

DIDCOT TOWN COUNCIL – GRANT REPORT JUNE 2020

Citizens Advice Oxfordshire South and Vale

Background

1. In November 2019, Didcot Town Council's Finance and General Purposes Committee awarded Citizens Advice a grant of £10,000. We are grateful to the Town Council for this funding; it is essential to our financial security. We receive no core funding from the national Citizens Advice charity or any other national source. All our core income is raised locally.

This report sets out what the funding has been used for.

Purposes for which the grant is being used

2. We are using the grant as a contribution to (a) the premises & offices costs of our Didcot Advice Centre and (b) volunteer expenses.

Volunteer expenses (mainly travel to the Didcot Advice Centre)	£2,445
Office costs (Reference materials, IT equipment & support, telephone, office equipment, printing and stationary, postage,)	£2,103
Premises costs (Heat and light, rent, rates, insurance, cleaning, repairs)	£12,930
Total annual costs of volunteer expenses, office and premises costs	£17,478
Grant awarded	£10,000

This grant enables us to maintain a high quality service to residents from Didcot and the surrounding area.

Our clients in Didcot

3. We reach a large number of people from the **Didcot Citizens Advice Centre** (in Dales, 9-15 High Street Didcot OX11 8EQ). During **2019/20**, we served **2,658** clients face to face and by phone. This includes **1,600 Didcot residents**. The remainder either worked in Didcot, used our Wallingford Advice Centre, or lived in the surrounding villages.
4. The difference between the total number of clients served by the Didcot *office* and the number of clients from Didcot *wards* is explained by the fact that some clients who work in Didcot but live elsewhere may use the service, as will clients from the

surrounding Parishes. The Town Council will be interested to know that many Parish Councils are now contributing towards our costs.

5. **Covid-19.** Since March 23rd 2020, all our Advice Centres have been closed and all our advisers and supervisors are operating our AdviceLine service from home. Our specialist staff have equipped them with the necessary equipment to maintain our strict security and confidentiality protocols. We are also continuing to recruit and train new advisers to join the service. Indeed, one of our newest advisers started in Didcot last month, having completed our first on-line training course.

6. **Some facts about Citizens Advice**

Top 6 main topics people bring to us:

- Benefits and tax credits
- Debt
- Employment
- Housing
- Relationships /family
- Consumer goods & services

Our costs in Didcot

• Approx cost of each client advice session:	36.00
• Total cost of CA service in Didcot (2,658 x 36):	95,688K
• District Council covers 60% of total cost:	57,412K
• Didcot Town Council grant:	10K
• Amount to be raised from Parish Councils / Trusts:	28.276K

Our Impact (across South and Vale)

• Likely to recommend Citizens Advice*	90%
• Helped to find a way forward*	86%
• Problem resolved (13-18 weeks after)*	78%
• Stressed / depressed before advice**	2 in 3
• Less stressed/ depressed after advice**	4 in 5

*Figures derived from third party survey of OSAV Citizens Advice clients Jan-March 2020

**Citizens Advice (2014) findings from national outcomes and impact research

*** Cost benefit model approved by HM Treasury set out in National Citizens Advice

'Modelling the value of the Citizens Advice service in 14/15'