

Community Investment Fund Grant Policy and Procedures Rules (revised December 2011 – revisions shown in *italic*)



Introduction

The Community Investment Fund grant scheme is funded on an annual basis from interest earned on investments.

The council considers the amount to be made available to the grant scheme at its annual budget setting meeting based on investment income earned in the previous financial year.

The scheme is split into two parts; one for awards of over £15,000 and one for smaller awards of under £15,000.

The scoring criteria and policy and procedure rules will be determined from time to time by the cabinet. Details of the application procedure will be included in the application forms held by the head of corporate strategy.

What type of project will the scheme fund?

The council seeks to support a variety of community initiatives. Applications for funding towards a wide variety of different community projects can be made. Only capital expenditure, such as spending on buildings, extensions or equipment will be considered under this scheme. Repairs and maintenance work does not fall within capital expenditure. Applications for revenue funding to cover such things as salary costs, heating or rent will not be considered under this scheme. Retrospective projects will not be considered unless exceptional circumstances can be shown.

Who can apply to the scheme?

Any constituted community-based organisation, including parish and town councils, may apply. The council will not fund public sector bodies, such as Oxfordshire County Council or Primary Care Trusts. Because education is a function of Oxfordshire County Council, we will not accept applications from schools. Businesses and individuals are not eligible to apply for a grant.

The council is committed to promoting equality and diversity and welcomes applications from all sectors of the community, regardless of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age, status, religion or belief.

What is the maximum award from the scheme?

Community Investment Fund – over £15,000 scheme

The maximum award from the over £15,000 scheme is **£100,000** (or 60 per cent of the total project cost). All grants awarded will be based on a percentage of the total project cost.

Community Investment Fund – under £15,000 scheme

The maximum award from the under £15,000 scheme is **£14,999** (or 60 per cent of the total project cost). The total project cost must be less than £50,000 (excluding VAT). All grants awarded will be based on a percentage of the total project cost.

Scheme eligibility criteria

Applications will only be considered if organisations/projects meet the following eligibility criteria:

- from properly constituted charitable or non profit making organisations
- secured all appropriate planning and listed building consents
- two years audited accounts (six months of bank statements for new organisations)
- a minimum of two quotations for all work, equipment and fees relating to the project
- an access audit (if the request for a grant award is towards building work to enhance an existing facility)
- has not commenced
- *organisations that have not received council funding in the previous two years*
- *for land/premises owned by the organisation (leases must be for a minimum term of 10 years)*

Scoring criteria

All applications to the scheme will be scored using approved scoring criteria¹ shown at appendix 2.

Decision making

Under £15,000 scheme

The relevant cabinet member will make decisions on awards for grants from the Community Investment Fund of between £5,000 and £15,000. These decisions will be published as individual cabinet member decisions.

The head of corporate strategy will make decisions on awards for grants from the Community Investment Fund of between £1 and up to a maximum of £4,999 in consultation with the relevant cabinet member. These decisions will be published to all councillors.

Over £15,000 scheme

The relevant cabinet member will make decisions on applications for grants from the Community Investment Fund in consultation with the Community Investment Fund Panel

¹ Cabinet 8/4/2010

(CIFP), as delegated to them by cabinet on 14 February 2011. If, for any reason, the cabinet member does not agree with the CIFP then the decision will be referred to full cabinet for consideration. The maximum award will be in line with the approved scheme criteria².

Community Investment Fund Grants Panel

*The council will appoint a CIFP of five councillors, consisting of representatives from each political group, to consider the applications received. No member of the cabinet shall be a member of the CIFP. CIFP members **must** attend all meetings to be eligible to vote on any application in order to make recommendations from the CIFP to the relevant cabinet member.*

The CIFP will visit each site that is subject of an application to the scheme.

The CIFP will consider a detailed evaluation report and receive a presentation from officers including a recommendation on the scores, based on the approved scoring criteria attached at appendix 1, for each application to the scheme.

*CIFP members **will not** be able to vote on applications within their own ward.*

The CIFP will determine the final score for each application using the approved scoring criteria attached at appendix 1.

The CIFP will decide a 'cut off' score and any applications scoring less than the 'cut off' score will receive no award.

