

REPORT TO FINANCE COMMITTEE

LARGE GRANTS POLICY AND PROCESS

Report Reference F-25-13
Meeting Date 9th March 2026
Agenda Item 9
Prepared by Town Clerk



1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Town Council operates a community grant scheme through which community organisations can apply for grant funding. Grants of a value of less than £1,500 are considered by the Community Committee and made throughout the year from a defined community grants budget. Grants of more than £1,500 (large grants) are considered annually by the Finance Committee.

The latest round of applications for large grants saw an unusually high number of applications for a significant amount of funding. It is recognised that it is likely the council will continue to receive higher than previous interest in its grant programme due to funding challenges faced by third sector organisations.

The large grants policy is separate to the council's policy on Multi-Year Funding Agreements.

2.0 REVIEW OF POLICY

The Large Grants Policy is contained with the Community Grants Policy. The relevant section is detailed below, with a tracked-change amendment proposal. The change would insert an informal review stage with committee members outside a formal meeting; this will provide some additional time for queries to be answered/resolved and mean applicants will not be expected to be present for the formal debate and decision on applications.

- 5.1 Applications should be made on the application form via the Town Council website (www.knutsfordtowncouncil.gov.uk/services/community-grants) and include all information requested on the form. An application will not normally go to committee until all required information has been provided.
- 5.2 Applicants must supply the previous two years of accounts and a recent (within three months) bank statement.
- 5.3 Where expenditure on a single item would exceed £500 the applicant should demonstrate that best value has been sought; this would normally be by the submission of quotations.
- 5.4 ~~Applicants must attend the committee meeting where their grant will be considered to answer any questions which may arise. A meeting will be held with the applicant and members of the Finance Committee; the purpose of this meeting will be to discuss the application and~~

any queries committee members have. No decision will be taken, but a recommendation may be made to the decision committee meeting.

- 5.5 The deadline for applications to be considered for this scheme shall be set by the Town Clerk to correspond with the Council's budget setting cycle. The deadline date shall be published as soon as practicable.
- 5.6 For the purchase of items consideration should be given to the Town Council purchasing items and gifting them to the organisation rather than providing a grant. This is because the Town Council can reclaim VAT for items purchased which are gifted as grants.

3.0 DECISIONS REQUIRED

The committee should determine what changes are required to the council's policy and process on the award of large grants.