



**WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Name and Date of Committee	<b>DELEGATED DECISION – COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES GRANTS (COST OF LIVING) - TUESDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> AUGUST 2023</b>
Subject	<b>COMMUNITY ACTIVITY GRANTS DECISION MEETING</b>
Wards Affected	ALL
Accountable Member	Councillor Joy Aitman – Executive Member for Stronger, Healthy Communities – Email: <a href="mailto:joy.aitman@westoxon.gov.uk">joy.aitman@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Accountable Officer & Report Author	Heather McCulloch – Community Wellbeing Manager Tel: 01993 861562 Email: <a href="mailto:heather.mcculloch@westoxon.gov.uk">heather.mcculloch@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Summary/Purpose	To determine applications to the Community Activity Grant scheme.
Annexes	Annex A - List of All Eligible Applications
Recommendations	<p><i>a) To approve, under delegated authority, the applications as set out in the report;</i></p> <p><i>b) Delegate to the Assistant Director for Communities, in consultation with Executive Member for Stronger, Healthy Communities and the Cost of Living Steering Group, the remaining budget to target support in areas of need.</i></p>
Corporate Priorities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Putting Residents First</li> <li>2. Enabling a Good Quality of Life for All</li> </ol>
Key Decision	No
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	None

## **I. BACKGROUND**

- I.1.** Community Activity Grants (CAG) aim to support grassroots community groups wishing to undertake community based activity which contributes to the health and wellbeing of residents and quality of community life. This year in the face of a cost of living crisis, the Council wants to support not for profit community groups to deliver activities and services which meet the needs of residents most affected by the cost of living crisis.
- I.2.** The grants available have been divided into 2 Lots – with the maximum grant available in Lot 1 being £2,500 and in Lot 2 being £1,000.
- I.3.** The total budget for this round of Community Activities grants in 2023/24 is £64,000. This is made up of £20,000 funding for food groups; £11,000 funding for CAG in 2023/24 and the remaining £33,000 in the budget for VCS support as part of the Cost of Living support provided by the Council.

## **2. MAIN POINTS**

- 2.1.** The current round for applications closed on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2023.
- 2.2.** The Council received 28 applications. The applications were reviewed against the eligibility checklist. Where information was unclear, officers contacted applicants to seek clarification. All eligible applications were assessed and scored using a scoring matrix before being reviewed by an officer panel. The scoring measures the degree to which each activity :
  - a. Meets new needs appearing as a result of the cost of living crisis.
  - b. Enables other sources of support to be secured for the benefit of West Oxfordshire communities.
  - c. Benefits those who are considered vulnerable, groups that services are not currently engaging with effectively and will not be served by other support organisations or activity.
  - d. Has the capacity to have ongoing impact.
  - e. Is responsive and addressing an issue of urgency.
  - f. Whether the activity of the grant will further expand the scope of activity underway elsewhere in West Oxfordshire, complement this activity or duplicate existing activity.
  - g. Is a collaborative endeavour, harnessing the combined resources and expertise of more than one organisation in the same area and avoids duplication.
  - h. Is meeting the Council's emerging priorities.
  - i. Benefits the residents of West Oxfordshire.
  - j. Is good value for money requesting a size of grant which is commensurate with those benefiting.
  - k. Makes a difference.
- 2.3.** A table showing details of all eligible applications is attached as Annex A. The scoring impacts the level of funding recommended.
- 2.4.** Two applications have been withdrawn as they were unable to evidence their eligibility.
- 2.5.** One applicant CAG/2324/15 Wychwood Baptist Church (Life Centre) has reported that they have been unable to utilise the funding previously awarded in full due to unexpected delays with the project proposed. They have £625 remaining. They have provided details and a plan to allocate the funding by the end of October 2023. Their application in this round is for an entirely different and more established project. The current application is recommended for support at the full amount as it has been scored highly.
- 2.6.** It is proposed that the following applications are not awarded funding:

CAG/2324/04 Cherwell Collective	Reason: Not sufficient specific detail. Other funding to support connected wider work with Cherwell Larder is proposed in Lot 1
CAG/2324/12 Volunteer Link Up	Reason: Not sufficient specific detail on how this work is additional to that already funded by WODC in 2023/24

### 3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. Should all applications be approved as per Annex A the total cost to the Council will be £27,840 and the amount remaining in the budget would be £36,160. The total project cost of projects recommended for support is £302,337.
- 3.2. It is proposed that the balance of this budget is devolved to officers working with the portfolio holder and the Cost Of Living steering group. In this devolved process the officers would work to identify opportunities for investment in areas of greatest need across the district and bring forward proposals.

### 4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. All applications were received ahead of the deadline. The level of funding recommended for each application is in line with the criteria of the scheme. The organisations and activities described in the applications, which are being recommended for an award, are judged to comply with the terms of the grant scheme and meet the criteria.

### 5. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 5.1. The risks posed by the decisions in this report are very low to the Council. There is a low risk that despite receiving the funding an applicant could fail to carry out the activity as specified. This risk is mitigated by only allowing certain types of organisations to apply. Furthermore the Council will request that each successful applicant reports back on performance at the end of the activity to demonstrate that the funding provided by the Council has been utilised appropriately. The maximum grant awarded is £2,500. Checks have been carried out by the Fraud team. Each application is checked against the criteria, scored against the priorities and reviewed by an officer panel.

