

Item 10: Application for a grant under section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

From Nigel Manning. Ash Parish Chairman. All councillors copied in.
To Nathan Khan. The Ash, Ash Vale & Ash Green Coronavirus Support Group

You are quite correct that S137 LGA 1972 allows local councils to make grants within the specifics of that legislation. However the legislation does provide limitations on what S137 grants can cover and the amount.

Up until Saturday 4th April Ash Parish Council (APC) has not been able to meet due to the restrictions from the Coronavirus, nor have we been able to meet to make decisions. Legislation only came into force on 4th April allowing councils to hold virtual meetings.

APC has a full Parish Council meeting arranged for Tuesday 14th April. We already have a request for funding under S137 to be considered at that meeting. I have arranged for your request for funding to be placed as an agenda item. This will be a virtual meeting of the council. However, there are a number of questions that need to be answered and documents provided before APC is able to consider this request;

1. For what purpose exactly are you requesting funding? Does this include any payments or expenses to be made to volunteers or other members of the Group?
2. How much are you asking APC to provide?
3. You mention that St Marys are allowing The Ash, Ash Vale & Ash Green Coronavirus Support Group (Group) are allowing the group to use their bank account, but how are the Group's funds identified and managed?
4. What accounting policies have been adopted? For example, what records, invoices etc are being maintained to show how the funds are being spent and for whom. How is it known what funds are available to the Group has at any one time?
5. What are the names and addresses to the Principal officers of the Group?
6. We would like to see a copy of the Group's constitution, safeguarding policy and any other operational guidelines.
7. What is to become of any funds remaining once the lock down is lifted and the pandemic over?
8. Should you wish to make any other representations to APC in connection with this request, this will need to be in electronic written format, which will be circulated to all members.

Please provide the above to me on nigel.manning@guildford.gov.uk and the Clerk to the Council, Dennis Wheeler on dennis.wheeler@ashpcdurrey.gov.uk. These can then be included in a report and circulated to members prior to the council meeting. To ensure there is enough time for consideration of the request and information, I would request that these be provided by 16.00 on Friday 10th April.

Nigel Manning
Chairman

Ash Parish Council

From: Nathan Khan <nathanjkhan@yahoo.co.uk>

Sent: 06 April 2020 11:09

To: Nigel Manning <Nigel.Manning@guildford.gov.uk>; Ash Parish Council <office@ashpcsurrey.gov.uk>; graham.bidwell@ashpcsurrey.gov.uk

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Subject: Application for a grant under section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972

Good morning Parish Councillors,

I am contacting on behalf of the Ash, Ash Vale & Ash Green Coronavirus Support Group. We are a local group that has been formed in response to the Coronavirus pandemic, to help our neighbours over the age of 70 or who are self isolating, but which do not fall into the ultra vulnerable category being looked after by the Shawfield hub run by Guildford Borough Council.

Our goal is very simple, we want to help stop the spread of the virus by enabling people to stay at home if they have any symptoms. Our group now has nearly 1400 members, of which around 350 are signed up volunteers, all from our local area. We are currently collecting and delivering around 25 prescriptions each day on behalf of self isolating neighbours and have already helped many people with shopping.

I have been doing some digging into ways we can secure funding and have realised that local councils (of all levels) are allowed to award community grants, under section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Even if the Parish Council have not budgeted for these grants or if the allocated budget for the year has already been used, awards can be made in 'exceptional circumstances'. I hope you would agree with me that there could be no more exceptional circumstance than a global pandemic.

I have also seen minutes of other Parish Councils awarding grants of anything upto £15,000. As Ash is such a large Parish Council with a uniquely large precept (in comparison with neighbouring Tongham or Normandy) I hope you will find a way to assist the local community in this vital work.

We have officially linked with St Mary's Church, Vale Road, who are a registered charity and can provide years worth of accounts, and this has been sufficient for any other funding we have applied for. Any documents you need from them, they would be happy to provide.

I look forward to hearing back from you and hope under the circumstances you will feel able to make a supportive and quick decision on this, the peak is expected to hit in the next week or so, we are getting busier and busier everyday and have nearly used up all available funds to us.

Kind Regards,

Nath Khan
Admin of Ash, Ash Vale & Ash Green Coronavirus Support Group
07884 043153