

## **“County Commissioner’s Fund” Hardship Policy**

Version 1.00

December 2017

*This policy provides guidance for the allocation of grants from the County Commissioner’s Fund.*

Durham Scout County has established and administers a grant awarding process to allow qualifying members of the Scout County to take advantage of funding which *“represents funds made available to the County Commissioner to use at his discretion in aiding needs in scouting.”* This fund is known as the County Commissioner’s Fund and is a restricted fund (funds so restricted may only be used for this purpose).

In order to provide a subjective basis for supporting the County Commissioner in making such awards, this policy defines the process and criteria on which County Commissioner’s Fund will operate.

1. Funds for this purpose will be ring fenced in a restricted fund and will be obtained from:
  - a. Grants from external funding and grant awarding bodies, approached by the County Commissioner specifically for this purpose. All grants and awards will be duly acknowledged, and reports provided to grant making bodies as requested.
  - b. Donations made specifically for this purpose.
  - c. Any additional donations and funds raised, so allocated by the County Executive Committee for this purpose.
2. The fund will be administered (monies allocated to the fund and grants approved from the fund) by the County Commissioner, supported by the County Administrator, with the process overseen by the County Executive Committee.
3. Grants of up to 50% of costs will be awarded, subject to the following limitations:
  - a. Applications must be made on the appropriate on-line application form.
  - b. Applications must be made for named individuals, not for sections, groups or districts. Multiple applications may be made for the same purpose (up to six named individuals per application form), each containing the name of each individual, each of whom must be eligible as below.
  - c. Multiple applications may be made for any individual in any calendar year, but no more than £250.00 may be awarded per individual per calendar year. A confidential process must be established to record and track all successful and unsuccessful applications

4. Grants are primarily intended to support young people in scouting, but may also be made to adult volunteers where a grant allows them to support scouting for young people that would otherwise not take place.
5. To receive a grant, members and/or their families should be in a position of:
  - a. Genuine sustained hardship i.e. meeting the qualifying criteria for free school dinners.
  - b. Exceptional short-term hardship (e.g. short-term unemployment, awaiting payment of benefits).
  - c. Hardship combined with multiple siblings also taking part in Scouting activities.

Note that evidence of hardship may be requested, but that all grant applications and payments will be treated as strictly confidential.

6. Grants will be awarded for:
  - a. Camp or event fees (but excluding international camps and events for which funding support is available from the county International Fund).
  - b. The purchase of mandatory uniform items.
  - c. Costs to undertake other scouting activities.

Grants will not be awarded for payment of membership subscriptions as it is expected that local scout groups have policies in place to provide support for payment or subsidy of membership subscriptions.

7. Priority for awarding grants will be for those activities counting towards Top Awards (Chief Scout (Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum and Diamond) Queen's Scout or Duke of Edinburgh (Bronze, Silver or Gold) Awards.
8. Applications for hardship funding must also have been made to the Scout Association (search for "The Benevolent Fund") and any Group or District or local authority sources of hardship funding, where available. Details of all such grants received or applications in progress must be declared when making an application.
9. Payments will only be made to Section, Group or District (including Explorer Scout or Scout Network) bank accounts by BACS transfer. No payment will be made to individuals or to individual leaders.