### 6. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 6.1. The recommendations will have a positive impact on the communities which are the focus for the activities detailed in the applications. The grant scheme has due regard for the needs of vulnerable residents affected by the cost of living crisis.

### 7. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. We do not foresee any negative implications for Climate Change. All activities take place in West Oxfordshire and are local community activities. This means that attendance is less reliant on having a car or access to public transport.

### 8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 8.1. The Council could decide not to award the grants as set out in Annex A or award them at different levels.

## **9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**9.1.** The following documents have been identified by the author of the report in accordance with section 100D.5(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 and are listed in accordance with section 100 D.1(a) for inspection by members of the public:

- Community Activity Grants 2023/24 - Application forms

**9.2.** These documents will be available for inspection at the Council Offices at Woodgreen, Witney. OX28 1NB during normal office hours for a period of up to four years from the date of the meeting. Please contact the author of the report.

(END)

## Annex A

### Community Activity Grant applications 2023/24

Ref No	Applicant Organisation	Project Details	Lot	Total Project Cost	Amount Requested	Amount recommended
CAG/2324/01	Kingham Village Friends (Kingham Lunch Club)	Christmas Lunch	2	400	250	200
CAG/2324/02	Thomas Gifford Trust	Hire of the sports hall for termly Friday evening youth club	2	1755	1000	1000
CAG/2324/03	Cherwell Larder	Cherwell Larder hosts a thrice-weekly community food service and marketplace in Kidlington providing basic essentials including food and hygiene products on a non-means tested basis. We also support by providing access to education around nutrition, cooking skills, gardening, and costs savings. Funding to support West Oxfordshire attendees.	1	150000	2500	2500
CAG/2324/04	Cherwell Collective	<i>We are seeking funds for sous chef and administrative staff who in addition to regular duties are currently organising online campaigns to take place in October</i>	2			0
CAG/2324/06	Chipping Norton Methodist Church	To help support the continuation of existing community events: (heating & electricity bills).	2	520	500	400
CAG/2324/07	Homestart Oxford	Baby/toddler stay-and-play at Ceewood Hall, Witney.	2	13,415	1000	1000
CAG/2324/08	Eynsham Good Neighbour Network (Eynsham Foodbank)	Continue to deliver food bank service.	1	23,400	2000	1600

CAG/2324/09	Oasis Family Church	Heating costs for Warm space in a priority neighbourhood in Witney	2	1500	1000	500
CAG/2324/10	Witney Congregational Church	Warm space on a Thursday in Witney, over the winter months.	2	3300	1000	500
CAG/2324/11	The Witney Shed	Garden furniture, battery drills & batteries & sundries.	2	980	980	490
CAG/2324/12	<i>Volunteer Link Up</i>	<i>Continuation of transport &amp; befriending service.</i>	<i>1</i>			<i>0</i>
CAG/2324/13	Witney Day Centre	Exercise session at the Windrush Leisure Centre	2	960	960	480
CAG/2324/14	Carterton Community Foodbank	Continuation of foodbank & fridge services.	1	2000	2500	2000
CAG/2324/15	Wychwood Baptist Church (Life Centre)	Continuation of food bank services	1	13140	2500	2500
CAG/2324/16	Carterton and Brize Coronavirus Assistance	Meals for vulnerable families & fun fair entertainment and activities.	1	2500	2500	1250
CAG/2324/17	Davenport Road Methodist Church	Warm Space on a Wednesday in Witney, over the winter months.	2	800	425	340
CAG/2324/18	Witney Baby Bank	To provide essential items for new mothers & babies across the district.	1	7500	2500	2500
CAG/2324/19	Combe Mutual Aid (Comag)	Warm space in Combe from January 2024.	2	2000	1000	800
CAG/2324/20	Charlbury PCC - Cornerstone Project	Continuation of the Community support food service.	1	33168	2500	2000

CAG/2324/2 1	The Branch Trust	Extend the Branch Out & Budget programme. (Packs & Vouchers).	1	15200	2500	2500
CAG/2324/2 2	St Mary's Church, Chipping Norton	Events to support the community (including warm spaces.)	2	9000	1000	800
CAG/2324/2 3	Dance Creative	Weekly creative dance classes held at Witney Congregational Church. The project will target residents in Witney and the surrounding areas who are vulnerable because of their age, health conditions, disabilities, or other factors. In particular- older adults (aged 65+).	2	11740	1000	1000
CAG/2324/2 4	Community Suppers, Chipping Norton Community Church	To help run the monthly Community Supper	2	1000	1000	800
CAG/2324/2 5	Eynsham Choral Society	Hall costs for choir	2	1200	500	100
CAG/2324/2 6	West Oxfordshire Community Transport (WOCT)	New low cost community transport shopper service helping people to get to out of town supermarkets.	2	5900	1000	1000
CAG/2324/2 7	Aspire	Printing and projection equipment for new CYP Hub in Witney.	2	959	959	480
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>302,337.00</b>	<b>33,074.00</b>	<b>27,840.00</b>