

Appendix One

Revenue Grants Policy

2017/18 – 2020/21

INTRODUCTION

We want to offer grant support for a four-year period to community organisations who can help us deliver our new corporate objectives. We recognise the value of local community organisations delivering key services to our residents and their need for grants that extend for more than a one-year period.

We will favour organisations who are actively exploring partnership/joint working with other voluntary organisations, businesses or the public sector and/or other methods to help them to become more sustainable.

WHAT TYPE OF SERVICE WILL THE SCHEME FUND?

We can fund a range of activities through this scheme but they must offer a direct benefit to our residents by meeting a clearly identified need and a measurable contribution to at least one of our corporate priorities and/or the council's equality objectives.

The corporate priorities are:

- Invest in the districts' future
- services that reflect residents' needs
- be tough on enforcement
- unlock the potential of Didcot
- homes and jobs for everyone
- build thriving communities.

Information about the corporate plan priorities and the council's equality objectives is available at www.southoxon.gov.uk

We will fund services that benefit residents of South Oxfordshire (if a service covers a wider area the costs will need to be pro-rata):

- core revenue funding such as;
 - salary costs relating to the activities being supported
 - rent and rates etc for the location of the service (ideally in South Oxfordshire)
 - training staff in new skills to deliver services in our district (or a proportion if it's a county wide service)
 - marketing and publicity for new/extended services, which those organisations provide, or a proportion for general publicity that includes a new service

- professional fees directly linked to collaborative working with others, or starting or extending a service
- transport costs (such as mileage expenses), where they are clearly required as part of the objectives of the organisation.

We will not fund:

- services that offer minimal benefit to residents of South Oxfordshire
- topping up savings and reserves
- purchase of large items of equipment (covered by our capital grant scheme)
- purchase of vehicles
- new heating systems(covered by our capital grant scheme)
- the purchase of a new lease(covered by our capital grant scheme)
- extensions to premises (covered by our capital grant scheme)

WHO CAN APPLY TO THE SCHEME?

Any constituted **local** voluntary sector organisation may apply.

This scheme is **not** open to:

- town/parish councils
- other statutory bodies, or organisations providing a service on behalf of a statutory body
- unincorporated groups and associations
- education providers (schools, free schools, academies, colleges and similar).

WHAT ARE THE MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM AWARDS?

We will accept applications for a **minimum** grant of £10,000 and a **maximum** grant of £100,000 over the four-year period.

We'll limit awards to a **maximum of one-third (33.33 per cent)** of an organisation's total annual running costs in **any** financial year.

In very exceptional cases, like a major funder pulling out of a project that offers significant benefit to our residents we will consider requests for more than these amounts. Applicants must get approval from the grants team before submitting an application. (The online application system will not allow exceptional requests without our approval).

GRANT REDUCTION OVER THE FOUR YEARS

We'll favour organisations who can show a year-on-year reduction in their grant request over the four-year grant period without reducing services. They must submit

plan explaining how they'll manage/compensate for the reduction without reducing their front line services.

BUDGET

We have a provisional budget of £1,680,000 over the four-year period; this is subject to annual approval by the council when setting its budgets.

HOW ORGANISATIONS APPLY

We have a two-stage application process for this scheme. Stage one is an initial expression of interest open to any non-profit organisation and stage two is a full application by invitation only.

OPENING, CLOSING AND DECISION DATES

Expressions of interest round:

Open mid-July 2016; close 15 September 2016 with decisions in October 2016.

Full application stage:

Open (by invitation only) 17 October 2016, close 28 November 2016, with decisions in February/March 2017.

SCHEME ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Stage one: expression of interest

Organisations must:

- have a specific and relevant activity or service they provide locally and that contributes to at least one of our corporate objectives
- provide evidence that there is a need for such an activity or service and that it benefits residents of South Oxfordshire
- provide details of the estimated costs to provide the activity or service each year, over the four-year period and how they'll fund the rest of these costs
- confirm they can provide the necessary documents listed below if invited to make a full application.

Stage two - full application:

In the full application, we will ask organisations for the following documents and information:

- a signed constitution, articles of association or equivalent
- full accounts for the last two years (or a detailed working budget and financial plan for new organisations)

- a detailed budget for year one and a funding plan for the following three years
- project delivery and development plans showing plans for more collaborative work with others to become more sustainable in the longer term
- insurance, safeguarding, H&S, equalities, data protection and other relevant policies
- evidence of need for the service/work/activity, including local strategies, official reports and similar
- suggested outcomes or targets we can use to help measure the success of the service/work/activity each year over the grant period
- two references (for organisations the council has not worked with before).

DECISION MAKING

Stage one

Officers will use the matrix shown at appendix A to assess the stage one applications and to recommend a shortlist to the Head of Corporate Strategy and the Cabinet Member for Grants who will decide which organisations we will invite to complete the stage two application.

Stage two

Officers will then invite the shortlisted organisations to make a full application and evaluate them using the matrix at appendix B. Officers will recommend scores and grant awards to the grants panel for consideration.

The grants panel will decide the final scores and make grant award recommendations to cabinet.

Cabinet will consider the grant panel's recommendations when determining the revenue grant awards. Any awards over £25,000 will be subject to the council's call-in procedure.

STANDARD CONDITIONS AND PENALTIES FOR REVENUE GRANT AWARDS

- the organisation must enter into a formal grant agreement with us before they can receive any funding
- awards are subject to annual approval of the council's budget for each financial year of the grant period
- organisations must provide satisfactory monitoring information by the deadlines set out in the grant agreement to continue receiving payments
- organisations must spend the grant in the financial year it was paid. We will deduct any grant remaining from the following year's payment
- organisations must consult with us before making any significant changes to the service or their general organisation structure

- organisations must ensure they comply with all statutory legislation, for example health and safety, safeguarding, equalities and human rights
- organisations will have suitable insurance in place for the duration of the grant
- organisations must acknowledge our support in any publicity about the service we are funding.