The CIFP will determine the award amounts to those applications scoring above the 'cut off' score appropriate to the budget available.

The CIFP will consider its advice to the relevant cabinet member in relation to the applications that have been submitted, including whether an application **should not receive** an award for any of the following reasons:

- there is serious concern as to the managerial capability of the applicant;
- *the applicant has **sufficient reserves** to fund the project themselves*
- there is serious concern as to the financial viability of a proposed project;
- there is uncertainty as to whether the proposed project complies with the grant awarding criteria

The relevant cabinet member will determine the applications in the light of the above advice.

Applications will normally be considered in June each year (unless an election has taken place when it will be September).

² Cabinet 14/2/2011

Procedure at meetings of the CIFP

Meetings of the CIFP will be conducted in accordance with the Rules of Procedure set out in Part 4 of this Constitution.

Standard conditions of all grant awards

- grants will not be payable towards any costs incurred before the grant award decision date.
- projects must commence within one year of the date of the grant being awarded.
- evidence that all funding is in place to complete the project must be provided to the grants team prior to commencement of work.
- council staff must be allowed to enter and inspect the work being carried out, by arrangement, subject to them abiding to any necessary health and safety requirements.
- requests for information to assist us in monitoring the success of your project must be supplied to the grants team as required.
- A plaque, supplied by the council, must be displayed in a prominent position to acknowledge grant awards of over £5,000.

Appendix 1

Community Investment Fund

Scoring criteria

Assessment methodology for capital grant applications

All applications will be assessed using the scoring system shown below.

Contributing to the council's priorities up to 60 points

Scores of up to 60 points are available dependent on how well the project contributes to the following priorities:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• protecting our environment• helping people to find homes• supporting economic growth• transforming Didcot• helping people feel safe & secure• improving opportunities, activities and support for young people• strengthening local communities.	Does the project contribute to one or more of these priorities? Scores are based on how well a project contributes to any one particular priority or a variety of them.
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For applications to the under £15,000 capital grant scheme, this section will be scored first and applications that do not score adequately will be withdrawn from the process.

The cut off score in this section for the under £15,000 capital grant scheme will be 19 points or under.

Viability of project up to 60 points

Scores of up to 60 points are available dependent on the viability of the project.

Viability	Financial viability, need, competence and value for money. Is the project justifiable, reasonable and appropriate for the area? Is the project viable and sustainable, delivering best value for money, likely to secure full funding and progress within a reasonable time scale? Is the organisation able to manage the project?
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Finance**up to 15 points**

Scores of up to 15 points are available dependent on the percentage of the project costs requested:

Up to 20 per cent of the project costs	15 points
21 – 40 per cent of the project costs	10 points
41 – 60 per cent of the project costs	5 points

Local issues**up to 80 points**

Scores of up to 20 points are available for each of the four categories shown below:

Broadening the range	<p>Is this more of the same or will the project enable new activities to take place?</p> <p>This will involve an assessment of the added value that the proposal brings. To score points a project must include evidence to show that a wider range of people will use the facility.</p>
Community participation	<p>To what extent has the relevant community been consulted and participated in putting the proposal together?</p> <p>A community need does not have to be geographically based and participation is not a headcount – the relevant community will vary in size dependent upon the project being proposed.</p>
Meeting a local need	<p>How well is this evidenced detailed?</p> <p>Need and demand are different - this is about a proven lack of something that the project provides.</p>
Community benefit	<p>Who will benefit? This will go beyond a simple number count, to take account of the imbalance in size between different communities.</p> <p>Community benefit also includes wider social, economic and environmental benefits that contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and energy saving in the district.</p>

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Summary of scoring system

The maximum score is 215 made up as follows:

Assessment factor	Maximum points available
Priorities of the council	60
Viability	60
Finance	15
Local issues	80
Total	215

Summary of scoring system for under £15,000 capital grant scheme

Applications to the under £15,000 capital grant scheme will be determined as detailed in the council's scheme of delegation and scored as follows:

Total points score	Award (subject to budget availability)
160	100 per cent of requested amount
115	80 per cent of requested amount
114 or less	No award

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