

POLICY, GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Date: Monday, 18 July 2022

Title: Grants & Subsidised Lettings

Contact Officer: Deputy Town Clerk – Adam Clapton

Background

The budget for general grants (4100/407) for the financial year, 2022-23, budget cycle is £20,000.

The budget for subsidised lettings (4110/407) for the financial year, 2022-23, budget cycle is £1,800.

Grants

The following application for a grant was received:

1. Witney Voice Box Choir

As a benefit to the community, this request for £100 was considered by the Stronger Communities Committee at its meeting on 11 July.

Recommended:

1. That, the request for £100 be granted from 4100/407 and,
2. That the grant be awarded under the General Power of Competence and that the recipient be asked to acknowledge the Council's financial contribution in their promotional literature.

Subsidised Letting Applications

The following application for subsidised letting of the Council's premises has been received: -

1. White Feather Spiritualist Church

A request for £58.50 towards hire of the Gallery Room, Corn Exchange in May as all proceeds from 2 charity evenings were donated to the Ukraine Disasters Emergency Committee.

Members should also note the following recommendation of the Parks & Recreation Committee on 4 July 2022.

2. Got2b CIC

A request to hold summer activities on Burwell Recreation Ground and The Leys through the summer. The cost for those events and staffing totalling £368.80

Recommended:

1. That, the request for use on town council land be approved and,
2. That, the incurred cost be covered from existing subsidised hire budget 4110/407.

Members should also note the charity Anchora, who were previously awarded £215 towards subsidised letting of the Corn Exchange have postponed their booking. The funds will remain allocated, should this be arranged within the current financial year.

Additional Financial Requests & MattersYouth Services Grant 2021-22

Members will recall that Oxfordshire Music & Arts Trust (OXMAT) was awarded £7,668 from this fund in the previous year towards,

‘A 6-month youth program (December to June), including 20 tutorial/band sessions (for up to 20 bands/individuals), a Bandcamp (for up to 40 participants) during Easter 2022, a showcase in May 2022, culminating in a youth festival in June 2022.

This programme will be delivered by local music tutors, many of whom have been impacted by Covid restrictions over the last 2 years. It will be open to all young people, but the programme will actively seek referrals from local youth organisations for individuals who would otherwise be excluded due to financial, social, physical, learning, or geographical barriers.

The festival will provide an opportunity to celebrate young people and for local youth organisations to showcase their work and connect with the community.’

Only half of the awarded amount has been paid and the OXMAT have requested that the remaining £3,834 is released to hold a winter festival, possibly at the Corn Exchange. Correspondence attached as an Appendix to this report.

Environmental impact

There is no known environmental impact.

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 has a policy and criteria for which it uses to award its grants to ensure public funds are allocated and used appropriately.

The Council has the General Power of Competence (GPC) which generally discretionary grants are awarded under.

The Committee should note the information above regarding funding to churches and ecclesiastical charities. There is a risk that any award will be queried by the auditor, but by not awarding the Council runs the risk of not helping this community facility.

Financial implications

As outlined in the report and grant applications.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note this report and;

1. Note the recommendations of the Parks & Recreation/Stronger Communities Committees in relation to requests from Witney Voice Box Choir and Got2b CIC.
2. Consider the subsidised letting request from the White Feather Spiritualist Church
3. Consider the request from OXMAT to draw upon the remaining amount of awarded Youth Funding from 2021-22.