



Meeting	Winchester Town Forum
Date and Time	Monday, 11th November, 2024 at 6.30 pm.
Venue	Walton Suite, Winchester Guildhall and streamed live on YouTube at www.youtube.com/winchestercc

Note: This meeting is being held in person at the location specified above. Members of the public should note that a live video feed of the meeting will be available from the council's YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/winchestercc) during the meeting.

A limited number of seats will be made available at the above named location however attendance must be notified to the council at least 3 working days before the meeting. Please note that priority will be given to those wishing to attend and address the meeting over those wishing to attend and observe.

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies**
To record the names of apologies given
- 2. Disclosures of Interests**
To receive any disclosure of interests from Members and Officers in matters to be discussed.
Note: Councillors are reminded of their obligations to declare disclosable pecuniary interests, personal and/or prejudicial interests in accordance with legislation and the Council's Code of Conduct.
If you require advice, please contact the appropriate Democratic Services Officer, prior to the meeting.
- 3. Chairperson's Announcements**
- 4. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 September 2024 (Pages 5 - 12)**
That the minutes of the meeting be signed as a correct record.
- 5. Public Participation**



To receive and note the questions asked and statements made from members of the public on issues relating to the responsibility of this Forum.

Members of the public and visiting councillors may speak at the Forum, provided they have registered to speak three working days in advance. Please contact Democratic Services **by 5pm on Tuesday, 5 November 2024** via democracy@winchester.gov.uk or (01962) 848 264 to register to speak and for further details.

6. **Town Forum Grants Programme Update (WTF332)** (Pages 13 - 48)
7. **Winchester Town Account Medium Term Financial Position (Draft Budget Options) (WTF333)** (Pages 49 - 58)
8. **Open Spaces and Grounds Maintenance - IDV Contract discussion (Verbal Update)**
9. **Informal Group - Verbal Update**
Optional: The Chairs of any of the informal groups may briefly update the Forum on any recent developments from their group.
10. **Work Programme 2024/25** (Pages 59 - 62)
To note the current version of the Work Programme for 2024/25.

Laura Taylor
Chief Executive

All of the Council's publicly available agendas, reports and minutes are available to view and download from the Council's [Website](#) and are also open to inspection at the offices of the council. As part of our drive to minimise our use of paper we do not provide paper copies of the full agenda pack at meetings. We do however, provide a number of copies of the agenda front sheet at the meeting which contains the QR Code opposite. Scanning this code enables members of the public to easily access all of the meeting papers on their own electronic device. Please hold your device's camera or QR code App over the QR Code so that it's clearly visible within your screen and you will be redirected to the agenda pack



31 October 2024

Agenda Contact: Claire Buchanan, Senior Democratic Services Officer
Tel: 01962 848 438 Email: cbuchanan@winchester.gov.uk

**With the exception of exempt items, Agenda, reports and previous minutes are available on the Council's [Website](#)*

MEMBERSHIP

Chairperson: Reach (Liberal Democrats)

Vice-Chairperson: Batho (Liberal Democrats)

Liberal Democrats

Aron
Becker
Eve
Learney
Morris
Murphy
Scott
Tippett-Cooper
Thompson
Tod
Westwood
Wise

Conservatives

Quorum = 5 members

The two County Council Members representing the Winchester Town area are invited as observers.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A public question and comment session is available at 6.30pm for a 15 minute period. There are a few limitations on the questions you can ask. These mainly relate to current applications (including grants), personal cases and confidential matters.

To reserve your place to speak, you are asked to register with Democratic Services three clear working days prior to the meeting –Please contact Democratic Services via democracy@winchester.gov.uk or (01962) 848 264 to register to speak and for further details.

VOTING

- apart from the Chairperson, every Member has one vote when a matter before the meeting requires a decision.
- in the event of an equality of votes, the Chairperson may exercise a casting vote and that vote may be exercised in any way seen fit.
- a Member may abstain from voting, or vote differently from how they may have indicated during the debate, without further explanation.

The way each Member voted will not be recorded in the minutes, unless a motion to have a Recorded Vote has been passed.

Disabled Access

Disabled access is normally available, but please phone Democratic Services on 01962 848 264 or email democracy@winchester.gov.uk three clear working days prior to the meeting to ensure that the necessary arrangements are in place.

FILMING AND BROADCAST NOTIFICATION

This meeting will be recorded and broadcast live from the Council's YouTube channel. The meeting may also be recorded and broadcast by the press and members of the public – please see the Access to Information Procedure Rules within the Council's Constitution for further information, which is available to view on the [Council's website](#). Please note that the video recording is subtitled, but you may have to enable your device to see them (advice on how to do this is on the meeting page).

Public Document Pack Agenda Item 4

WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM

Thursday, 12 September 2024

Attendance:

Councillors

Reach (Chairperson)

Aron	Murphy (for items 1-8)
Batho (except for Item 8)	Scott
Becker	Thompson
Eve	Tod
Learney	Tippett-Cooper
Morris	Wise

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillor Cramoysan

[Full video recording](#)

1. **APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON FOR THE 2024/25 MUNICIPAL YEAR**

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Reach be elected Chairperson and Councillor Batho be appointed Vice-Chairperson for the 2024/25 municipal year.

2. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies of absence were received from Councillor Westwood.

3. **DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS**

Councillor Batho declared a disclosable pecuniary interest concerning agenda item 8 (Update from Stagecoach) as an employee of Stagecoach. He left the room during the consideration of this item taking no part in the discussion thereon.

Councillor Aron declare a personal (but not prejudicial) interest concerning any matters relating to Stanmore Community Association due to her role as Chair of Trustees.

Councillor Tod declared a personal (but non prejudicial) interest concerning agenda items that may be related to his role as a County Councillor.

4. **CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairperson announced that this was the first meeting for the 2024/25 municipal year which was taking place later than expected due to the General Election held in July.

The Chairperson made reference to concerns expressed regarding the facial recognition trial that was taking place in the town centre and other areas of the district. He suggested that members and residents raise their views with Hampshire Constabulary who were running a consultation on their website regarding the trial.

5. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 11 MARCH 2024**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 March 2024 be approved and adopted.

6. **TO NOTE THE DATE AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE FORUM AS SET OUT BELOW:**

RESOLVED:

That the date and times of future meetings for 2024/25, as set out on the agenda, be noted.

7. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Councillor Cramoysan spoke during item 8 (Update from Stagecoach) and a summary of his comments are set out under the relevant minute below.

8. **UPDATE FROM STAGECOACH (VERBAL UPDATE)**

Councillor Cramoysan addressed the committee on this item.

In summary, Councillor Cramoysan made reference to the following points:

- The dependence of residents in The Worthys to access city centre amenities and the need for reliable and frequent bus network links to ensure accessibility.
- Referred to the Number 6 bus (formerly known as The Spring), which was the primary service serving the residents of Kings Worthy and stated that since

the Summer, regular bus users had reported improvements to the punctuality of the service.

- Would welcome a two-way dialogue approach to help enforce messaging with the local community to manage expectations and establish how best to assist Stagecoach in the continued delivery of punctual bus services.

The matters raised by Councillor Cramoysan were addressed during the discussion of the item.

The Chairperson and the Head of Programme: Place welcomed James O'Neill, Commercial Director for Stagecoach South to the meeting who provided an update from Stagecoach as the largest bus operator in the area. The update included details of the following:

- Network performance and focussed changes to routes over the evenings and weekends.
- Changes to demand and frequency of bus services during the day in the working week.
- Investment in longer distance service routes.
- The use of HVO fuel in local business and the cost implications of this.
- An overview of the current position including passenger numbers, differences in the way people travel and trends pre and post pandemic.
- The background to the most recent changes including Hampshire Bus Service Improvement Plans (BSIP) and Park and Ride.
- Future challenges and opportunities including plans for the long-term fleet such as seeking electrification of the fleet.

The committee proceeded to ask questions and comment on the following matters which were responded to by James O'Neill and the Head of Programme: Place.

- (a) Opportunities to work collaboratively with Stagecoach and Hampshire County Council to ensure the success of the bus network in the city centre going forward.
- (b) Targets to change and modernise the fleet to reduce the use of diesel buses, improve emissions and work towards electrification.
- (c) Advice, direction and signage to keep residents aware of the cancellation of services and assistance for elderly and vulnerable residents accessing the Stagecoach app on mobile devices.
- (d) Plans to introduce new bus routes to accommodate areas where there were growth areas of development.
- (e) The number of users required to make a service route viable.
- (f) Concessionary rates, fare caps and the return rate from concessionary pass holders and fare payers.
- (g) The fare cap and transferrable tickets.
- (h) Reviews of financially sustainable routes.
- (i) Commercial viability.
- (j) Planned works for the maintenance and repair of the bus station.
- (k) Longer distance routes in the southern parishes.
- (l) Future bus development and dialogue with Stagecoach to feed into the planning process.

