



# Nelson Town Council Ward Initiative Fund Devolved Powers Policy

## **1. Title**

This Policy may be cited as Nelson Town Council's Ward Initiative Fund Policy.

## **2. Background**

The rules relating to the Ward Initiative Fund Budgets have never been approved by Council. This Policy aims to clear up any misunderstanding there are about how the Funds Work

## **3. Policy**

Each of the six wards has a budget set aside for small grants to voluntary and community groups. Town Councils are not permitted to give grants to individuals. Small grants are also available to groups of residents wishing to make a local improvement but are not part of a formal constituted group.

It has been generally agreed that, if the majority of the Ward Councillors are in favour of the application it is approved; however it would appear that this has never been agreed in a formal policy.

## **4. Delegation**

In order to achieve the intent for the grants it is proposed that The Ward Initiative Budgets are delegated.

Council powers may only be delegated to a Committee, Sub-Committee or to a responsible Officer, in this case the Clerk.

The Clerk is only delegated the authority to spend to the limit of the pre-set budget for that Ward. Once the budget maximum is reached, further applications will be put 'on-hold' for consideration from a future year's budgets.

If the application exceeds the amount remaining in the budget, it may be approved in part up to the maximum level of that budget.

As the Ward Initiative Fund Budgets will be delegated to the Clerk, the Council no longer has any power to allocate expenditure against these budgets. This also includes the Finance & General Purposes Committee. Expenditure from these budgets will lie solely with the Clerk in consultation with the Ward Councillors.

## **5. Process**

It is therefore recommended that the process for Ward Initiative Grants is as follows:

- 5.1 The Group applying for a grant supply the relevant application form along with a copy of their constitution and the last twelve months audited account statement in writing to the Clerk. Forms not received by the Clerk are automatically rejected. Any application received

without the accompanying documentation is not processed until the documentation is provided.

- 5.2 A non constituted group of residents may also apply for funding for improvements to their local area. If these grants are approved then the work must be ordered and paid for by the Town Council. No cheque will be awarded to an individual. These applications will follow the same process, however a constitution and bank accounts will not be required.
- 5.3 The Clerk circulates the Applications and accompanying documentation to all relevant Ward Councillors for consideration, along with an up to date statement of the Ward Initiative budget remaining.
- 5.4 Ward Councillors have 10 working days to respond to the application and indicate whether they support or reject the application in part or in full.
- 5.5 If a majority of Councillors are in agreement with the application in full or in part, it is delegated to the Clerk to approve the application ensuring it is within the budget for that Ward.
- 5.6 If the majority of Councillors reject the application the Clerk will notify the Applicants.
- 5.7 If a majority of Councillors fail to reply to the application within the 10 working days, the application is automatically rejected.
- 5.8 Where there is no clear majority for the application, the Chair of the Council will have a casting vote on all Applications.

## **6. Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Finance & General Purposes Committee recommends to Full Council that the Ward Initiative Policy is agreed and that the Ward Initiative Fund Budgets are delegated to the Clerk in consultation with the relevant Ward Councillors.