

Report with proposed recommendations to council

GRANTS AND SPONSORSHIP

	Yes	No
Does the decision involve new expenditure?		No
Is there an existing budget for the proposed expenditure (insert code)	N/A	
What procurement level is required?	N/A	
Are there equalities impacts / an equalities assessment required?		No
Does this require a full council decision? (Reports for full council decision should still be sent to the relevant committee where possible.)	Yes	
Is there a background paper or papers? (provide links below).		No
Minute PC048/22 and associated papers		

Committee is invited to consider the recommendations of the Town Clerk, building on the decisions recorded in PC048/22:

1. That all papers used to consider this matter at the meeting of the committee on 4/10/2022 be published as background papers.
2. That committee adopt as its rationale for its recommendations 'In order to enable clarity as to the reasons for decisions, to provide greater opportunities to other bodies to seek funding, and to provide a more organised process for applications and decisions the committee recommends.'
3. That the proposed pots of money allocated for grants be published as a separate appendix to the budget report, and that the process for applications be published within six weeks of the adoption of the budget proposals.
4. That, subject to consultation with stakeholders there should be no rolling awards, that all awards should be applied for on a year-to-year basis and that each application will be considered on its own merit.
5. That Officers develop a new 3-tier system based on the current grant system within the existing budget envelope for grants of all types, and
6. Subject to the outcome of the consultation proposed at 4 above, council should transition to only providing support via the grants process for budget year 2023-24.

1. It is unclear at this stage why the public were excluded from the consideration of the matter in question, and no clear reason is evidenced either by the minutes of the resolution to exclude the public, or the correspondence during which the Chair of the committee instructed a member of staff to prepare the documents on pink paper because they contained 'sensitive' matters. For the benefit of the committee S.2 of the Admission to Meetings Act 1960 states '*a body may, by resolution exclude the public from the meeting (whether during the whole or part of the proceedings) whenever publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons stated in the resolution and arising from the nature of that business or of the proceedings*'. It is not clear from either the report or the attached documents what public interests there is in treating these matters as confidential, and the reason offered in the chair's email to the member of staff is not sufficiently clear to justify such a decision. Recommendation 1 therefore is that all the documents used by the committee in its considerations should be published as background papers to the council agenda that considers these recommendations.
2. The report prepared by the councillors was not in the standard format used by council, and it is difficult to discern from it the rationale underpinning the recommendations of the report. Recommendation 2 therefore seeks to clarify the reasoning for the recommendations covered by the report.

3. It is not the role of this report to seek to debate the report prepared by elected members, but it is important to point out that all the Autumn Festival funding has formed part of the council's annual budget report, with the amounts allocated to each purpose itemized, and that it is a principle of council's budget process that adoption of items specifically identified within the report is an endorsement of those items; this is the gist of the explanation helpfully given by Ms Bankier on page 3 of the report. It is unhelpful to describe matters that require a budget report and its adoption by council as unclear (p.2 of the report) when the reports are a matter of public record. However, as a learning organisation, recommendation 3 reflects that fact that councillors appear to be dissatisfied with the way in which these decisions have been communicated in the past, and proposes a new route forward.
4. As officers we wish to give life to the recommendations adopted by committee previously; however we would strongly recommend that recommendation 1 adopted by the committee be amended to enable consultation to be undertaken before council makes a final decision on this matter, and this is reflected in recommendation 4 above.
5. Recommendation 5 is worded to make clear that no new budget allocations are proposed at this stage, although that matter remains open for the budget debates, and
6. Recommendation 6 seeks to provide clarity from Recommendation 3 of the draft minutes, which would be void by virtue of a lack of clarity about the time period specified.

Issues arising from proposal

None.

Rationale for recommendation.

Stated within the report