- (m) Transport mitigation and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payments to support bus services.
- (n) The retention of bus services at Teg Down.
- (o) Public notification of changes to bus services. The need to regularly update bus timetables and issue timely notifications of changes to bus schedules.

At the conclusion of debate, the forum thanked James O'Neill for attending the meeting to provide an informative update and welcomed further updates from Stagecoach in the future.

RESOLVED:

That the update be received, and the comments raised by the committee, as summarised above, be noted.

9. **WINCHESTER TOWN ACCOUNT FINANCIAL PLANNING 2024/25 (WTF331)**

The Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency introduced the report in her capacity as Chair of the Town Accounts Informal Group which outlined the forums medium term financial projections to assist the forum with looking at any changes the forum may wish to make in next year's budget which would be drawn up in the coming months. Councillor Learney drew members' attention to the projections, as set out in Appendix 1. It was noted that the increase in precept and the reprofiling of play area expenditure had helped to stabilise the budget, with reserves staying marginally above the recommended level in the medium term.

However, it was emphasised that there were pressures on the budget over the next few years not indicated in the figures, with increases to the cost of building works on a number of projects including the Pavilion and works connected to the park plan at River Park, with contract renewal likely to increase costs of looking after parks, sports facilities and public conveniences. Unlike Parish Council's the town was capped with limited scope for increasing the precept, therefore savings would need to be sought with spending on cemeteries and grounds maintenance currently under review.

An additional source of finance available for capital expenditure was the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The report set out the balance and the funds already allocated to town forum and community projects and consideration could be given to any projects that may be required in high pressured areas of development.

The Finance Manager (Strategic Finance) provided an update of the current financial position of the Winchester Town Account and financial projections over the medium and long term to support the development of a refreshed financial strategy with final budget recommendations due for consideration by Town Forum in January 2025, prior to final approval by Cabinet and Council. In addition, he stated that feedback from the Winchester Town Forum Accounts Informal Group had been incorporated within this report and that a further report

on the budget options would come forward for consideration by the Town Forum at its meeting on 11 November 2024.

The forum proceeded to ask questions and comment on the following matters which were responded to by the Cabinet Member and the Finance Manager (Strategic Finance).

- (a) The impact of changes to inflation rates on the town account budget and reserves.
- (b) The responsibility and scale of work undertaken on bus shelter maintenance and bus shelter advertising contracts.
- (c) Opportunities for income generation from external hire and use of sport facilities and community use of facilities.
- (d) The allocation of CIL funding and the process to secure future CIL funding for projects.

At the conclusion of debate, the forum commended the officers and the Town Accounts Informal Group for their prudent financial management set out within the report.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the financial projections, set out in Appendix 1 of the report be noted and the budget timetable for 2025/26, be agreed.

10. **INFORMAL GROUP - VERBAL UPDATE**

The Forum received individual updates from the Chairpersons of various Town Informal Groups, where updates had not already been provided within the items considered above. Each summarised the work that had been carried out by the respective groups over the previous two-month period.

Councillor Batho – Parks and Recreation Informal Group

Progress updates from the group included:

- (i) The KGV Pavilion has been formally handed over with work completed. Redevelopment of the play area and MUGA was underway with the MUGA being repainted to provide a clear surface for activities. A pathway was due to be installed from the Garrison Ground to the MUGA to complete works in this area.
- (ii) A contractor has been appointed to complete works to Talavera Road play area to bring this facility back in use, with works due to commence mid-November.
- (iii) Remedial works were being undertaken at Abbey Gardens play area with the swing repairs due to be completed by the end of September.
- (iv) An update on River Park Park Plan was available on the council's website.

RESOLVED:

That the update received from the Town Informal Group, be noted.

11. **TOWN FORUM INFORMAL GROUP APPOINTMENTS AND WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2024/25 (WTF330)**

The Forum considered the work programme and the proposed changes to the Winchester Town Informal Groups for 2024/25, as set out in the report and its appendices.

RESOLVED:

1. That the items listed in Appendix 1 and 2 of the report be noted, the 2024/25 work programme be approved and authority be delegated to the Strategic Director, in consultation with the Chairperson, to further set the detailed work programme for the municipal year.
2. That the changes to the Informal Groups set out in paragraph 11.3 of the report be approved and appointed for 2024/25 as set out in Appendix 3 to the report.
3. That the membership of the Forum's informal groups for 2024/25 be approved as stated above and set out below:
 - (i) Winchester Town Forum (Streets and Spaces) Informal Group
Members: Cllrs: Wise (Ch), Batho, Learney, Tod, Thompson and Westwood
Lead Officer: C Williams
 - (ii) Winchester Town Forum (Climate and Open Spaces) Informal Group
Members: Cllrs: Batho (Ch), Becker, Learney and Tippet-Cooper
Lead Officer: R Smith
 - (iii) Winchester Town Forum (Account) Informal Group
Members: Cllrs: Learney (Ch), Reach, Tod and Wise
Lead Officer: D Kennedy
 - (iv) Winchester Town Forum (Culture) Informal Group
Members: Cllrs: Tippet-Cooper (Ch), Eve, Morris, Thompson and Westwood
Lead Officer: A Gostelow
 - (v) Winchester Town Forum (Grants and Community Empowerment) Informal Group

Members: Cllrs: Batho (Ch), Becker and Scott
Lead Officer: S Lincoln

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and concluded at 7.55 pm

Chairperson

This page is intentionally left blank

REPORT TITLE: TOWN FORUM GRANT PROGRAMME UPDATE

11 NOVEMBER 2024

REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF TOWN FORUM: COUNCILLOR MARK REACH

Contact Officer: Melissa Fletcher Tel No: 01962 848 492 Email
mfletcher@winchester.gov.uk

WARD(S): TOWN WARDS

PURPOSE

The Town Forum operated a community grants programme in 2023/24 which included contributions to core funded organisations, a Project Grant scheme and a Small Grant scheme. This paper reports on the grants awarded and outcomes achieved during 2023/24 and the programme for 2024/25 delivery.

This paper also outlines the options for making the £10,000 baseline reduction to the total town grants budget outlined in the Mid Term Financial Projections for 2025/26 and the process for how further reductions will be achieved in 2026/27.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Town Forum notes:

1. The achievements and successes of the Small Grant and Project Grant programmes in 2023-24;
2. The allocated grant budget of £30k for other grants: small/project grants in 2024/25 is currently open for application and is used to fund the new Winchester City Community grants scheme, with criteria developed to include Town Vision outcomes.

3. The important role of members in supporting the community engagement process and encouraging grant applications to the new Winchester City Communities scheme;
4. The impending review of the overall council community grants programme as part of TC25, the outcome of which will feed into the proposal to address budget reductions to the Town Forum grants budget in 2025/26 and 2026/27; and
5. That the Corporate Head of Economy and Community has the delegated authority to approve the grant criteria and allocations, in consultation with the Winchester Town Forum (Grants and Community Empowerment) Informal Group, Chair of the Town Forum and the Cabinet Member for Community and Engagement.

That Town Forum approves:

1. That the £10,000 budget saving for 2025/26 is achieved by a reduction of £5,000 to the Winchester City Community grant scheme and a reduction of £2,500 each in core grant contribution to Citizens Advice and Play to the Crowd.

IMPLICATIONS:1. COUNCIL PLAN OUTCOME

1.1. Tackling the Climate Emergency and Creating a Greener District

The Winchester City Community grant scheme supports this outcome through the active travel priority.

1.2. Homes for all

Core funding provided to Citizen Advice supports this outcome.

1.3. Vibrant Local Economy

Core funding provided to Play to the Crowd addresses this priority.

1.4. Living Well

The Winchester City Community grant scheme supports this outcome through funding projects and activities which strengthen local communities.

Core funding provided to Citizens Advice Winchester addresses this priority

1.5. Your Services, Your Voice

The funding programmes aim to be open, transparent and inclusive. Applicants to the Winchester City Community grant scheme are invited to attend a panel meeting with members to discuss their application.

2. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

2.1. The Small Grant and Project Grant schemes (renamed Winchester City Community grants) form part of the Town Forum grant budget for 24/25, and was reduced by £10,000 for this financial year as detailed in paper WTF321. As a result, the grant budget is currently £70,000.

2.2. The Town Forum considered the town account budget in its mid-term financial projections on 12 September 2024 (WTF331), which included further reductions in the grants and Vision delivery budget during the period to 28/29.