We may add extra conditions to any grant during the decision making process if we consider it necessary.

The Head of Corporate Strategy has delegated authority in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Grants to remove any grant conditions or amend any targets following a written request from the organisation.

We will confirm organisations have met all relevant grant conditions before making any payments.

Failure to meet all of the agreed grant conditions may delay payment or, in extreme cases, result in termination of the grant.

PAYMENT OF GRANTS

We will release all annual grants of £20,000 or more in two equal stages, the first half at the start of the year (April) and the balance approximately six months later, after a **satisfactory** mid-year monitoring review against targets (September).

We will pay annual grants of less than £20,000 in one payment, the first in April 2017 and subsequently on an annual basis after a **satisfactory** monitoring review against targets.

If an organisation supplies monitoring data or other requested documents within two months after the submission deadline, we will deduct the following year's grant by ten per cent.

If an organisation has not supplied their monitoring data or other requested documents within two months after the submission deadline, we will consider them organisation in breach of our grant agreement and we will terminate their grant.

If an organisation performs below target without valid reasons, we will reduce our next grant payment proportionately to reflect the drop in performance, for example if they are ten per cent below target, we will deduct ten per cent from their next payment.

Appendix A - Expression of interest - shortlisting scoring matrix:

We will only consider applications submitted by the application deadline (including all required documents).

We will automatically reject applications from organisations who have not provided the necessary documents to meet the eligibility criteria by the closing date.

Criteria	Low (1-5)	Medium (6-10)	High (11-15)	Very High (16-20)
Will the organisation help us meet one or more of our corporate priorities <u>and/or</u> the council's equality objectives?	Low levels of contribution to any of our corporate priorities and/or the council's equality objectives	Medium levels of contribution to one or more of our priorities and/or the council's equality objectives	High levels of contribution to one or more of our priorities and/or the council's equality objectives	Very high levels of contribution to one or more of our priorities and/or the council's equality objectives
Based on evidence provided will the service address an identified local need in South Oxfordshire?	Low levels of identified proven local need	Medium levels of identified proven local need	High levels of identified proven local need	Very high levels of identified proven local need
Do the estimated costs provided for the service seem realistic to meet the identified needs in the local area.	The funding plan is brief and not well developed	The funding plan is developed to a reasonable level.	The funding plan is highly developed and realistic.	The funding plan is very highly developed and realistic

Maximum score is 60 points	Priority level
15 - 30	Low priority – organisation not invited to apply to the second round
31 - 44	Medium priority – subject to budget availability invite organisation to apply to the second round
45 - 50	High priority – invite organisation to submit an application for the second round
51 or over	Very high priority – invite and encourage organisation to submit an application for the second round

Appendix B - Full application scoring matrix:

We will automatically reject any applications that have not submitted all the required eligibility documents by the closing date.

Financial review

Do they have:	0 points	1 point	2 points
A plan to reduce the amount of our grant year on year and how they'll manage this reduction without reducing their service	No	Partly – they have only planned minor reductions and/or reductions in some years and not all four	Yes – they have planned a reasonable reduction over the four-year grant term with supporting evidence of how they will manage this.
A long term financial plan (ideally covering the next five years)	No	Yes – a financial plan has been submitted and is satisfactory	Yes – a detailed financial plan has been submitted and is comprehensive
At least one year's running costs in reserve (excluding new organisations)	No		Yes
Evidence they've covered all their costs without making a loss in the last two years (excluding new organisations)	No		Yes
What other funding sources have they identified?	None	Other funders identified but funding not yet secured	They've secured all their other revenue funding

General review

Criteria	0 points	1 point	2 points
How did they identify the local need for their service/activity?	No evidence of a local need other than their own opinion	There's some external research on this need, or some evidence has been provided	There is strong evidence of the need which is clearly identified in local strategies, plans or other reports
Will the organisation help us meet one or more of our corporate priorities and/or the council's equality objectives?	Low levels of contribution to any of our corporate priorities and/or the council's equality objectives.	A medium to high level of contribution to one or more of our priorities and/or the council's equality objectives.	Very high levels of contribution to one or more of our priorities and/or the council's equality objectives.
Does the organisation have a volunteering policy and actively encourage volunteers?	No evidence provided	No formal policy exists but the organisation does recruit volunteers.	A volunteering policy exists and the organisation has an active volunteer base.
What evidence is there that this service is the best way to meet the local need?	No evidence provided	Some evidence it could meet the need but there are other options	Significant levels of evidence that this is the best solution
What support does this service have from relevant officers and from other agencies?	No support or negative feedback from officers or other agencies	Some general support from officers or other agencies	Officers or other agencies strongly support this specific service
What evidence is there that their	No evidence of how they	Some research when setting	Significant levels of research and the outcomes

measurable outcomes/targets are reasonable and achievable?	set the outcomes and/or they aren't reasonable	outcomes but they seem too high or low	seem reasonable
How reasonable and achievable is their project plan (based on evidence provided)	It's unlikely they'll achieve their plan	They might achieve some of their plan, but there are concerns/risks	We're confident they'll deliver the majority or all of their plan
What is the funding for?	To continue an existing service with no changes to the service or their funding	To improve an existing service or continue one if they've lost funding	To expand their existing range of services/areas covered or to launch a new service

maximum score is 22 points	
0 – 15 points	Low priority funding
16 – 18 points	Medium priority funding
19 – 22 points	High priority funding