

SALISBURY CITY COUNCIL

Report

Subject : Revised Grants Policy and Rent Reductions Policy
Committee : Events, Markets and Grants Subcommittee
Date : 25 July 2022
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1. Report Summary

- 1.1. This report asks for the committee to consider and vote on the implementation of a revised Grants Policy, and a separate revised Rent Reductions Policy, for Salisbury City Council.
- 1.2. Specific votes may be required on
 - 1.2.1. Grants Areas of Community Priority Requirements
 - 1.2.2. Annual Key Priorities
 - 1.2.3. City Grant Priorities
 - 1.2.4. Repeat or Continued Activity Applications
 - 1.2.5. Rent Reduction Areas of Community Priority requirements
 - 1.2.6. Rent Reduction Improvement Periods.

2. Background

- 2.1. In November 2021 the Communities Working Group agreed to review SCC Grants and Rent Reductions Policy. In January 2022 draft policies were reviewed and discussed by the Communities Working Group.
- 2.2. The resulting policies are presented here to the Events, Markets and Grants Subcommittee for their consideration and approval.
- 2.3. The main aim of this policy review was to create policies that:
 - 2.3.1. Are clearer to the applicant
 - 2.3.2. Embed the community and strategic priorities of SCC in the application and reporting processes
 - 2.3.3. Enable councillors to award or refuse grants or in the case of Rent Reduction, subsidies, based on these priorities
 - 2.3.4. Embed accessibility considerations into rent reduction requirements
 - 2.3.5. Respond to changes in enquiries for grants from community organisations

3. Summary of amendments:

- 3.1. The Grants Policy and the Rent Reductions Policy have been separated to improve readability and clarity for applicants
- 3.2. This has also enabled specific reporting forms to be created for Rent Reduction reporting.
- 3.3. Amended and new areas of the draft policies are currently highlighted in yellow for review by Councillors.

4. Grants Policy Amendments

- 4.1. Minor grants have been renamed as small grants in response to feedback from applicants and prospective applicants
- 4.2. Pg. 3 - Areas of Priority Requirements have been introduced, with small grant applicants being required to reflect on their connections to priority areas and Medium grant applicants being required to report against a preferred minimum of two priority areas.

- 4.3. Pg. 3 – Annual Key Priorities – Medium Grants – if applied as proposed this subcommittee will select one community priority as a Key Priority, starting in 2023/24, enabling SCC to target the Community Development Grant budget at key aspects of community need and development aims.
- 4.4. Pg. 4 – City Grant Priorities – The wording regarding the aims of City Grant (previously Major Grants) has been rewritten for clarity and to include new strategic priorities.
- 4.5. Pg. 5 – A requirement for applicants to provide a safeguarding policy, where working with children or adults at risk has now been included as a mandatory requirement
- 4.6. Pgs. 6 & 9 - The policy now includes reference to organisations without a constitution of bank account who work in partnership with an eligible organisation to manage and administer the grant fund. This has been happening in practice for some time. See Mandatory requirements, Pg. 5
- 4.7. Pg. 7 – Small Community Grant – The maximum limit for small grants has been raised to £750 to reflect rising costs.
- 4.8. Pg. 8 – Medium Community Grants – The minimum medium grant has been raised from £500 to £750 with reference to the raised Maximum for Small Grants.
- 4.9. Pg. 9 – Applications for continued activity/repeat applications – this policy draft allows for repeat applications from 12 months after the receipt of an SCC Community Development Grant. Medium grant holders are required to provide extra evidence of sustainability plans and are advised that awards may be of a lower level. Small grant applicants must be applying for new activity.
- 4.10. Pg.10 – additional information regarding the city grant application process has been included for clarity.
- 4.11. Pg.14 – Reporting deadlines will now be included on the grant acceptance form.
- 4.12. Appendices – Small Grants now have a separate and shorter application and reporting form, in response to applicant feedback.
- 4.13. All grant application forms now include direct reference to community priorities
- 4.14. Medium and City Grant forms now include a requirement to state how impact will be measured against selected community priorities.
- 4.15. All reporting forms now include direct reference to community priorities.

5. Rent Reductions Policy Amendments

- 5.1. Pg. 3 - The Subsidy parameter has been extended to include ‘community organisations’, in order to encompass the full range of current rent reduction recipients
- 5.2. Pg. 4 - A requirement for applicants to provide a safeguarding policy, where working with children or adults at risk has now been included as a mandatory requirement
- 5.3. Pg. 5 – Areas of Priority Requirements - Areas of Priority Requirements have been introduced, with applicants being required to report against a minimum of two priority areas.
- 5.4. Pg. 7 – Reasons for refusal of a Rent reduction subsidy now include failure to demonstrate activity against a minimum of two areas of priority
- 5.5. Pg. 8 – Improvement Periods – this policy draft includes a proposal for the introduction of improvement periods as a step between awarding of the subsidy and withdrawal of the subsidy. This refers to managing rent reduction recipients who are not meeting requirements.
- 5.6. Pg.10 – Reporting Requirements – Rent reduction recipients will not be asked to submit Priority Area and Access plans, alongside organisational aims and objectives.
- 5.7. Pg. 10/11 – Rent reduction recipients would now be required to meet with the Communities manager to discuss their plans and reports, annually.
- 5.8. Pg.13 – 17 – Rent reduction Application form – has been amended to include priority area aims, access plans and additional information on reporting expectations for each section of the form.
- 5.9. Appendix 2 – The refusal notice not includes the grounds on which subsidy has been reduced or refused.
- 5.10. Appendix 3 – This draft includes a new Officer Amendment Form, with reference to the Improvement Periods clause (pg.8)

- 5.11. Appendix 5 – The annual report form not includes specific reference to the community priority areas, organisational aims and access plans.
- 5.12. Appendix 4 – The annual report form now includes a planning section for the next financial year, to be submitted at the same time.

6. Recommendation:

- 6.1. It is recommended that the Subcommittee approve the implementation of the New Grants Policy and the new rent Reduction Policy as presented.

7. Wards Affected: All

8. Background papers:

- 8.1. DRAFT– Grants Policy July 2022 – Doc*****
- 8.2. DRAFT Rent reduction Policy– JULY 2022 – Doc *****

9. Implications:

- 9.1. **Financial:** None in relation to this report.
- 9.2. **Legal:** None in relation to this report.
- 9.3. **Personnel:** Communities Officer time.
- 9.4. **Environmental Impact:** To be assessed on a grant by grant basis.
- 9.5. **Equalities Impact Statement:** None in relation to this report.