2.3. Further reductions of £10,000 each year are required in 25/26 and 26/27 and this paper recommends how the 2025/26 reduction should be achieved. A summary is given in the table below and further detail provided elsewhere in the report at paragraph 11.11

FUND	23/24 Budget	24/25 Budget	25/26 Budget	26/27 Budget
Strategic Fund:				
– Citizens Advice Winchester District	£20,000	£20,000	£17,500	TBC
– Play to the Crowd	£20,000	£20,000	£17,500	TBC
Winchester City Community grants:				
– Project Grant scheme	£33,000	£30,000	£25,000	TBC
– Small Grant scheme	£7,000			
TOTAL	£80,000	£70,000	£60,000	£50,000

3. LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 gives the Council a general power of competence, to enter into a grant agreement provided there is good reason to do so. Once a decision is made, the authority to draft and seal the agreement (where required) is under the scheme of delegation to Service Lead – Legal in Part 3.4 of the Council Constitution.
- 3.2. Checks are in place to ensure that the funds are used for the purpose for which they were awarded. Grant agreements include clawback clauses and safeguards include grant monitoring/reporting and for larger grants, evidence of expenditure.
- 3.3. There are no procurement implications as a result of these recommendations, however seeking value for money is still relevant.

4. WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. There are no workforce implications as these programmes are managed within the existing staff resources.

5. PROPERTY AND ASSET IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. None.

6. CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

2023/24 Grant fund information and promotion

- 6.1. Information on the 23/24 grants programme was distributed to members via the DSU e-newsletter in May 2023 following the local elections. In addition, two webinars were held for members in June 2023 to give an overview of the 23/24 grants programme.

- 6.2. Four Town Forum grants panels were conducted between September 2023 and March 2024, bringing together applicants and members of the Winchester Town Forum (Town Vision) Informal Group.
- 6.3. Seven grant webinars/surgeries were held during the year 23/24 to inform potential applicants about community grants (three in-person and four on-line).
- 6.4. An impact report was produced during 23/24 on the previous year's community grant programme (**Appendix 3**). This included Town Forum grants awarded and was distributed widely and well received in the local press including the BBC [Winchester City Council awards charities thousands in funding - BBC News](#).
- 6.5. There is an ongoing programme of publicity for the council's community grants programme, including those funded by the Town Forum, such as promotion of schemes in newsletters, social media and at funding events.

Review of the funding programme for 2024/25

- 6.6. Following the recommendation made at Town Forum 11 March 2024 which supported the revision of grant criteria to include Town Vision outcomes (WTF329), the Winchester Town Forum (Town Vision) Informal Group were consulted on a proposal to replace Town Forum small grants and project grants with a new Winchester City Community grant scheme in 2024/25.
- 6.7. The new scheme launched on 1 August 2024 and all Town Forum members were informed of the new scheme via DSU and email. An online briefing for members was held in September 2024 to ensure they are well equipped to help encourage applications from their wards.
- 6.8. An online seminar is planned for November 2024 to support emerging and new groups with setting up a community/volunteer group and applying for funding. Other local groups who have recently gone through this process will be on hand to offer advice based on their experiences.

Consultation on options for savings

- 6.9. The proposal was discussed with the Town Forum (Town Vision) Informal Group on 16 October 2024 and the Winchester Town Accounts informal group on 17 October 2024.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1. Projects that have negative or detrimental impact on the environment, or are counter to the Council's declaration of a climate emergency, will not receive council grant support.

8. PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

- 8.1. The council has a duty of care under the Public Sector Equality Act to consider the impact of the decision on vulnerable groups/persons. An Equality Impact Assessment is attached in **Appendix 2**.
- 8.2. The modest reduction in core funding to Citizens Advice could have the potential to impact those service users with disabilities, older people and or parents. However, as the reduction is a small proportion of the funding we provide it is unlikely to result in the alteration of support being provided. Likewise, similarly with the modest reduction to Play to the Crowd
- 8.3. Applicants are asked to explain how they ensure their activities and services are open and inclusive when they apply for a grant. Further consideration takes place during grant panel meetings and at the point of the decision making. Successful grant holders are required to report back through an end-of-grant report on whether their activities were directed at beneficiaries from groups with protected characteristics, and how they have insured that all sections of the community could benefit from the services/activities provided by the grant

9. DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 9.1. Grant applications are managed through a bespoke system called Flexigrant, which has been designed with in-built data controls that are in line with data protection legislation.

10. RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Mitigation	Opportunities
Financial Exposure Inability to meet grant commitments.	Winchester City Community grant scheme is one-off funding with no further commitment and awards only made within budgetary framework. Core grants are included within the mid-term financial strategy.	
Exposure to challenge Challenge of decision to award (or not) fund.	Clear and transparent assessment process with defined criteria. Dialogue with applicants to support organisations through the process.	Signposting to alternative funding sources increases potential to lever in funding to sustain services.

Risk	Mitigation	Opportunities
<p>Innovation Risk that organisations are not innovative with the funding provided.</p>	<p>Innovation encouraged through dialogue at grant panel meetings. Advice offered to inspire new and emerging groups to apply for funding for new initiatives.</p>	<p>Grass roots organisations often identify innovative solutions to localised issues.</p>
<p>Reputation Council funds an organisation or activity which is not well received by certain members of the community.</p>	<p>Criteria are set for the grant programmes to exclude funding of activities which are of a wholly and exclusively political or religious nature, or organisations supporting political activism.</p> <p>Every group or organisation must have a constitution or documentation which includes a formal decision-making process and aims that are acceptable to Winchester City Council.</p>	<p>Endorsement of worthwhile projects enhances the council's reputation.</p>
<p>Achievement of outcome Funding does not result in expected outcomes that align with council criteria and priorities.</p>	<p>Clear application criteria, grant allocation process and monitoring will ensure grant scheme outcomes are met.</p>	<p>Many grants generate additional social value over and above the core intended outcome.</p>

Property		
Community Support Local organisations and communities do not respond to the grant opportunities.	Provide support to applicants and extensively promote the grants. Allow flexibility in allocation of funds between different grant programmes.	Member involvement to help promote grant schemes.
Community opposition to decisions that are made	Clear and transparent grant processes.	
Timescales		
Project capacity		
Other		

11. SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

Small Grant and Project Grant schemes in 2023/24

- 11.1. Grant applications received and awarded from the Town Forum Small Grant and Project Grant budgets in 2023/24 are published on the council's website here: [Voluntary and Community Grants Awarded - Winchester City Council](#).

Appendix 1 summarises some of the feedback received from grant recipients. In summary:

FUND:	23/24 Budget	23/24 Actual Awards
Strategic Fund:		
Citizens Advice Winchester District	£20,000	£20,000
Play to the Crowd	£20,000	£20,000
Project Grants	£33,000	£15,718
Small grant programme	£7,000	£9,094
TOTAL	£80,000	£64,812

- 11.2. The Town Forum Small Grant scheme received applications from a variety of organisations across all five town wards. The number of applications was higher than in 22/23, with 22 applications received and 15 grants awarded totalling £9,094. The seven unsuccessful applications did not meet the eligibility criteria so could not be considered.
- 11.3. Despite holding two rounds of the Project Grant scheme, applications were lower than expected in 23/24. Eight applications were received in total and five awarded, totalling £15,718, with the remaining three applications not meeting the eligibility criteria.

- 11.4. A summary of the 2023/24 allocations compared to the previous years is given in the table below.

	2022/23	2023/24
Small grants		
Number of applications	15	22
Number of awards	12	15
Total value of awards	£10,800	£9,094
Project Grants		
Number of applications	8	8
Number of awards	6	5
Total value of awards	£26,510	£15,718

Contribution to Strategic Funded organisations 2023/24

- 11.5. Winchester Town Forum made a £20,000 contribution to each of the Strategic Fund core grants to Play to the Crowd and Citizens Advice in 2023/24. These grants are monitored through submission of six and twelve-month reports to update on achievement of expected outcomes, and annual review meetings involving officers and members. Highlights for the work that these core grants enabled are given below:

a) Citizens Advice

The £20,000 Town contribution to Citizen Advice's Strategic Fund grant of £195,000 for 2023/24 enabled continuation of their vital service delivery. An increased number of clients were supported compared to previous years and a continued rise in cost-of-living issues experienced, which was recognised through additional council funding. Income gained for clients across the whole services was £2,560,041, due in part to an increase in applications for Personal Independence Payments (PIP), one of the most time-consuming areas of advice outside debt casework.

Metric	22/23	23/24
Number of advice issues	16,602	18,062
Income gain for clients	£1,320,625	£2,560,041
Number of clients supported (district-wide)	5,321	5,948
Number of people helped with financial advice	2,897	2,546
Number of people supported with debt	678	728

b) Play to the Crowd

The £20,000 Town contribution to Play to the Crowd's Strategic Fund grant of £147,000 for 2023/24 enabled people to connect with and participate in live performance. This was a record year with 342

performances at the theatre, including 54 community performances enabling nearly 20 local organisations to present on a professional stage. Approximately 150 performances were staged as part of Hat Fair and over 250 participatory activity sessions were held as part of Playmakers – including in Wickham and South Wonston.

