

Councillors' Grant Scheme Awarding Policy



Policy Overview

Witham Town Council is committed to supporting local community projects that enhance the lives of residents. Each Councillor is allocated £500 per year to fund projects that benefit their ward.

The scheme is intended to provide small, flexible grants that support local priorities while ensuring fairness, transparency, value for money and compliance with the Council's duties, including the Best Value Duty and relevant grant-making guidance.

Who Can Apply?

Eligible groups include:

- Registered Charities
- Constituted 'not for profit' Community or Voluntary Groups
- Social Enterprises
- Village Hall and Recreation Ground Committees
- Town & Parish Councils (for projects beyond their statutory obligations)
- Schools (for community-benefiting projects)

Applicants must normally be based in, or deliver clear and demonstrable benefit to, residents of Witham.

Who Cannot Apply?

Ineligible groups include:

- Informal Groups
- Individuals
- Private Businesses
- Profit-making organisations

In addition, the Council will not fund:

- Party-political activities or campaigns.
- Activities which primarily promote religious doctrine (faith-based organisations may apply for community projects that are open to all).

Repeat access restriction:

Once an organisation (including any of its branches or affiliated entities under the same governing body) has received a grant from the Councillors' Grant Scheme, it will be ineligible to receive a further grant from this Scheme for a period of two full financial years, regardless of which Councillor wishes to support the application.

Councillors must check previous awards to ensure that organisations are not awarded consecutive-year grants contrary to this restriction. This restriction is intended to broaden the reach of the Scheme, avoid over-reliance on a small number of organisations, and ensure equitable distribution of public funds across the community.

Grant Details

- **Grant Amount:** Each Councillor can award between £100 and £500 for each project.
- **Funding:** 100% funding is available; no match funding is required.
- **Application Timing:** Applications can be submitted at any time.
- **Decision-Making:** Your local Ward Councillor(s) will recommend grant requests for approval. Contact details for your Ward Councillor can be found at www.witham.gov.uk/councillors.
- **Multiple Contributions:** Several Councillors can contribute to a single project, allowing for larger grants.
- **Project Location:** Councillors may fund projects outside their ward if it benefits residents within their ward.
- **Funding Duration:** Grants must be spent within 6 months of approval, with a possible extension to 12 months in certain cases.
- **Advertising:** Groups/organisations are asked to advertise that the Town Council has awarded funding.

Where a project could be funded from more than one Council grant scheme, officers may advise applicants which scheme is most appropriate; double-funding of the same costs from different Council grants is not permitted.

Application Process

To apply, your organisation must:

- Be a formally governed 'not for profit' organisation with a written governing document (e.g., Constitution, Trust Deed).
- Have a UK bank account in the organisation's name.

Applications must be made on the Council's standard application form for this Scheme and submitted with any supporting information requested (for example, a recent bank statement and copy of the governing document) to enable appropriate checks to be made.

Officers may request further information or clarification where necessary to support proper decision-making; failure to provide this may result in the application not being progressed.

Eligible Expenditure

Grants can fund:

- Capital costs (e.g., building improvements, playground equipment)
- Revenue costs (e.g., salaries, training fees)

Ineligible Expenditure

Grants cannot fund:

- Recoverable VAT
- Depreciation
- Bank charges or loan repayments
- Retrospective costs
- Projects that primarily benefit individuals

Transparency and Reporting

- **Publicity:** All awards will be published on the council's website, with no personal information disclosed.
- **Monitoring:** Successful applicants must complete a monitoring form detailing project outcomes within 6 months of receiving the grant. Receipts for all expenditures must be provided.
- The Council will require as a condition of grant, the organisations to advertise the fact that grant aid has been provided by the Council.

Details of grants awarded under this Scheme, including date, amount, recipient and purpose, will be published in line with the Local Government Transparency Code 2015 and any other applicable transparency requirements.

Legal and Compliance

Organisations must comply with all relevant legal, health and safety, and safeguarding requirements. Projects should be accessible to all sectors of the community.

Grant recipients must retain appropriate financial and project records for inspection if requested and must notify the Council promptly of any significant issues affecting delivery of the project.

Additional Information

- **Data Protection:** The council will handle personal information in accordance with data protection laws.
- **Elections:** No grants will be processed during election periods.
- **Councillors Interests:** If it is felt that there is a conflict of interest with the Ward Councillor recommending the grant for approval and the beneficiary the grant will be refused.

By applying for a Councillors' Community Grant, applicants confirm that the information provided is accurate and that the grant will be used solely for the stated purposes. Applicants also confirm that they will comply with the conditions of grant and will notify the Council of any material changes to the project or organisation that could affect the use of the grant.

If further information regarding any aspect of the Council's Grants Policy is required, please contact Finance Assistant, on 01376 520627 or finance@witham.gov.uk

Agreed at Minute 62, Community Committee Meeting held 28.2.2023

Reviewed: 24.02.2026

Next review Date: February 2028

POLICY NO: WTC/061 – COMMUNITY COMMITTEE