless as to whether they have been made on a regular basis in the past. This review will initially be made by the Employment, Finance Strategy Group who will make recommendations for the Full Council to consider and approve.
4. There may be occasions when either a request is made for a donation during the year or the Parish Council wishes to recognise a specific service undertaken on its behalf. Normal practice would be to defer this request until the following year's budget is being considered. However, there may be occasions when it would be appropriate to make an exception. In these situations the Parish Council would need to consider the specific circumstances before making a final decision.
5. Most donations would represent a contribution towards the normal operating costs of providing the service. The Parish Council may be able to support capital projects – see Policy on S137 Grants. Each request would need to be considered on its own merit and the following points taken into account:
 - There must be an overall benefit to the Staplehurst community.
 - The Parish Council must decide whether this expenditure is an effective way for it to utilise its finite financial resources.
 - There must be a system of internal controls in place to ensure that expenditure is properly accounted for and generally accepted accountancy principles applied.
 - If benefits are spread over a number of years consideration should be given to setting up a specific reserve to offset the precept in future years. The

Employment, Finance and Strategy Group would need regularly to review progress and report back to the Full Council.

6. Organisations that might be eligible include, inter alia:

- Properly constituted community and voluntary organisations.
- Registered Charities and Community Interest Companies.
- An organisation that covers a wider area than Staplehurst Parish must indicate the number of "clients that reside in Staplehurst" to be considered

7. As stated above donations are not automatically given. They will be entirely at the discretion of the Parish Council and will be subject to review as part of the Parish Council's annual budgetary and precept setting process. They will also be subject to review by the Internal Auditor. All requests for a donation must be approved by a majority of the Parish Council.

8. Adoption

This policy supersedes any previous donations policy and was adopted by

Staplehurst Parish Council on10th March 2025.....minute...2332 / 7.2....