

For Council: 8 December 2025 APPENDIX 3

Lichfield City Council Minutes of the Meeting of the Grants Advisory Committee held via 'Zoom' at 6.00pm on Tuesday 25 November 2025

PRESENT: Councillors C Ball (Chair), H Ashton, D Baker, J Christie, A Hughes, J Marshall and R Yardley.

APOLOGIES: Councillor K Farrelly (apologies accepted following recent childbirth).

Members unanimously offered their congratulations and best wishes to Councillor K Farrelly

24. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

Councillor J Christie declared an interest in agenda item 9 (minute 31) as a former Chair of BSARA and current member.

Councillors A Hughes and R Yardley declared an interest in agenda item 10 (minute 32) as Chair and member respectively of the Johnson Birthplace Advisory Committee.

25. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

RESOLVED: *That the minutes of the Grants Committee meeting held on 15 September 2025 be confirmed as a correct record [Minutes adopted by Council on 30 September 2025].*

26. GENERAL REVENUE GRANTS – 2025/26 BALANCES

It was noted that £11,846 remains in the 2025/26 General Grant fund.

27. GENERAL REVENUE GRANTS – INFLATIONARY INCREASE

The Committee considered whether it would be appropriate to recommend an inflationary increase to the general grant fund for 2026/27). As the current funds were not yet allocated, it was agreed that no request would be made for such an increase

RESOLVED: *That no request for an increase to the grants fund be submitted to Council at this time.*

28. GENERAL REVENUE GRANT REQUEST – LICHFIELD TALKING NEWS FOR THE BLIND

The Committee considered the grant application to fund the expansion of 'Talking News', and the possibility of replacing the current method of distribution with the provision of virtual assistants to service users that would allow quicker and easier distribution and dissemination of information. While supporting the aims of the group, the Committee also felt that the requested sum (£1,000 - £5,000) was somewhat speculative and agreed that £1,000 would be an appropriate grant to award. The Committee asked that Lichfield Talking News be advised of other potential sources of funding, including the Mary Slater Charity, which may be able to assist with their aims.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: *That a grant of £1,000 be awarded to Lichfield Talking News for the Blind.*

29. GENERAL GRANT REQUEST AND IN PRINCIPLE CIL SUPPORT – DOVEHOUSE COMMUNITY GARDENS

The Committee considered the submission from representatives of Dovehouse Community Gardens which detailed the process and costs to establish the viability of a mains water supply to the former allotment site. The Committee was asked to consider:

1. Whether or not it would wish to award a grant of £183 to fund investigation into the viability of a mains water facility at Dovehouse Community Gardens.
2. Whether it would wish to support the use of CIL to facilitate mains water at Dovehouse Community Gardens based on an estimated cost of £5,000

Cllr D Baker advised that there was limited opportunity for additional rainwater capture at the site. Cllr Baker also asked whether, in addition to the benefits to the ploholders, the land itself as an LCC asset would benefit from having a mains water supply. Cllr A Hughes stated that the investigation work was supported, and future discussions should be informed by that process, rather than committing to any monetary support from CIL at this time.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That a grant of £183 be awarded to Dovehouse Community Gardens to fund investigation into the viability of mains water supply to the site.

RESOLVED: That the Committee reconsider any application for CIL on its own merits in due course, dependent upon additional information that will become available following initial investigations, the availability of CIL at the time any formal request is made etc.

30. CIL MONIES RECEIVED, COMMITTED AND FORECAST

Members considered the agenda report which provided detail of completed and ongoing CIL funded projects. The current amount of CIL available for allocation being £86,865.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

31. CIL REQUEST – PARKING PREVENTION, BEACONFIELDS

Members considered the Town Clerk's agenda report which detailed issues experienced with parking on LCC land around Beaconfields/Swinfen Broun Road (open spaces 15a and 15c), especially when there are events in the city centre and/or Beacon Park. Beacon Street Area Residents Association (BSARA) had highlighted this issue and requested a permanent solution. The recommendations in the report – to utilise timber and duraplast bollards to prevent unwanted vehicular access but to still allow access for maintenance etc - followed a site meeting with representatives from BSARA, LCC, LDC and SCC Highways.

Cllr J Marshall asked whether other solutions had been investigated, such as planters. The Town Clerk advised that signage had been placed at the sites but this had been largely ineffective, and that it would require several planters to ensure no vehicular access to the areas, plus the associated maintenance. It was agreed the proposal be supported, but that efforts be made to improve the grassed areas as a result of restricted vehicle access, for example with bulb planting/wildflower areas. The Town Clerk confirmed he would discuss options with the Open Spaces Officer.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That up to £5,000 of CIL be allocated to install bollards at LCC open space 15a and 15c in accordance with discussions held with other stakeholders and detailed in the committee report.

