

Agenda Item: 9b

APPENDIX G

Report to: Finance and Audit Committee

Date: 15th July 2026

Subject: Review of the Grants Policy

Summary: The Committee is asked to consider the review of the current Grants and Donation policy and agree how to action the review.

1. Background and objective

- 1.1 The Council discussed at the EGM meeting dated 3rd June 2026 to review the current Grants and Donation Policy and budget.
- 1.2 The current Grants and Donation Policy were last reviewed 11th June 2025, and the grants budget of £42,000 was agreed as part of the budget setting process for 2026-2027, which is split between grants for events £24,000 and grants for other projects £18,000.

2. Purpose of the report

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to discuss point raised at Full Council EGM 3rd June 2026.
- 2.2 To consider the review the current Grant and Donation Policy.
- 2.3 To consider setting up a working party from Finance and Audit committee to fully review the current policy.
- 2.4 Look at whether the yearly events are built into the budget as opposed to being awarded from the grants and donations budget.

3. The Grant and Donation Policy

- 3.1 The current Grant and Donation is included in the agenda papers as an appendix.
- 3.2 The table below is a list of annual events in Bexhill-on-Sea.

Organiser	Event	Grants awarded	Year last awarded
Bexhill 100	Car Show	£500.00	2025-2026
Bexhill Carnival	Annual Carnival	£5,000 per year	2023-2026
Horseshow	Horseshow	£0	N/A
18 Hours	Various annual event	£3,000	Allocated in the budget each year.
Flatlands	Arts Weekender	£2,000-£3,000	2026-2027
White Label CIC	Various annual event	£4,000-£5,000	2026-2027

Points from EGM 3rd June 2026

For discussion – Some of the points below would require a Full Council resolution,

- Creating a separate grants policy for events
- Engagement and Communications committee responsible for awarding Event grants.
- Review of the Grants and Donation policy
- Allocation of funds separate from the grants and donation budget for the support of annual events in the town.

There are several solutions and options available for discussion – There are notes below in relation to the points raised above.

Creating a separate grant policy for events and reviewing the grants and donation policy

As the feeling that this policy is still not fit for purpose, maybe the FAC should create working party to review and put together a policy that is fit for purpose, and whether that's one joint policy or separate for other projects and events.

(NB the current policy was reviewed and amended by FAC on 2 separate occasions June and September 2025).

Engagement and Communications committee responsible for awarding event grants

At present the Terms of Reference for Finance and Audit states –

Consider and determine requests for community and other grants within agreed annual budgets

If this was moved to Engagement and Communications committee it would require a recommendation to Full council to change the terms of reference. This could cause further issues such as applications being duplicated or overlooked. There was a point made about when only a few members review a grant application is this fair and just,

moving it to another committee would not resolve this issue, it would be the same at any committee level. The only way to overcome that would be to move to Full Council.

Allocation of funds separate from the grants and donation budget for the support of annual events in the town.

There is an option to move the set annual events (in the table above) away from Grants and Donation budget and set up individual budgets for them as part of the budget setting process, we do this currently with 18 hours, Bexhill in Bloom and there was a 3-year EMR fund for the Bexhill Carnival. Other councils have done this, and it does work well. They would still provide an application for the year, detailing what they are looking to use the fund on.

The Council could consider awarding grants on an annual basis, which could avoid some of the issues we have come across over the last few years, as it would be promoted, and detailed when the applications would be closed and you could do a full council meeting to review all applications (i.e. November/December for the coming year) and then the grants would all be issued in the April, (you could present them or notify them as part of the ATM/Civic meeting).

4. Considerations

- 4.1 To consider the outcomes from the points raised at EGM 3rd June 2026.
- 4.2 To consider a review of the current Grant and Donation policy
- 4.3 To consider setting up a working party to fully review the policy
- 4.4 To consider allocating funds on a yearly basis for annual events applications as part of the budget instead of awarding from the grant and donation budget.