

## Charitable Donations Policy

Combs Parish Council receives many requests for donations throughout the year from charities and other organizations, most of which are worthy causes. However, the Council obtains its funds for the purposes of its operations for the benefit of the parish and the residents, and not for 'worthy causes'.

On the other hand, many of those organizations do provide some form of benefit to the parish residents as part of the wider community of Suffolk or even East Anglia, for example providing a volunteer emergency or safety-net service whether in medicine (eg Suffolk Accident Rescue Service/EA Air Ambulance), legal advice (eg CAB), planning support (Suffolk Preservation Society) or other matters.

In deciding how to respond to these requests for donations, therefore, the Council should consider the following matters:

1. How local is the organization? Does it service only Combs, or Combs and one or two adjoining parishes?
2. Is the request merely for donations to its general funds, or is there a specific object in mind which would clearly have some benefit to the residents of Combs?
3. Is the organization known to have benefitted Combs residents in the recent past or is it likely to benefit them in the future? Is such benefit widespread in Combs, or only on very rare occasions and to very few people?
4. Is the organization well run financially (as far as can be ascertained), such that the funds donated are unlikely to be squandered? Or is the request for donations known or suspected to be an attempt to save it from impending collapse? Is the organization well funded already, and the request is only a general circular, part of its regular annual campaign?
5. How recent was the last request for donations, and how recently did the Council donate?
6. Is there another organization which does a similar job without recourse to this kind of funding, or is there an organization to which we should belong and pay a verifiable subscription?

There should be a line item in the Council's budget for Charitable Donations, and the sum should not be greater than £1,000. Only in very exceptional circumstances should this budget figure be exceeded in any financial year, even if the projections for the full year indicate a surplus. Any under-spend from this sum should not be carried forward to the next year except where a commitment has been made but has not yet been drawn down.

This policy was adopted by the Parish Council at its meeting on 13 May 2019.