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Minutes

Meeting of : Communities Committee
Date : 09 February 2026
Meeting held in : The Guildhall, Salisbury
Commencing at : 1830 Hours

Present:

Chair: V Charleston

Vice Chair: C Taylor

Cllrs: S Foster, R Johnson, V Milos, S Rideout

Officers: Louise Webber, Andy Hunt and Penny Muxworthy

There were 2 members of the public present, and 0 members of the press.

1. Apologies:

Cllr J Wells not present.

2. Public Questions/Statement Time:

There were no questions or statements submitted by the public.

3. Councillor Questions/Statement Time:

There were no questions or statements submitted by Councillors.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting:

The minutes of the last meeting of the Communities Committee held on 06 October 2025 were approved and signed by the Chair.

5. Declarations of Interest:

No declarations of interest were received.

6. Dispensations:

No dispensations were requested or granted.

7. Chair's Announcements:

There were no Chair's announcements that would not be covered by the agenda business.

8. Community Services Team Update:

Louise Webber, Head of Community Services, presented the Team update highlighting service development areas following the recently approved budget bids.

It was:

Resolved that:

8.1. The Committee noted the update.

9. Community Strategy and Priorities 2026 to 2029:

Louise Webber, Head of Community Services, presented the paper updating members on the development of the Community Strategy and Priorities for 2026 to 2029. She set out how SCC would work in our communities, and the priorities and actions that would help deliver this work. It will also shape how we collaborate in partnership, engage with residents, underpin the work of the SCC Community team and facilitate the alignment of associated resources, e.g. community grants.

It was:

Resolved that:

9.1 The Committee noted the proposed approach and future direction of travel and endorsed these priorities to provide a working operational framework for development and delivery of the Strategy going forward.

10. Grants Review and Update:

Louise Webber, Head of Community Services, presented the report and recommendations following the review of existing policy, procedures and processes for awarding community grants. These recommendations would improve transparency, reduce inefficiencies and duplication, and increase accessibility to grants from a broader range of organisations.

Neil Cotton, of Wessex Community Action, reported on the work of the group and on their 'expression of interest' for a pending application of £19,950. This would support two outreach workers for one day each for twelve months for an innovative targeted pilot of outreach, engagement, capacity building, training and support for marginalised/diverse communities and a wealth of smaller charities and community groups across Salisbury.

Their project funding request is greater than the £16,000 available for allocation in this 2025/26 year. The committee suggested that a fully developed community application be submitted as an 'exceptional bid', that £16,000 be considered for funding from 25/26 funds, with the remaining £3,500 be requested in the 26/27 financial year.

Proposed by: Cllr S Foster

Seconded by: Cllr S Rideout

A **vote** was taken, and it was:

Resolved that:

- 10.1 The development of a revised grant policy and implementation of associated streamlined grant procedures be undertaken.
- 10.2 That approved recommendations from this report may be utilised as additional supplementary guidance to support responsive and up to date grant decision making.
- 10.3 To improve the currently complex grant process by consolidating grants into one fund, removing defunct grant pots, moving to a rolling programme of annual grants, removing the current appeals process and moving to a web-based platform.
- 10.4 Rent reductions be removed from the grants policy as this has its own stand-alone rent relief policy in place, approved by Full Council in March 2025.
- 10.5 The committee note the current grants expenditure position.
- 10.6 Committee members will receive copies of the 'exceptional decision' applications 'for information only' with timely responses.

11. Salisbury City Community Lottery:

Louise Webber, Head of Community Services, presented the report highlighting there have been no applications from community groups to become new community lottery good causes over the last quarter and that further work is needed to promote this opportunity.

Proposed by: Cllr S Foster

Seconded by: Cllr C Taylor

A **vote** was taken, and it was:

Resolved that:

- 11.1 The committee supports the recommendation that the Communities team undertake promotional work with community networks and on social media to encourage more eligible groups to apply to become a lottery good cause.

11.2 Officers provide more detailed data to compare last five years.

12. Budget Monitoring Report 2025/26 M9 (December end):

Louise Webber introduced the budget monitoring for Community Services.

It was:

Resolved that:

12.1 The Committee noted the financial position at the end of December.

13 Matters, if any, which by reason of special circumstances the Chairman, decides should be considered as a matter of urgency:

There was none.

The meeting closed at 2028 hours.