Metric	22/23			23/24		
	Town	Wider district	Total	Town	Wider district	Total
Winchester district residents						
People engaged with Theatre Royal performances	29,578	25,641	55,219	30,955	27,434	58,389
People engaged with Hat Fair performances	45,871	15,749	61,620	37,140	13,050	50,190
Number of participants in Playmakers activities including youth theatre	6,075	1,888	7,963	4,805	2,793	7,598
Average ticket revenue			£17.19			£17.41

Community Grants programme for 2024/25

- 11.6. The Town Forum budget for 2024/25 (WTF328) includes continued contribution of £40,000 to the Strategic Fund 2022-2025 grants for the final year of the current three-year funding agreement:
- a) Citizens Advice Winchester - £20,000
 - b) Play to the Crowd - £20,000
- 11.7. The 2024/25 budget for small/project grants was reduced by £10,000 to £30,000, which will fund the new Winchester City Community grant scheme for grants of £500 - £3,000. This funding scheme is designed to provide small, one-off grants to local groups and organisations working in the city of Winchester, empowering them to make improvements to their local community or neighbourhood in line with Town Vision outcomes. Grants are available for projects that help to bring communities together and provide activities that enrich local life for people living in the city, as defined by the Winchester town wards.

- a) This scheme opened on 1 August 2024 and will remain open until the budget is fully allocated, or 28 February 2025, whichever is sooner.
- b) Eligible applicants will be invited to attend a brief grant panel including members from the relevant ward and the Chairs of the Town Forum and the Grants and Community Empowerment Informal Group.
- c) The first grant panel of the year will be held in Autumn 2024.

TC25 grant review and 2025/26 Town Account forecast

11.8. The Town Forum noted the Mid Term Financial Projections on 12 September 2024 (WTF331) which detailed further reductions over future financial years in the grants and Vision delivery budget:

- a) Reduction of £10,000 for the year of 2025/26 to leave a budget of £60,000
- b) Reduction of £10,000 for the year of 2026/27 to leave a budget of £50,000

11.9. There are options as to how the £10,000 reduction in grant budget is achieved for 2025/26. These are set out in the table below and can be summarised as follows:

- a) TF1 – A reduction of £10,000 to the Winchester City Community grant scheme for grants of £500 - £3,000.
- b) TF2 - A reduction of £5,000 to the Winchester City Community grant scheme for grants of £500 - £3,000, plus a reduction of £2,500 each in core grant contribution to Citizens Advice and Play to the Crowd.
- c) TF3 - A reduction of £5,000 each in core grant contribution to Citizens Advice and Play to the Crowd.

	GF: 24/25	TF: 24/25	TF1: 25/26	TF2: 25/26	TF3: 25/26
Citizens Advice	175,000	20,000	20,000	17,500	15,000
Play to the Crowd	127,000	20,000	20,000	17,500	15,000
Other grants		30,000	20,000	25,000	30,000
Total	302,000	70,000	60,000	60,000	60,000

11.10. It is recommended that the reduction of £10,000 for the year of 2025/26 will be achieved through a reduction of £5,000 to the Winchester City Community grant scheme for grants of £500 - £3,000, plus a reduction of £2,500 each in core grant contribution to Citizens Advice and Play to the Crowd (option TF2 in the table above).

12. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

12.1. Alternative options exist for reducing the budget by £10,000 in 2025/26 shown as options TF1 and TF3 in the table, with either the small grants or the core funding grants taking the full reduction. A review of the district-wide community grant programme is currently in progress and will result in changes to core funding arrangements, but possibly not until 2026/27. The Town Forum should consider its core funding contributions further in light of any changes to the General Fund programme in due course, however for 25/26 it is recommended to spread the reduction across all recipients so options TF1 and TF3 are discounted at this time.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Committee Reports:-

[WTF331 – 12 September 2024: Winchester Town Account Financial Planning 2024-25.pdf](#)

[WTF324 – 8 November 2023: Winchester Town Account Medium Term Financial Position Draft budget options.pdf](#)

[WTF321 – 14 September 2023: Town Grants Programme.pdf \(winchester.gov.uk\)](#)

[WTF314 - 26 January 2023: Winchester Town Account Budget for 2023/24 \(to be recommended to Cabinet\)](#)

Other Background Documents:-

None

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1: Town Forum small/project grants report feedback 2023/24

Appendix 2: Equality impact assessment

Appendix 3: Community Grants Programme 2022/23 Impact Report

WTF332 Appendix 1: Town Forum Small Grants/Project Grants Feedback 2023/2024

Platform 4



Winchester voices were heard by over 2,000 people for this project and we were even featured on Radio 4's Today programme - we are thrilled at its success."

With the small grant Platform 4 were able to purchase a computer which allowed the use of digital projections for their project TRIFFIDS! The equipment was also lent to Winnall Rock School so that they could create their own digital projections for shows and showcases in 2024.

The voices of Winchester Highcliffe Allotment holders were embedded in the TRIFFIDS! Show and the computer supported the creative delivery of this project.

Friends of St Giles Hill Park



The WCC grant enabled the purchase of tools, safety equipment and a store for the equipment used to make St Giles Hill Park more attractive to users and visitors. Routes, pathways and views have been improved along with the biodiversity by removing invasive planting and helping the more desired range of planting to thrive.



New planting undertaken by the volunteers and funded by WCC will add to the biodiversity. Habitat improvement have been made using arisings on site.

Winchester and District Allotment Holders

"The grant has enabled us to create a community space which has brought people together. "



The allotment Society decided to make improvements to their portacabin and transform it into a community hub. The grant was used to purchase solar panels, controller units, batteries, lighting and an inverter to power a kettle. The portakabin is now used for meetings and as a focal point for social events and work-parties, as well as informally by those simply wishing to have a cup of tea.

Clausementum Fen Conservation Group

This grant enabled the purchase of a tree popper, a tool used by conservation bodies to clear areas of unwanted tree saplings. Removal of invading tree growth from areas of Clausementum Fen keeps them clear and open for the benefit of the biodiversity and the enhancement of the environment for visitors.

Winchester GoLD



“The launch of our advocacy group has given Winchester Go LD members an important platform for their voices to be heard.

We talk about issues that matter to the learning disability community, where members are championed as experts having a wealth of lived experience.”

Winchester Poetry Festival

The grant enabled WPF to create an accessible and inclusive creative environment where people from different backgrounds and cultures within the local area were able to connect through poetry and wordplay.

“The grant gave Winchester Poetry Festival the opportunity to connect, engage with, and celebrate Winchester's diverse communities through poetry. It also enabled us to:

- foster new connections that we hope to build upon going forward
- maintain and broaden our ongoing commitment to accessibility and inclusion.
- ensure this event was free to attend and could be positioned in the most accessible venue Winchester has.”



Winchester Baptist Church

Purchase of laptop. It has enabled us to provide an improved quality of service to those in our community who need support in preparing a CV, searching for job opportunities and filling in application forms.

"It has made the writing of CVs so much faster that we can help with more people in one session."

The Carroll Centre

"The grant enabled the introduction of various long-term initiatives throughout the centre, resulting in an immediate improvement in our services and offerings, while also providing continuous benefits to our centre, community, and service users."

Items included a new hanging system launching at their Charity Art Exhibition this year, increasing the number of local individuals displaying their work while supporting the centre, and encouraging more local creatives.

WinACC (on behalf of Nature Recovery Teg Down)

“The Town Forum small grant enabled us to take a leap forward: to launch our community group and start building an exciting programme of nature and wildlife activities shaped by our local residents. We are particularly grateful to local councillors and the ecology team at WCC who backed our bid and supported this new initiative.”



St John’s Winchester – Fabric of Winchester

The grant funded an additional four free Community Sewing Days across Winchester and ensured a widespread digital, print and press marketing campaign so that the stories of Wintonians were shared across the community. The project culminated in a 4-day free public exhibition for people to view the finished quilts. Throughout the project, the grant supported documentation of the process through a photographer at all events and sessions. Overall more than 100 individuals participated in the Community Sewing Days. The project had a focus on inclusivity and accessibility meaning that many people reported they were able to participate fully in a way that best suited their needs, abilities, and level of interest.

Weeke Community Centre – Weeke Weekend

The grant enabled the purchase of equipment and enhanced marketing for the local festival, benefitting the local community of Weeke/ Harestock who attended the event. The event was inclusive and accessible to all, and the equipment purchased will enhance the sustainability of the event for future years. The event enabled the community centre to engage with local people who previously didn’t know about its services.