32. CIL REQUEST – SJBM KITCHEN & TOILETS

Members considered the Museum and Heritage Officer's agenda report which provided an update on the costs associated with the proposed refitting of the Birthplace Museum's kitchen and toilet. Following professional advice, the scope and cost of the work has increased. The Committee considered the merits of the project, and the positive stance of the City Council's Johnson Birthplace Advisory Committee, which had considered the matter in detail.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That an additional £7,042 of CIL be allocated to the renovation of the SJBM kitchen/toilet facilities.

33. CIL REQUEST – GUILDHALL ROOF

Members considered the Town Clerk's agenda report which detailed the costs of the proposed works to the Guildhall roof, (budgeted at £150,000 to include fees and contingencies). Members agreed that the Guildhall is a community asset and should be well maintained, and that relieving pressure on the City Council's capital reserve – thereby allowing it to be utilised for other projects – was an appropriate way forward.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That £50,000 of CIL be allocated to the proposed replacement of the eastern pitch of the Guildhall roof.

34. CIL REQUEST – FRIARY CLOCK

Members considered the Town Clerk's agenda report which set out the professional advice and quotation for repairs to the Friary clock. The Town Clerk provided a verbal update, confirming that due to Smith of Derby's current lead in time, it would be January 2026 before repairs could begin.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That £7,611 of CIL be allocated to the repair of the Friary clock mechanism as detailed in the report provided by Smith of Derby.

35. CIL REQUEST – DRIVEWAY TO ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH

Members considered the representations made by St Michael's in regard to the condition of the driveway. The Town Clerk provided a verbal update on quotations received, being approximately £3,000 for basic repairs, and between £15,000 and £17,000 to prepare the surface and re-lay tarmac to the majority of the path where heavy wear is evident. The Town Clerk confirmed that no Plan had yet been provided by St Michael's to confirm the extent of the closed churchyard and therefore LCC's responsibility in the area.

The Committee was in agreement that, in the absence of a Plan that demonstrated the driveway was part of the Closure Order for the wider closed churchyard, it would not be appropriate for the council to admit liability or invest core funds in the repairs.

Cllr C Ball asked if there had been any recent burials in the 'closed churchyard'; the Town Clerk confirmed that there had been, but these were, to the best of his knowledge, all 'family plots' which are exempt from the normal rules of closed churchyards.

The Committee agreed that, as a gesture of goodwill, a CIL grant be awarded to cover the costs of the urgent repairs, but that St Michael's representatives could use this funding as a contribution towards wider driveway repairs if it so wished. The Committee wished it to be made clear to St Michael's representatives that the CIL grant was not an admission of responsibility for the driveway on the part of the council, and that a Plan of the closed churchyard would be required to establish this.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That £2,700+VAT of CIL be allocated to the repair of the driveway at St Michael's Churchyard.

36. CIL – SPEED INDICATOR DEVICES (SIDs)

Members considered the information and updates within the Town Clerk's report. This item followed a request from SCC Councillor Matthew Wallens to consider installation of SIDs on the following roads:

- Curborough Road
- Weston Road
- Purcell Avenue
- Dimbles Lane
- Trent Valley Road

As SCC no longer fund these devices it would likely fall to the City Council to do so, as would maintenance/repair and any public consultation associated with their provision. The City Council would also be required to satisfy Highways requirements as to exact location, obtain a licence from SCC to install etc.

Cllr A Hughes suggested that LDC CIL may be more appropriate for this project but also questioned the proposed locations. Cllr J Marshall stated that County Councillors can allocate their own funding to speed studies and that such a study should be essential in assessing whether or not to allocate funds in this case. Cllr R Yardley noted the significant cost variations in equipment that purports to carry out the same function. Cllrs Baker and Ashton echoed Cllr Hughes' comments regarding location, Cllr Ashton stating that he did not believe the devices would be effective in the locations chosen. Cllr C Ball stated that he would be more supportive if the devices had cameras and allowed the prosecution of offenders. The Committee agreed that the proposal be rejected at this time but further evidence be requested in the form of a speed survey to inform future discussions.

RESOLVED: That the proposal be rejected at this time, but that a request for a speed survey be submitted; the survey being seen by the committee as essential to inform the evidence base for the proposal.

37. CIL ALLOCATION UPDATES

Members considered the agenda report detailing progress with ongoing CIL funded projects.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

38. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

23 February 2026, in person in the Moulton Room Guildhall, to consider the applications received to the main annual grants round.

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS
THE CHAIR DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 6.52PM**

*Copies of applications for funding as detailed in these minutes are available
to all members on request to the Town Clerk*