
SWANLEY TOWN COUNCIL

Fundraising Strategy 2017 - 2025

Introduction

The Town Council has applied successfully for grants for a number of years to great effect both to the Council itself and in supporting local Community Groups and Organisations. While Officers and Councillors can also be proactive in disseminating this service to the wider community there is still much to be done in coordinating the efforts of the Town Council as a whole.

There exists expertise within the Council staff and amongst Councillors in the identification and application for grants outside the Town Council from external bodies such as the National Lottery, Heritage Lottery and others for use by the Town Council. To be effective STC need to think more strategically about the applications it makes and who has responsibility for any application.

Set out below are a number of ways to bring the process together and for improving STC ability to obtain grants, make applications and to use officer time more effectively to achieve the best results.

I. Decision Making

I.1 With any local authority there will always be a balance between what is achievable and what should or should not be the focus of attention in terms of the activities provided, supported by officers and staff. With new projects there may also be wider issues for which Council members may need to be consulted as to the appropriateness of New Projects and if the Town Council should support such projects.

I.2 As many forms of funding come with very short response times or windows of opportunity for applications to be made, it may not be possible to consult Councillors adequately to make a more informed decision about involvement. However such opportunities should not be lost as they rarely come again and may in fact be well received by council members.

I.3 To overcome any possible repercussions and to allay any fears that members may have with regard to new applications, it is a simple process to return funding if successful. So an application might be made by an officer at short notice and prove successful but does not commit the Council to actually spend the funding if it later transpires that members do not support such applications. It is important to remember also that though an application is made, the reply time for any confirmation or indication of success may be several weeks or months, which then allows time for more detailed consultation with members.

If during the consultation period and the application evaluation process Members decide not to proceed, then that is facilitated very easily by a phone call and letter to the decision making body.

- **Apply first – consult and confirm later**

2. Priority of work

- 2.1** The current budget headings which STC operate to, and the objectives of the Town Council will allow officers to make informed decisions about the priority for funding where only one grant may be held by an organisation in a 12 month period. As an example, the National Lottery Awards for All only allows for one grant in 12 months and STC first application could be toward a Music Festival, which might be a priority at this time; in the second application we might be committed to support Sporting Activities and so make an application for Sports Coaching. These smaller grants pose no real problem in the decision making process as they require minimal input from officers, are not likely to be controversial and need to be for the changing needs of the Town Council.
- 2.2** Larger grant applications however require much more officer time in collating information in support of each application and may need some member consultation. As an example, the Swanley Lake and Olympic Hall both require funding applications, but the grants available could be obtained from the same sources and one application will affect the success of the other, despite the ability to hold more than one grant at a time. This is because all Lottery providers also work to 'my fair share' which means resources are allocated geographically as well as by their worth.
- 2.3** While no projects other than those described above are likely to cause any great issues at present, it does require highlighting at this time to avoid complication or debate at a later stage should a more controversial decision be made.

- **Shared and limited resources need to be prioritised**

3. Identification of Funding

- 3.1** Currently Swanley Town Council has access to a number of search tools which are very useful and could be used by more officers and Councillors if required. However there are numerous sources of funding information sent out and within the Town Council it will not always have all the information about every type of grant.
- 3.2** With a strategy and procedure in place for identifying available funding STC could make applications more quickly, allocate a responsible officer, provide partnership funding where needed, and link applications to current provision and activities.
- 3.3** As indicated there are sources of funding available for different projects but sometimes from the same source. If an application is made without the knowledge of a central control point it could jeopardise both applications and, more seriously, could be interpreted as attempting to mislead the grant giver.

- **All application must be approved by CEO**

4. The Application

- 4.1** Having identified possible sources of funding or sponsorship Officers and Councillors can decide on priorities, if any, and identify a lead officer to take the responsibility for the application and which staff can be used to put the application together. In this way deadlines can be set for obtaining information and work on the application can move more quickly, through shared work loads if needed to ensure the application is submitted when required.

4.2 With larger applications there is also a list of guidelines to be worked through, which identifies the way to present an application, supporting information required, references and funding available from the applying organisation. Being coordinated by one person, a level of expertise will be developed and requirements of the application will be met more easily and even previous applications could be cut and pasted to make up new applications.

- **Coordination from one department can save time and increase success**

5. Joint Funding

5.1 Many grant applications require the applicant to provide funding from their own organisation of between 10-35% of the total project costs and this need not mean any additional resources being allocated by the Town Council, but merely the identification of existing budget headings. It means that applications do not have to wait for an allocation of funding before they can be submitted, if existing resources meet the demands of the application

5.2 Joined up funding can also benefit more than one organisation at a time and provide both capital and revenue expenditure toward overall project costs. As an example working with Youth Workers could provide funding for the Town Council to provide a Community Support Officer, but also provide funding to education providers, interpreters and police to provide additional resources such as information sessions, information packs and meetings with community leaders.

5.3 Joint funding from local partners also strengthens cases for funding by showing that there is a real partnership in place and a commitment to drive projects forward.

- **Joint Funding need not involve real money**

6. Achieving a Joined Up Approach

6.1 On occasion it will only require basic information to be passed to the Lead Officer to make them aware that a grant has or is about to be applied for by a department or partnership organisation. However there is a real need for a more in depth explanation of requirements or current undertakings with regard grant or sponsorship applications.

6.2 An advice and application sheet is attached to this document as a suggested way forward which will meet the identified needs at present for information sharing. It will be possible and likely that as we get even more involved with grants and sponsorship that this information sheet may need changes which are not identified as yet.

- **More money for groups means more money for the Town and Town Council**

7. Training

- 7.1** As with all resources held by the Town Council it should employ 'Economy of Effort' when tackling all projects and activities. STC should limit duplication of attendance on training courses or conferences when not justified.
- 7.2** Various funding bodies now offer workshops free of charge or conferences which discuss and address the rolling out of new and existing programmes of funding. However, these are rarely needed and are intended for the novice fund raiser or organisations which have no fund raising experience at all.
- 7.3** The CEO has attended formal training courses in fund raising and obtained certificates in Fund Raising Practice. The CEO is also aware of Funding Codes of Practice and updates annually on new programmes and opportunities for funding. Other members of the Council will receive internal training from the CEO in small grant applications and develop a good level of proficiency across a wide range of funding programmes.
- 7.4** By training dedicated Funding Officers it would be reasonable to assume they can pass on points of interest to the appropriate Officers in identifying funding programmes and in putting together an internal training programme for other members of staff wishing to expand their expertise. This is important when individuals seeking funding and funding courses or conferences may not be aware of the FREE or discounted opportunities available. Add to the price of attending a conference the price of travel, over night accommodation and expenses – can be significant.

Strategy adopted by Swanley Town Council on

**GRANT
INFORMATION SHARE**

Department	
STC Responsible Officer	
Grant / Sponsorship Applied For	
Grant / Sponsor Name	
Grant / Sponsor Contact if applicable	
Amount Requested	
Confirmation Date	
Brief Summary of Request	
Date Submitted	
Date Funding Required By	
CEO Aware	YES / NO
All Senior Officers Aware	YES / NO
Councillors Aware	YES / NO
Name of Project if Applicable	
Comments	