Following the event the community centre has received more booking enquiries, helping to ensure its longevity, and community groups have seen an increased number of people enquiring about classes and groups.

Winchester City Council

Equality Impact Assessment Template (EIA)

Section 1 - Data Checklist

When undertaking an EIA for your policy or project, it is important that you take into consideration everything which is associated with the policy or project that is being assessed.

The checklist below is to help you sense check your policy or project before you move to Section 2.

		Yes/No	Please provide details
1	Have there been any complaints data related to the policy or project you are looking to implement?	No	Information on grants awarded is made publicly available on the council website.
2	Have all officers who will be responsible for implementing the policy or project been consulted, and given the opportunity to raise concerns about the way the policy or function has or will be implemented?	Yes	Officers within the communities team are involved in the set up and running of these annual programmes
3	Have previous consultations highlighted any concerns about the policy or project from an equality impact perspective?	No	Discussions take place with members, other council teams, and the wider the voluntary sector support as part of the delivery of this work.
4	Do you have any concerns regarding the implementation of this policy or project? <i>(i.e. Have you completed a self-assessment and action plan for the implementation of your policy or project?)</i>	No	This is an ongoing programme with dedicated resource to deliver.
5	Does any accessible data regarding the area which your work will address identify any areas of concern or potential problems which may impact on your policy or project?	No	Funding criteria are broad and enable support for a range of activity within Winchester Town.
6	Do you have any past experience delivering similar policies or projects which may inform the implementation of your scheme	Yes	The Community grants team is experienced in developing grant funding programmes and the Funding and Development Officer

		Yes/No	Please provide details
	from an equality impact point of view?		is well informed on best practices in this area.
7	Are there any other issues that you think will be relevant?	No	

Section 2 - Your EIA form

Directorate: Economy and Community	Your Service Area: Community	Team: Community Grants	Officer responsible for this assessment: Jane Chuhan	Date of assessment: 17 October 2024
---	---	-------------------------------------	--	---

	Question	Please provide details
1	What is the name of the policy or project that is being assessed?	Town Forum community grants
2	Is this a new or existing policy?	Existing
3	Briefly describe the aim and purpose of this work.	To support voluntary and not-for-profit groups and organisations in Winchester town wards that can clearly demonstrate how their services and projects help deliver a cohesive, sustainable, resilient community.
4	What are the associated objectives of this work?	Deliver an annual small grants / project grants programme for the financial years 2024/25 and 2025/26 to support outcomes from the Town Vision.
5	Who is intended to benefit from this work and in what way?	The grants are awarded for work that brings community benefit, in particular inclusion, wellbeing and environmental outcomes and all communities may benefit, but in particular those who are most vulnerable.
6	What are the outcomes sought from this work?	A vibrant voluntary sector that support communities in Winchester town wards
7	What factors/forces could contribute or detract from the outcomes?	Budgets are reducing by £10,000 per year. Town Forum priorities change. Organisations do not take up the opportunity of applying for a grant.
8	Who are the key individuals and organisations responsible for the implementation of this work?	Community Grants Team
9	Who implements the policy or project and who or what is responsible for it?	Communities Team, Corporate Head of Economy and Community has delegated authority for programme, Cabinet Member for Community and

		Engagement, Winchester Town Forum (Town Vision) informal group
--	--	--

		Please select your answer in bold . Please provide detail here.		
10a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of race differently in a negative way?	Y	N	People who don't speak English (or for whom English is not their first language) may have difficulty accessing funding.
10b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Census data from 2021 showed that 3.4% of the district population did not speak English as a first language. 		
11a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of sex differently in a negative way?	Y	N	With regard to the proposed reductions in grant funding, there is no indication that there would be disproportionate impacts on individuals with this protected characteristic.
11b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N/A		
12a	<p>Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of disability differently in a negative way?</p> <p><i>you may wish to consider:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Physical access</i> <i>Format of information</i> <i>Time of interview or consultation event</i> <i>Personal assistance</i> <i>Interpreter</i> <i>Induction loop system</i> <i>Independent living equipment</i> <i>Content of interview)</i> 	Y	N	A proportion of grant-funded projects and the core funding to Citizens Advice Winchester specifically support individuals with this protected characteristic, who could be impacted if funding is reduced which in turn could cause a reduction in the support available and or experience an increase in the length of time that they will be seen.
12b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Approximately 50% of Citizens Advice's clients have a disability or long-term health condition.		

13a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of sexual orientation differently in a negative way?	Y	N	With regard to the proposed reductions in grant funding, there is no indication that there would be disproportionate impacts on individuals with this protected characteristic.
13b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N/A		
14a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of age differently in a negative way?	Y	N	A proportion of grant-funded projects and the core funding to Citizens Advice Winchester specifically support individuals with this protected characteristic, who could be impacted with the reduction in the support available and or experience increases in the length of time that they will be seen.
14b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	20% of Citizens Advice's clients are aged 65 years and older.		
15a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of religious belief differently in a negative way?	Y	N	With regard to the proposed reductions in grant funding, there is no indication that there would be disproportionate impacts on individuals with this protected characteristic.
15b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N/A		
16a	Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of gender reassignment differently in a negative way?	Y	N	With regard to the proposed reductions in grant funding, there is no indication that there would be disproportionate impacts on individuals with this protected characteristic.
16b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N/A		
17a	Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis	Y	N	With regard to the proposed reductions in grant funding, there is no indication that there would

	of marriage and civil partnership differently in a negative way?			be disproportionate impacts on individuals with this protected characteristic.
17b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N/A		
18a	Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of pregnancy and maternity differently in a negative way?	Y	N	With regard to the proposed reductions in grant funding, there is no indication that there would be disproportionate impacts on individuals with this protected characteristic.
18b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N/A		
19	Could any negative impacts that you identified in questions 10a to 15b create the potential for the policy to discriminate against certain groups on the basis of protected characteristics?	Y	N	There is potential for the change to discriminate in the following ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inability of people who don't speak English (or for whom English is not their first language) to understand the changes.
20	Can this negative impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for certain groups on the basis of protected characteristics? Please provide your answer opposite against the relevant protected characteristic.	Y	N	Race: Sex: Disability: Sexual orientation: Age: Gender reassignment: Pregnancy and maternity: Marriage and civil partnership: Religious belief:
21	How will you mitigate any potential discrimination that may be brought about by your policy or project that you have identified above?	Access to information on the grants scheme is made in a variety of formats to ensure accessibility. Applicants are asked to explain how they ensure their activities and services are open and inclusive when they apply for a grant. Successful grant holders are required to report back through an end of grant report.		

		<p>Information about community grants is published on the council website and people are encouraged to contact the team if they require assistance in making an application. Contact details are provided. The grants team support applicants for whom the online application process may be a barrier, by making the application on their behalf.</p> <p>A new EDI collection tool in the grant management system is being implemented to collect information on applicants.</p>		
22	Do any negative impacts that you have identified above impact on your service plan?	Y	N	

Signed by completing officer	Jane Chuhan, Funding and Development Officer
Signed by Service Lead or Corporate Head of Service	Steve Lincoln, Service Lead: Community & Wellbeing

This page is intentionally left blank

WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

**IMPACT REPORT:
COMMUNITY GRANTS
PROGRAMME 2022-2023**



COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAMME 2022-2023

SUMMARY

Winchester City Council recognises the important role that community and voluntary organisations have in delivering key services to the people and communities of the Winchester district. The council's community grant funding programme is aimed at supporting voluntary and not-for-profit groups and organisations in the District to deliver services and activities that closely align with council priorities.

In 2022-2023 the council awarded 109 community grants totalling £698,753 to charities, not for profit organisations and community groups via eight different grant funds. Demand for grants was higher than in previous years and unfortunately we were unable to award all eligible applications. Projects and activities were supported in all wards across the district.

