May 2023 County Councillor Report – Cllr Robin Bennett

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A new online application form for the councillor priority fund is now live:

[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/councillorpriorityfund](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/councillorpriorityfund)

**Background**The Councillor Priority Fund supports councillor priorities in their local areas.

Each Oxfordshire county councillor has a budget of £15,000 to award during over the course of two financial years from April 2023 until March 2025. Funding is awarded by councillors on a rolling basis.

This is part of our commitment to supporting local communities across Oxfordshire to create a greener, fairer and healthier county.

If your project impacts a wider area, you can put through a joint bid supported by multiple councillors.

To be eligible for funding, applying organisations must have a committee and a constitution or appropriate rules setting out aims and objectives and how the group will operate. Eligible organisations include:

▪  Registered Charity

▪  Not for Profit Company (including Community Interest Companies, CIO)

▪  Constituted Community or Voluntary Group

▪  Non-Constituted Community or Voluntary Group

▪  Town/Parish Council or Parish Meeting

▪  School, Academy or Educational Institution

▪  Parent Teacher Associations

The types of projects that we fund include village hall refurbishment, purchasing of equipment, community activities open to all, play equipment for playgrounds, provisions for food banks or community larders, tree planting or community gardening schemes.

▪  All projects must address recognised needs of local communities of Oxfordshire.

▪  Project application forms must provide a breakdown of costs and anticipated timescales

▪  Projects will need to be completed by 31 March 2025

▪  Projects must benefit Oxfordshire communities, be inclusive and provide good

value for money.

**The final deadline for applications is 30 November 2025.**

**The application process:**

1)  Discuss your proposal with your local county councillor(s) and confirm their support in writing

2)  Complete the online application form, you will need to provide evidence that you have support from your local councillor(s)

3)  Applications will be assessed against the scheme’s requirements

4)  Applicants will be notified of the decision along with their local councillor

5)  Monitoring of projects

**Next Steps**

The OCC team will assess your application within 28 days to make sure your project proposal meets the scheme’s requirements and contact you if they require further information about the proposal. Incomplete applications lead to delays in processing the funding request, so please make sure to include all requested information in your application form.

**Awarding Grant**

If your funding request is successful, the team will notify you by email. Unsuccessful applicants will be offered feedback on their proposal and, where possible, we will work with organisations to help them identify alternative funding opportunities.

For all bids you will be required to accept the terms and conditions as part of completing the application form.

If your funding request is for £5,000 or more, we will need to have a separate grant agreement in place before any payment can be awarded. We will send this out once the application form has been received and approved by the relevant county councillor(s).

**Monitoring**

Successful applicants are expected to comply fully with any monitoring requests from the Council and must agree to this when signing the funding request form.

All successful applicants need to be prepared for a review of their project. This may include:

* Receipts recording how the money was spent
* Reports on the activity funded
* Feedback from individuals impacted
* Any other record of the activity funded (e.g. promotional flyers and posters)

Successful applicants are strongly encouraged to keep us informed about the progress of their projects. Any setbacks to the implementation of the projects should be reported to the Councillor Priority Fund team (**councillorpriorityfund@oxfordshire.gov.uk**).

Any unspent grant funding will be recovered by the county council.