

Freedom of Information Request 010/2025 Cary in Bloom and flower displays

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. This concerns Castle Cary Town Council support to Cary in Bloom and the cost of hanging baskets, window boxes etc. In relation to this I would be grateful if you could provide the following information:

- **The total amount of money spent by Castle Cary Town Council on supporting Cary in Bloom. Please include in this any indirect costs incurred – for example through the use of existing contracts (such as printing, watering etc). Kindly also provide details of any anticipated future costs.**

Castle Cary Town Council awarded a grant of £150 towards Cary in Bloom 2025. This is in line with requests from many Castle Cary and Ansford groups who ask for support from time to time.

- **An estimate of the number of staff hours spent on work relating to Cary in Bloom and flower displays.**

Approximately 2 hours of Marketing and Communications Administrator time spent on Cary in Bloom, ordering printed flyers and scarecrow festival maps and promoting events on social media.

Approximately 3 hours of Town Clerk time spent on the tender for the hanging baskets and processing invoices. Please note that this is not part of the Cary in Bloom entry but to promote the town and businesses.

- **The total amount of money spent to date by Castle Cary Town Council on providing flowers and containers around the Town (eg hanging baskets and window boxes). Please include any indirect costs incurred such as installation, watering etc. Please also provide details of any anticipated future costs.**

The total net cost for the supply, planting and watering of the hanging baskets during 2025 is £4,045. The invoices have been paid by CCTC but it is envisaged that the full amount will be recovered through Castle Cary Commerce Association membership fees and donations from local businesses.

- **A copy of the Business Case or equivalent documentation that demonstrates the compelling need for public funds to be allocated to these.**

As part of the budget setting process for 2025-26 and precept discussions, no budget line for hanging baskets was included and it is envisaged that the costs will be recovered in full through Castle Cary Commerce Association membership fees and donations from local businesses.

- **Details of any grants or donations received for either of these.**

There is money remaining in a reserve that was received as a donation to CCTC in a previous year for hanging baskets/marketing.

- **It is understood from your last monthly meeting that there may have been an issue regarding the authorisation of certain contracts and/or payments related to this area of spending. If this is correct, please provide details of the issue and any measures introduced to improve governance processes going forward.**

Payments are authorised monthly at the Full Council meetings. The links to the minutes of December 2024 and January 2025 are below for information

<https://castle-cary.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Approved-CCTC-Minutes-Full-Council-9th-December-2024.pdf>

<https://castle-cary.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Approved-CCTC-Minutes-Full-Council-20th-January-2025-3.pdf>