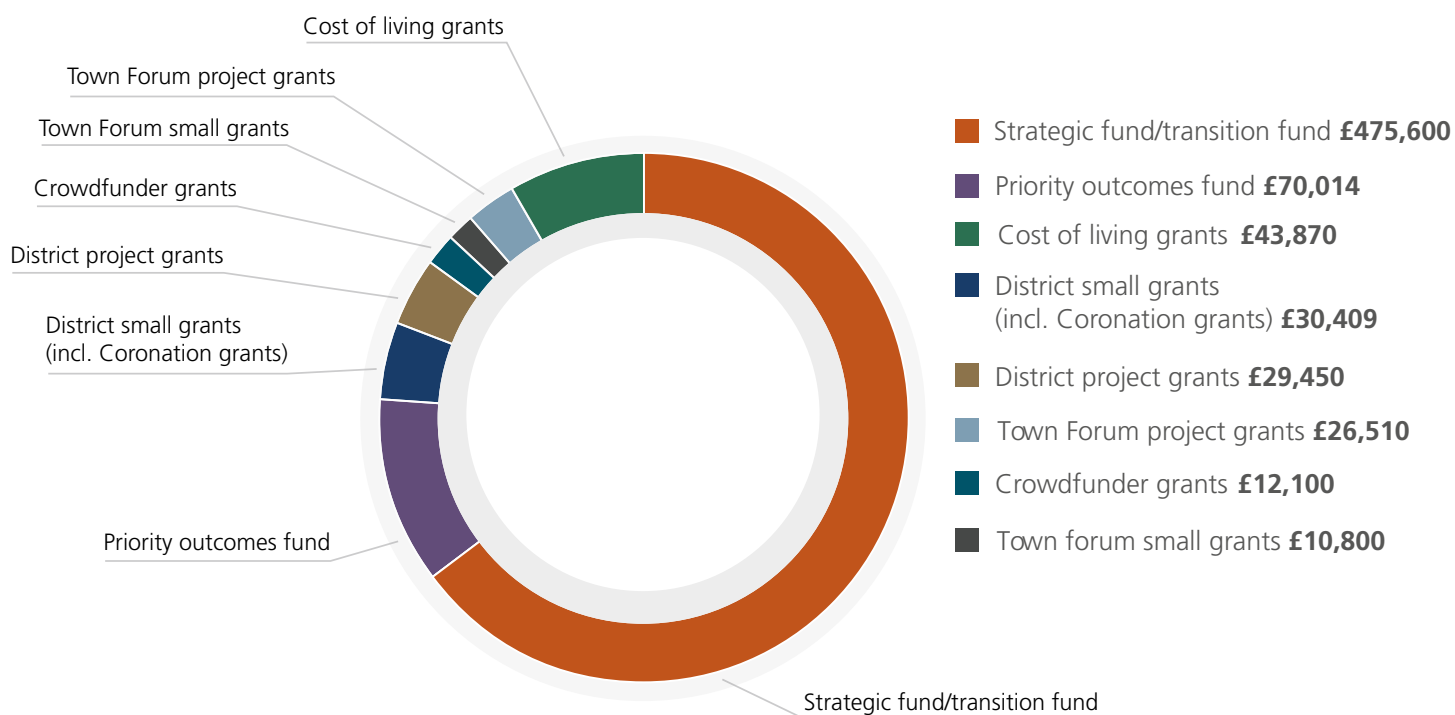
"Winchester district is fortunate to have a flourishing voluntary and community sector and our community grants programme provides funding to organisations whose work supports the council's priorities. We are delighted to share some of the fantastic work carried out by these organisations, whose activities help create cohesive, sustainable and resilient communities across the district."



Cllr Kathleen Becker
CABINET MEMBER FOR
COMMUNITY AND ENGAGEMENT

Community Grants Summary

Demand for our grants has increased again as activities resumed in the post-Covid recovery period, and the new project grants scheme was particularly popular. A large amount of work was carried out in the year to ensure that residents, communities and organisations, were aware of the funding available and received support to make an application.



Community grants benefitted communities and residents in Winchester district in several ways:

- Enabling better support for our homeless and most vulnerable residents
- Increasing help for residents experiencing difficulties due the rising cost of living
- Improving access to advice services on finances, debt and advice planning
- Providing greater opportunities for people to participate in community life, reducing isolation
- Increasing opportunities for people to improve their physical and mental health
- Facilitating more schemes that reduce the District's carbon footprint

Funding Priorities and Outcomes

Community grants supported activities and services that align with our funding priorities, themes which fit closely with our Council priorities:

Council Priority	Funding Priority and Outcome
Tackling the climate emergency and going greener faster 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability, environmental quality, green technologies
Living well 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health • Isolation • Low income • Physical inactivity
Homes for all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness
Vibrant local economy and pride in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital application, services and products • Creative and innovative • Business growth
Cost of living 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing access to information, support and guidance • Providing information and support to reduce costs • Increasing social interactions in warm spaces • Overcoming barriers to accessing services such as transport, access to the internet or use of IT equipment • Helping to access essentials such as food or clothing

Funding Priority 1: Sustainability, environmental quality, green technologies

£20,366 of project/small grant funding was awarded to activities supporting the council's ambition to go greener faster. This included solar panels on Itchen Abbas and Avington Village Hall, an EV charging point for Ooooby who deliver locally grown produce, more energy efficient lighting for Littleton Tennis Club, heat loss projects through Swanmore and South Wonston Parish Councils and local biodiversity projects.

Broadlands Riding for the Disabled:

"In enabling the replacement of our old, inefficient and dangerous electrical lighting with a more efficient, brighter and more environmentally acceptable LED solution, the grant from Winchester City Council has provided better working conditions, and lower utility costs, for our charity. This is of direct benefit to our disabled riders and carriage drivers."



Friends of St Giles Hill Graveyard

Received a small grant which enabled volunteers to clear an area of the graveyard, create gabion seating and plant specialised chalk grassland meadow mix. "The grant from WCC has helped us create valuable sitting areas for the user of St Giles Hill Graveyard and is particularly helpful to those with limited mobility. Also, some areas of the site that were previously difficult to maintain are more accessible."



Solar panels at Itchen Abbas and Avington Village Hall

Winchester City Council has awarded funding for the installation of solar panels on a village hall's roof. The Itchen Abbas and Avington Village Hall applied for the funding for solar panels as part of its sustainability efforts and to reduce energy bills. The charity, managed by volunteers, raised more than £10,000 from both Crowdfunder and a grant of £4,000 from Winchester City Council.

The funding was provided from the council's Greener Futures Fund via crowdfunder which was open for applications earlier this year. Cllr Kelsie Learney, Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency, said:

"The city council has made a commitment to go greener faster and we're very pleased to be able to help support businesses and community organisations to not only lower their carbon footprint but save them money too. Itchen Abbas and Avington Village Hall's solar panel project is an excellent example of how this funding can be used and we're proud to have supported it."

Christopher Langford, Chair of Itchen Abbas and Avington Village Hall, said:

"The Winchester City Council Greener Futures Fund operated through Crowdfunder has supported us to raise the money to put solar panels on the roof of our village hall this will help with future hire charges to benefit the local community."



Funding Priority 2: Mental health:

£19,565 of project/small grants supported work that included 115 additional counselling sessions at Olive Branch Counselling, a reminiscence project by the Memory Box Foundation for people with dementia, and equine therapy and music therapy sessions for 18 people.

A Priority Outcomes grant to Winchester Youth Counselling enabled them to deliver a total of 2,590 one to one counselling sessions for 177 young people over the year.

Winchester GoLD

Winchester GoLD received a Priority Outcomes core grant for their work with adults with learning disabilities. Their membership has grown to 120 this year with people supported through a variety of activities and advocacy. For example 40 people have been supported over the year through 252 walk and talk sessions which provide one to one contact for social engagement, inclusion, problem sharing and companionship. A graphic illustrating their advocacy work is shown below:



Funding Priority 3: Homelessness

Our core funding supported organisations addressing homelessness and enabled over 500 people to stay safe through this support. The funding also helped prevent more than 80 people from sleeping rough.

Funding Priority 4: Physical inactivity:

Grants of £6,210 were awarded to sports clubs to run activities or purchase equipment, enabling over 350 people to be active. Recipients included Winchester Walking Football, Winchester Athletics, Sparsholt Cricket Club, Littleton Croquet Club and Winchester Castle FC.



Walking Football

Winchester Walking Football Club were awarded a Town Forum small grants to purchase of a set of goals and additional equipment, enabling the club to expand their weekly sessions, making them even more accessible to more people.

Funding Priority 5: Isolation

Over £20,000 of project and small grants were awarded enabling people to be less isolated and more involved in their community. Work supported included a lunch club in Swanmore, a new dance club in Bishops Waltham, new equipment for The Worthy's Community Shed, a community event for the Filipino Association, a film club at West Meon Village Hall and an awareness project with Awaaz Radio. Additionally, 14 grants totalling £12,190 were awarded to support community celebrations and enable people to come together for the King's Coronation in May 2023.

Easton Village Hall & Recreation Ground

Received a small grant towards their community celebration for the King's Coronation. "Without the pump priming grant from Winchester City Council, we may not have been brave enough to risk undertaking the organisation of this Coronation Party, which has been such a success for Easton.



Young Carers

Young Carers received a Priority Outcomes core grant for their work with 102 young carers from across the district in the last 12 months, who engaged in a programme of activities to reduce isolation and help share their experiences and understanding as young carers. "We are very grateful to WCC for its funding and support - it is absolutely crucial to our operations."

