
Agenda Item:	Annual Grants
Meeting Date:	Monday, 24 November 2025
Contact Officer:	Deputy Town Clerk

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on the dispersal of annual grants for the 2025/26 fiscal year.

Background

In addition to a discretionary grants budget which is dispersed bi-annually in June and January, the Council holds specific budgets for certain groups or organisations in Witney, agreed through budget-setting at the end of the last fiscal year. These organisations are able to request annual amounts for the services or events they provide the town council and the town in general.

Current Situation

The following organisations have specific budgets for annual grants which have not yet been released in the current fiscal year:

1. Citizen's Advice West Oxfordshire

The Council has an allocated budget of £2,000 to provide financial support to the group.

2. Volunteer Link-Up

The Council has an allocated budget of £2,000 to provide financial support to the group. A request has been received to release these funds, accompanied by supporting financial information, which is attached as **Appendix A**.

3. Witney Dementia Alliance

The Council has an allocated budget of £1,000 to provide financial support to this initiative.

4. Witney & District Museum

The Council agreed to allocate a budget of £500 annually (within the discretionary grants fund) to help towards the running of this valuable historical service.

5. Witney Town Band

The Council has an allocated budget of £660 (within the discretionary grants fund) to provide musical accompaniment at civic events in the town throughout the year. *This amount was provided to the Band following the 21 March 2025 meeting (minute no. F139(8)) refers.*

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality – Citizen's Advice provide a free service for all residents, irrespective of their personal circumstances. Likewise, Volunteer Link Up provide services for older and vulnerable residents who may not have access to other opportunities.
- b) Biodiversity – no direct impact from this report.
- c) Crime & Disorder – no direct impact from this report.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency – no direct impact from this report.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

The Council must ensure that funds are officially requested and supporting information provided where necessary. To not do so could incur reputational risk.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

Benefits to Witney's community - young, elderly, disadvantaged and vulnerable people within the town are all covered both independently and jointly by several of the applicants. All groups provide social value for residents including tackling social isolation, providing advice for them to live positive and fulfilling lives and in facilitating community events. In addition, the Museum celebrates, preserves and educates on the historical heritage of the town.

Financial implications

The above annual grants for 2025-26 can be funded from their allocated budget lines:

➤ 4101/407 Citizens Advice West Oxon	£2,000
➤ 4162/407 Volunteer Link Up	£2,000
➤ 4107/407 Witney Dementia Alliance	£1,000
➤ 4100/407 Witney & District Museum	£500

Grants to the Witney Twinning Association, Volunteer Link Up and Witney & District Museum, Oxfordshire Play Association & Witney Carnival can be provided under the General Power of Competence. The power to grant support to Citizens Advice West Oxon can be made under Section 142 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and,

1. Consider approving the award of annual grants to the outlined organisations, subject to a written request and supporting documents where required.