
Agenda Item: Financial Matters referred from Spending Committees

Meeting Date: Monday, 30 March 2026

Contact Officer: Deputy Town Clerk

Background

It is the Council's usual practice that all matters discussed, and recommendations made by spending Committees which have financial implications, are reported to this committee.

Following a resolution of Full Council on 6 October (Minute No. 581 refers), this report provides a summary of all spending committee decisions, both approved and declined, to ensure comprehensive and transparent scrutiny by this Committee which holds overall responsibility for the Council's financial management and oversight of budgetary decisions.

Current Situation

Parks & Recreation Committee – 9 March 2026

PR124 – The Leys/Courtside Hub. The Committee recommended that, authority be delegated to the Town Clerk, in conjunction with the Head of Estates & Operations, to release the Town Council's £250k funding contribution for the Leys Courtside Hub project in line with the agreed project milestones.

Halls Cemeteries & Allotments Committee – 16 March 2026

H139 – Corn Exchange Business Report. The Committee recommended that the Deputy Town Clerk progresses the allocation of the Council's £1,000 grant to West Oxfordshire Performing Arts Foundation and how this would be used to support a bursary award.

H140 – Proposal to improve the Bin Storage Area at Thorney Leys. The Committee recommended that progression of the improvements be delegated to officers to implement any necessary actions and due diligence (including mitigating against new and ongoing costs to Witney Town Council).

Stronger Communities Committee – 23 March 2026

Communications Report – The Committee recommended that the fees for the Spring newsletter delivery be reviewed by the Deputy Town Clerk before payment.

Vevox Polling Platform – The Committee noted that the Council had procured this engagement platform which had been used successfully at the Annual Town Meeting from existing budgets.

Community Engagement Report. The Committee recommended that the Council did not budget towards promotion of the Great British Spring Clean week in 2027.

Town Twinning Visit. The Committee recommended that the Council should provide a small civic drinks reception at the Corn Exchange to welcome Witney's twinned town visitors on 1st May 2026. Cost unknown but will be limited and from existing budgets.

Witney: Past, Present & Future WP. The Committee endorsed the plans (and implicated expenses) of St George's Day events on 23 and 26 April 2026.

Witney Town Centre Improvements. The Committee noted a response from the District Council concerning underspent Section 106 allocations for Witney Town Centre and were advised any suggestions from the Town Council would need to be fully costed and planned before they would be considered. The Committee agreed to defer this to the re-formed Witney Town Centre Forum.

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 – Covered in specific project reports.
- b) Biodiversity – Covered in specific project reports.
- c) Crime & Disorder – Covered in specific project reports.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency - Covered in specific project reports.

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.

All the Council's Committees receive financial reports to conduct its checks and balances, and consideration is given to budgets and funding availability when agreeing expenditure.

Social Value

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

The benefits of these items should be considered at the time of recommendation.

Financial implications

The report forms part of the Council's mechanisms for budgetary control. Specific financial implications are detailed.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and,

1. Consider agreeing the recommendations of the spending committees as detailed above.