Funding Priority 6: Low income

Over £15,000 of project and small grants were awarded to support youth outreach work, a new day time drop-in service for young people not in employment, education or training, a growing Saturday club for children in Weeke, volunteer training for Home-Start Hampshire to support families in the Meon Valley, and a cookery book project to promote healthy eating on a budget.

The core grant to Citizens Advice Winchester along with an additional cost of living grant enabled them to support 5,321 clients with 16,602 advice issues (an increase from 15,118 issues and 4,739 clients last year). Of these 3,575 people were helped with financial and debt advice.

Street Reach:

"The Winchester City Council small grant enabled Street Reach to purchase some modular furniture to provide a welcoming space to deliver various projects for vulnerable young people in Winchester. The charity moved to Unit 12 in October 2022 to an unfurnished space and the grant was used to make the space more young people friendly, with some of our service users even helping to put the furniture together with our staff team and decorating the space."



Funding Priority 7: Creativity and culture

Winchester Poetry Festival were awarded a project grant of £1,875 to improve accessibility including engaging BSL interpreters for several events plus the provision of online events and digital live streaming services for those unable to attend in person.

Play to the Crowd received a Strategic Fund award to support their core work which saw audiences return to performances in higher numbers this year. 55,219 people attended performances at the Theatre Royal and 61,620 people benefitting from Hat Fair and related performances.

Awaaz Radio

received a small grant to raise awareness of their community radio. "Thanks to the support from Winchester City Council, we were able to hire an OB truck (Outside Broadcasting) which allowed us to broadcast Awaaz Radio from Winchester City Centre. We met and engaged with over 1,000 people who passed by the truck. As Winchester currently does not have any ethnic media outlets, this grant has allowed Awaaz to break this barrier and begin a new and important cultural development for Winchester."



Other support for organisations seeking funds

- Delivered a Winchester Funding Fayre in March 2023 with Community First – attended by 72 people from 50 different organisations.



"Thank you for the chat on Wednesday... I hadn't realised Winchester City Council was offering **so much support** - great news!"

- Supported 25 organisations through funding advice drop in events and surgeries, offering advice on making an application to the council and signposting to other sources of support.



"**Your input has been invaluable** and I am researching a number of ideas as to how to raise funds"





Play to the Crowd

“The Charity’s vision is to delight and unite communities and by doing this we **help people** to lead happier and healthier lives and contribute to social cohesion, empathy for others and a sense of **belonging and purpose**. Play to the Crowd is grateful for the investment made by Winchester City Council from its Strategic Fund. Arts and Culture are such an **important** part of what makes a place desirable to live, work and play in and we simply **could not exist** without this investment.”

Play to the Crowd is an arts and education charity that inspire people to connect with and participate in live performance. The charity runs Theatre Royal Winchester and Hat Fair, along with a community engagement programme called Playmakers. A Strategic Fund grant from Winchester City Council helps the charity to present over 300 performances a year at Theatre Royal Winchester and many more as part of Hat Fair, attracting over 150,000 people a year.

Funding Priority 7: Creativity and culture

Citizens Advice Winchester District

"We're **enormously grateful** to receive a Strategic Fund grant from WCC. This funding is crucial to the survival of our core advice service in Winchester District, and gives us the **stability** we need to seek additional funding to expand and **develop** the range of **services** that we can provide."

Citizens Advice Winchester District is an independent local charity that provide advice for anyone in the district facing challenge in their lives. They provide free, confidential advice to everyone on a range of issues including money, housing, relationships and employment. The charity's core operational costs are supported by a Strategic Fund grant from the council, helping them to deliver support to over 5,000 people a year and last year generating additional income of £1,320,623 for their users.



Funding Priority 6: Low income

Quotes from some of the people we have supported

“Many thanks for your help with this & your coordination of a **very smooth process.**”

“Just wanted to say a big thank you...it’s such wonderful news to have been awarded a grant and will really help add ‘Zing’ to **everyone’s efforts to have been recognised and supported in this way.**”

“It was **SO helpful** to talk to you, and thanks so much for your time this morning.”

“Your input has been **invaluable** and I am researching a number of ideas as to how to **raise funds**”





Winchester
City Council

REPORT TITLE: WINCHESTER TOWN ACCOUNT MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL POSITION (DRAFT BUDGET OPTIONS)

11 NOVEMBER 2024

REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER: Cllr Kelsie Learney, Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency

Contact Officer: Darren Kennedy Tel No: 01962 848464 Email dkennedy@winchester.gov.uk

WARD(S): ALL

PURPOSE

To provide an update on the current budget setting options and considerations for the four-year medium-term period from 2025/26 to 2028/29. This planning will enable the Town Forum to recommend a budget and precept for 2025/26 to Cabinet in January 2025.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Identify any budget issues to consider further in advance of recommending a Town Account Budget to Cabinet in January.
2. Consider any feedback to Cabinet in relation to the wider budget consultation.

IMPLICATIONS:

1 COUNCIL PLAN OUTCOME

- 1.1 This report sets out the current financial position including the latest medium term financial projections. Budget options will be considered in line with the Council Plan.

2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 Identifying and analysing the financial risks and pressures helps to ensure the effective prioritisation of resources in order to deliver the Council Plan and maintain a balanced budget.

3 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 None identified

4 WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None

5 PROPERTY AND ASSET IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This paper reflects the budgets and funding associated with town assets such as play areas and sports facilities.

6 CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 6.1 This report has been discussed with the town account informal group, relevant staff and advisors.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 Environmental considerations will be part of the business case supporting any budget proposals.

8 PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

- 8.1 None

9 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 None

10 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 10.1 The main source of funding for baseline recurring expenditure is the town precept. As a stable source of funding overall financial risk is therefore relatively low but consideration must be taken of the requirement for the town

to keep within government referendum limits (a restriction not currently applicable to parish councils).

Risk	Mitigation	Opportunities
<i>Failure to set a balanced budget over the medium term.</i>	<i>Financial projections are shown up until 2028/29 and the scenario planning highlights the potential sensitivities. Planning over a longer period will help to ensure understanding of the scale of the financial challenges and early planning enables enough lead in time for the implementation of the budget options.</i>	<i>Long term strategic planning. Innovative funding streams. Transformational efficiency savings.</i>
<i>Council's service priorities are not reflected in the budget.</i>	<i>The budget planning process, including the process of outcome based budgeting and the informal account group meetings which review the detailed budgets and strategy.</i>	<i>Ensure the prioritisation of resources to best meet the outcomes of the authority.</i>
<i>High levels of contractual inflation and the continuation of current precept referendum limits.</i>	<i>Medium term financial planning and sensitivity analysis highlighting the challenges posed by high inflation.</i>	<i>Transformational efficiency savings.</i>

11 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

Background

- 11.1 WTF3331 Winchester Town Account Financial Planning 2025/26 introduced the budget setting process, the key principles, and updated medium term financial projections to 2028/29.
- 11.2 The Winchester Town Forum (Informal Account) Group met in October 2024 in order to establish the key focus of the budget process and any priority resource considerations to bring back to the Town Forum.

Winchester Town Precept

- 11.3 The town precept for 2024/25 was set at £85.38 (per band D property). The decision on the level of council tax for 2025/26 will be taken at Council in February.
- 11.4 The town will need to consider its proposed strategy for the Town Precept but will need to bear in mind that any decisions will be subject to 'referendum limits' and may be impacted by decisions taken on the level of district Council tax.
- 11.5 It is currently anticipated that the overall referendum limit for the Council in 2025/26 will remain at up to 3% (as £5 is now below 3%). The maximum increase for the town or district are interrelated with each other, for example if the district increased by a lower percentage then the town could increase by a higher percentage and still remain within the overall referendum limit.
- 11.6 The potential additional annual income generated by increasing the Town Precept is shown in the table below. The financial projections in Appendix 1 currently assume a 3% increase.

Effect of increasing the Town Precept 2025/26*

% MAX District Increase	% TOWN Precept Increase	Additional Income £000	Town Precept	Town Precept £ Increase	District Precept £ Increase	District Precept 24/25 £
	0%		£85.38			£159.36
2.99%	2.99%	38	£87.93	£2.55	£4.76	£164.12
2.84%	4.0%	51	£88.80	£3.42	£4.53	£163.89
2.62%	5.0%	64	£89.65	£4.27	£4.29	£163.65
2.11%	10.0%	127	£93.92	£5.99	£3.11	£162.47

* To note these estimates are prior to finalisation of the council tax base for 2025/26 so are subject to change.

