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CREDITON TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Grants Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 21 July 2026, at 13:00, Manor Office, 6 North Street, Crediton, EX17 2BT

Present: Cllrs Steve Huxtable, Liz Brookes-Hocking, John Downes, Vix Frisby (part meeting) and Joyce Harris

Minute Taker: Emily Armitage

MINUTES

1 ELECTION OF CHAIR FOR 2026-27

The meeting opened with an apology that the agenda numbering had carried over incorrectly from a template.
Decision: It was **resolved** to elect Cllr Huxtable as Chair of the Grants Sub-Committee for 2026-27 (Proposed by Cllr Harris).

2 ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR FOR 2026-27

Decision: It was **resolved** to elect Cllr Liz Brookes-Hocking as Deputy Chair of the Grants Sub-Committee for 2026-27 (Proposed by Cllr Harris).

Cllr Frisby joined the meeting at 13.03

3 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Cllr Huxtable welcomed everyone to the meeting and members introduced themselves.

4 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chair confirmed that no members of the public were present for public question time.

5 APOLOGIES

No apologies were reported.

6 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

The Chair invited any declarations of interest or requests for dispensation. None were raised.

6.1 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST AND DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS (DPI'S) IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA

Members were asked whether they had any personal interests or disclosable pecuniary interests in relation to items on the agenda. No declarations were made.

6.2 TO CONSIDER ANY DISPENSATION REQUESTS (REQUESTS SHOULD BE MADE TO THE TOWN CLERK PRIOR TO THE MEETING)

The Clerk confirmed that no dispensation requests had been received before the meeting, and no further requests were raised during the item.

7 ORDER OF BUSINESS

No adjustment was requested.

8 CHAIR'S AND CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Neither the Chair nor the Clerk had announcements to bring forward under this item.

9 GRANTS COMMITTEE MINUTES

Decision: It was **resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 22 January 2026 as a correct record. (Proposed by Cllr Brookes-Hocking).

10 FINANCE

The financial reports were **noted.**

11 COMMUNITY GRANTS POLICY

11.1 TO RECEIVE THE EXTERNAL REPORT REGARDING RECOMMENDATIONS TO CHANGES TO THE COMMUNITY GRANTS POLICY

Members agreed that the external report had raised several worthwhile points but also noted that attempting a complete rewrite immediately before the next Oversight meeting would be impractical. The discussion therefore focused on identifying changes that were sufficiently clear to progress now, while marking broader ideas such as multi-year arrangements, youth participation, and micro-grants for further work.

A substantial part of the discussion centred on how current practice already includes an element of core funding, even though the policy does not state this clearly. Members observed that some grants effectively sustain valued community organisations year to year rather than fund a one-off innovative project. Examples were discussed in general terms to show that the committee already supports both ongoing community activity and occasional specific projects from the same organisations.

The committee examined the present £3,000 cap. Members debated that the cap appears to encourage applicants to default to that figure rather than submit a properly costed request. Reference was also made to the wider question of whether grant spending should remain around 10 per cent, move to 5 per cent, or be reviewed more fundamentally.

The report's comments on eligible costs prompted a further review of the blanket exclusion of salaries and hospitality. Members noted that salaries had in practice sometimes been supported through core funding, and that hospitality could in some cases be a legitimate event cost. The emerging consensus was that the policy should not contain an absolute ban if the committee may legitimately choose to fund such costs in context.

Decision: The £3,000 cap on grant applications was removed from the policy so applications can be considered on their merits. Cllr Brookes-Hocking voted against removing the £3000 cap.

Decision: The policy position excluding salaries and hospitality as grant costs was removed so those costs can be considered case by case.

11.2 TO CONSIDER ALLOCATING MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL TO ORGANISATIONS IN RECEIPT OF GRANTS TO SUPPORT RELATIONSHIPS AND MONITORING

The committee supported the idea of allocating councillors to organisations receiving grants so that relationships could be strengthened and understanding of funded activity improved and noted that some councillor involvement with organisations or events was already happening informally. It was agreed for Cllr Huxtable to write to council members.

Task: Circulate a list of grant-funded organisations to councillors and invite them to indicate which organisations they would like to be paired with. *@Steve Huxtable*

11.3 TO CONSIDER AND AGREE ANY CHANGES, FOR APPROVAL BY THE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING ON 28 JULY 2026

Members agreed that the policy should not be pushed to the next Oversight Committee meeting on 28 July 2026, as the discussion had shown that the document still needed review for consistency and impact before final submission.

Within the small grants section, members debated whether the lower £700 threshold should remain, however, the committee did not support leaving decisions solely with the Clerk and Chair. Instead, it was agreed that the delegated arrangement should be revised so small grants are handled through the Chair or Deputy Chair of the Grants Sub-Committee, with other committee members able to participate as appropriate.

The wording that grants are considered on a first come, first served basis was challenged as inaccurate and was agreed for removal. Members also reviewed the assessment language used for small grants and the wider scoring approach. One member added that numerical scoring can distort judgement by encouraging formulaic comparisons rather than a rounded view of each application. The committee accepted that point and agreed to replace references to scoring with wording based on assessing or reviewing applications against the stated criteria. The committee acknowledged that application forms would need some consequential updating, particularly following the removal of the £3,000 cap.

Decision: The £700 small-grant threshold was retained as a separate lower-threshold process.

Decision: Delegated consideration of small grants was reassigned to the Chair or Deputy Chair of the Grants Sub-Committee, with committee members able to take part as appropriate.

Decision: The policy wording stating that grants are considered on a first come, first served basis was removed.

Decision: References to scoring grant applications were replaced with assessment or review and score against the policy criteria.

Decision: Revised grant policy changes were deferred for later review rather than being sent to Oversight on 28 July 2026.

12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members noted that the scheduled next meeting date in the agenda was Tuesday 22 September 2026 but concluded that this would come too late for the required policy review sequence.

Decision: The next meeting was rescheduled to 13.00 on Thursday 10 September 2026 to review the policy before Oversight.

The meeting closed at 14.00.

13 REPORTS PACK

Signed ……………………………………………………………………………………

Dated…………………………………