- 11.7 The forecasts are currently calculated using an average increase in properties of 1.2% per annum. The final budget will be updated when the forecast Council Tax Base is approved in December. The effect of increases to the base on income are illustrated below:

	0.2%	0.4%	0.8%	1.2%	1.6%	2.0%
Increase in Properties	30	60	119	179	239	298
Increase in Council Tax (£000)	3	5	10	16	21	26

Budget Review 2025/26

- 11.8 The 2023/24 budget review process addressed the immediate financial pressures that had been facing the town account due to high levels of contractual inflation and additional revenue budget pressures. It is important that focus remains on the medium-term forecasts in order to ensure the ambitions of the town forum and any future unexpected growth areas can be achieved through a balanced budget.
- 11.9 Out of the initial four main budget review areas, agreed in the 2023/24 budget process, two reviews remain in progress:
- a) **Cemeteries** – a review is underway in order to set out options for the future of the cemeteries. Additional time is needed in order to explore the potential options further and therefore this review will be brought to the town forum shortly.
 - b) **Open Spaces and Grounds Maintenance** – given the complexities and sensitivity around this review it has been agreed to run this review within the existing TC25 project. A verbal update is to be presented to town forum on the same agenda as this report, in November.
- 11.10 A review of bus shelter cleaning and maintenance is underway, including where the future responsibility of this sits, and further details will be presented in due course.
- 11.11 The annual review of fees and charges is currently underway and covers cemeteries and open spaces within the Winchester town account. Cemeteries is specifically covered as one of the main budget review areas.
- 11.12 The following budget growth proposal has been identified during the budget review process:
- a) The town forum support budget has remained at £5,000 for a number of years. Following a review of officer time and meeting room usage it has been identified that costs are now around £17,500 per annum and so the budget forecast has been uplifted by £12,500.
- 11.13 **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)** – the Neighbourhood CIL (Town) receivable balance stood at £0.701m as at April 2024. Commitments include £0.495m towards North Walls Pavilion; £0.037m towards the KGV Park Plan; £0.050m towards Abbots Barton and Hyde Scouts Facility; £0.020m towards St Giles Hill Stabilisation works; and £0.010m for Milland Road.
- The principles for spending the Winchester Town Forum's share of CIL were approved in November 2016 (see WTF245), in order to provide for the community led improvement of the environment and infrastructure in the Winchester Town.

- Based on historic receipts around £150k to £200k of town CIL is expected per annum. There are risks around relying on this funding as reductions in development in the town area or changes to the CIL scheme could significantly impact on future receipts. As such this future forecast is used for planning purposes but is not to be committed to schemes as certain funding.

11.14 The following central case assumptions have been used in the financial forecast shown in Appendix 1:

	2025/2026 Forecast	2026/2027 Forecast	2027/2028 Forecast	2028/2029 Forecast
<u>Assumptions:</u>				
Contract inflation	4%	3%	3%	3%
Percentage increase in tax	3%	3%	3%	3%
Tax Base	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%

11.15 The sensitivity of the above assumptions is as follows:

- Contract Inflation is around £7k per 1%.
- A 1% precept increase generates additional funding of just under £13k per annum.
- A 1.2% tax base increase generates additional funding of c£15k per annum. Whilst 1.2% is a reasonable long-term forecast increase per annum, there can be significant year-on-year deviations to this average.

Capital Expenditure

11.16 Capital expenditure is either funded directly from the Town Account Earmarked Reserve, external funding such as CIL, or through the General Fund and repaid over the life of the asset (along with interest).

11.17 In January 2017 (WTF250) the Town Forum approved a strategy to fund the long term requirements of the play area refurbishment up until the end of 2024/25, from the Town Account Earmarked Reserve. Play area refurbishments in the town make up the largest proportion of town capital expenditure as shown below.

11.18 There is currently a total budget of £0.590m in the capital programme for play area refurbishments to the end of 2028/29.

Reserves

11.19 The Winchester Town Account earmarked reserve is available to support planned one-off expenditure over the medium term as well as a contingency balance of 15% of the total annual net expenditure which is set aside to deal with any urgent / unexpected requirements.

11.20 The current forecasts in Appendix 1 shows the reserve decreasing below 15% in 2025/26 and 2026/27 but then replenishing back above 15% in 2027/28 and 2028//29 due to forecast precept increases of 3% per annum.

11.21 Currently the capital budget forecasts listed above, particularly the significant programme of play area refurbishments are planned to be funded from the Town reserve. It is therefore important that long term planning ensures funding is in place to support these projects.

11.22 It should be noted that the forecast reserve balance shown in Appendix 1 does fluctuate on a year-by-year basis and individual end of year balances are impacted by 'lumpy' one-off expenditure such as the play area refurbishments.

12 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

12.1 None, this paper sets out the current financial position

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Committee Reports:-

Winchester Town Account Financial Planning 2024/25 – WTF331 – September 2024

Town Account Budget for 2024/25 – WTF328 – January 2024

Other Background Documents:-

None

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1: Medium Term Financial Projections

This page is intentionally left blank

WINCHESTER TOWN ACCOUNT - Medium Term Financial Projections

	2024/2025 Forecast	2025/2026 Forecast	2026/2027 Forecast	2027/28 Forecast	2028/29 Forecast
Assumptions:					
Contract inflation	6%	4%	3%	3%	3%
Utilities	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Percentage increase in tax	5.5%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Tax Base	14,919	15,098	15,279	15,462	15,648
Cost of Services					
Recurring Budgets:					
Allotments	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)
Bus Shelter Cleaning / Maintenance / New Provision	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Cemeteries	87,039	91,199	95,886	100,719	105,704
Christmas Lights	7,500	7,500	7,500	7,500	7,500
Neighbourhood Service Officers (Contribution)	45,000	45,000	45,000	45,000	45,000
Footway Lighting	33,873	32,607	33,536	34,513	35,538
Grants and Vision Delivery	70,000	60,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Support Costs for Grant Scheme	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Maintenance Work to Council Owned Bridges	5,500	5,500	5,500	5,500	5,500
Night Bus Contribution	12,751	13,261	13,659	14,069	14,491
Public Conveniences (Contribution)	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Recreation Grounds & Open Spaces	866,607	920,651	956,624	983,086	1,010,052
Tennis Court Improvements	9,000	9,000	9,000	9,000	9,000
Town Forum Support	17,500	17,500	17,500	17,500	17,500
Total Recurring Budgets	1,222,770	1,270,218	1,302,205	1,334,886	1,368,285
Total Cost of Services	1,222,770	1,270,218	1,302,205	1,334,886	1,368,285
Taxation and Non-specific grant income					
Council Tax Income	(1,273,758)	(1,327,542)	(1,383,656)	(1,442,163)	(1,503,126)
Interest on Balances	(5,560)	(6,444)	(5,057)	(4,052)	(5,892)
Total Taxation and Non-specific grant income	(1,279,317)	(1,333,986)	(1,388,713)	(1,446,214)	(1,509,017)
Transfers to/(from) Earmarked reserves					
Reserves	(56,547)	(63,768)	(86,508)	(111,328)	(140,733)
Capital Expenditure funded by Town Reserve	220,000	110,000	120,000	50,000	90,000
Reserve					
Opening Reserve Balance (at 1st April)	(378,239)	(214,785)	(168,553)	(135,061)	(196,389)
Closing Reserve Balance (carried forward)	(214,785)	(168,553)	(135,061)	(196,389)	(247,121)
Closing Reserves forecast as % of net expenditure	18%	13%	10%	15%	18%
TAX					
Tax at Band D	£85.38	£87.93	£90.56	£93.27	£96.06
Increase over previous year (£)	£4.45	£2.55	£2.63	£2.71	£2.79

This page is intentionally left blank

11 NOVEMBER 2024					
	BUSINESS	LEAD OFFICER	COMMITTEE DATE		STATUS/COMMENT
	Town Forum Grant Programme Update	Melissa Fletcher/Jane Chuhan	11 November 2024		WTF332
	Winchester Town Account Medium Term Financial Position (Draft budget options)	Darren Kennedy	11 November 2024		WTF333
	Open Spaces and Grounds Maintenance –IDV Contract discussion	Campbell Williams/Simon Hende	11 November 2024		Verbal Update
23 JANUARY 2025					
	BUSINESS	LEAD OFFICER	COMMITTEE DATE		STATUS/COMMENT
	Winchester Town Account Budget for 2025/26 (to be recommended to Cabinet)	Darren Kennedy	23 January 2025		
	Budget Review: Cemeteries – Proposals	Karen Vincent	23 January 2025		
10 MARCH 2025					

	BUSINESS	LEAD OFFICER	COMMITTEE DATE	STATUS/COMMENT
	No items at present			

Possible Items to be allocated for 2024/25
North Winchester Design Code (to be timetabled by officers when updates are available) – Date tbc

This page is intentionally left blank