

Report to: Executive Board 11th November 2002

GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY & COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS - UPDATE

Report of:	<i>Neighbourhood Renewal Business Unit.</i>	WARDS AFFECTED
Report Author:	<i>Nicola Harrison Grants Development Officer</i>	
Date Written:	<i>23/10/02</i>	
Lead Member Responsible:	<i>Councillor Christian</i>	
Overview and Scrutiny Committee responsibility:	<i>Finance & Performance Monitoring</i>	
Key decision:	<i>No</i>	
<p>SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS This report considers a recommendation from the East Area Committee regarding grants criteria, informs the Executive Board of feedback received about partnership grants criteria and explains the role that Area Committees will take in the new grant allocation process.</p> <p>Recommendations The Executive Board is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reaffirm the existing criteria referred to in paragraphs 1.2 and 1.4. 2. Note the comments in paragraph 1.3. 3. Note the role of the Area Committees in the new grants allocation process. 4. Circulate this report to Area Committees for information. 		
<p>This report has been seen and approved by:</p> <p>Councillor Christian, Portfolio for Grants.</p> <p>Val Johnson, Neighbourhood Renewal Business Manager.</p>		

1. Recommendation from East Area Committee

1.1 The East Area Committee on 16th October received the report previously considered by the Board on 27th September and recommended that:

(a) the grant criteria be amended to include the requirement for minimum terms and conditions, and not just minimum wages, and for agreements on conditions attached to any grant awarded to be approved by the relevant Area Committee

(b) the term "Partnership Grant" be more clearly defined in the section on Partnership Grants criteria.

1.2 The matter of whether grant criteria should include the requirement for minimum terms and conditions was debated at both Finance & Monitoring Overview & Scrutiny and Executive Board. The conclusion reached was that it would be impractical to implement such a requirement both in terms of having limited resources to monitor / assess the requirement and also that it would commit the City Council to fund organisations to enable them to maintain minimum terms & conditions (for by example awarding annual inflationary increases to partnership grants). For these reasons the decision made was to include only the requirement for organisations to pay the minimum wage to any staff employed with City council funding. Executive Board is asked to reaffirm the original recommendation that if organisations are requesting funds to employ staff then they should ensure that employees are paid at least the minimum wage.

1.3 The conditions attached to grants agreed are standard for each award (attached as Appendix 1). Specific conditions are occasionally attached if the grant is subject to a particular requirement being met. If the relevant area committee requires any additional or specific conditions attached to a grant then this should be made clear when the area committee considers applications in February 2003. It would not be feasible however to negotiate the conditions for each grant separately, given the amount of additional monitoring and administration that this would generate.

1.4 Executive Board agreed criteria for partnership grants for the period 2003 – 2006 on 27th September 2002. This is the first time that such criteria has been applied to groups requesting longer term funding and aspires to make the allocation of partnership grants more open, transparent and accessible. Feedback has been received from one organisation that they are unhappy with the benchmark that partnership grants will only be awarded if the request is for over £10,000 (annual). The Arts officer has identified that possibly two organisations that have received partnership grants in the past could be adversely affected by this requirement, and has expressed concern that the strategic aspect of the work with these organisations could be diluted if only annual grants were awarded. Councillor Christian shares this viewpoint. Whilst acknowledging these concerns I recommend that the partnership criteria is not changed. The original purpose of setting the £10k limit was to

ensure that there was a clear boundary and would not open the floodgates for a large number of relatively small applications for which individual service specifications would have to be negotiated and more in depth monitoring carried out – this would have significant resource implications. Theoretically there would also be the risk of committing the grants budget with partnership applications which would reduce the overall budget available for annual grants. In addition, given that completed applications are already being received it would be impractical at this stage to change the partnership criteria. Executive Board is asked to reaffirm the criteria for partnership grants already agreed.

2. Area Committee role

For the next grants round Executive Board agreed that Area Committees would be involved in allocating grants in the following ways:

2.1 Award small local area grants.

2.2 That for the 2003/2004 financial year the grants budget be allocated to area committees on a historical basis (excluding partnerships) and that the Neighbourhood Renewal Business Manager would recommend any adjustments to this basis of allocation on the grounds of need and effectiveness, and that a more pertinent method of allocation be adopted for future years.

2.3 Executive Board should have a 'call in' role to apply if Area Committees took an inordinate amount of time to determine a grant application such as the delay adversely affected the grants allocation process.

2.4 That a formal group containing representatives from Area Committees to liaise with the grants officer not be established.

2.5 The new grants cycle is depicted in the flowchart attached as Appendix Two. It is essentially a two-stage process. Basic eligibility is checked during stage one and ineligible, late or incomplete applications are rejected at this level. For this reason it is essential that applications be received with all necessary enclosures by the closing date of 29th November 2002.

2.6 Those applications which go forward to the next stage are sorted in to grant themes (based on the Councils revised Vision and objectives) and type of application (whether city-wide, area or partnership grant request). Application forms are delegated to Business Units for scoring using an assessment matrix. All the scored applications are returned to the grants officer for reconciliation, and are then considered by the Area Committees (for clearly local area applications) or the Executive Board (for Partnership grant requests city-wide applications and 'no fit').

2.7 It is hoped that Executive Board will agree an indicative grants budget in December. Area Committees will consider the requests for their areas in the February committee cycle, followed by city-wide / partnership requests being looked at in March by the Executive Board. It is essential that this timetable is adhered to enabling decisions to be made as early as possible so that voluntary & community groups are notified at the earliest opportunity of the outcome of their application. This will ensure that grant payments can be made at the beginning of April.

OXFORD CITY COUNCIL**CONDITIONS ATTACHED TO YOUR GRANT 2002 / 2003.**

The Council's Executive Board has awarded <<Organisation>> a grant of <<£amount>> towards <<purpose>>

Grants are made subject to the following conditions:-

Organisations will be required to:-

1. Spend the money on the project or specific item described in your application form or return the grant at the end of the year.
2. Keep a careful financial record of how the grant money is spent and provide a copy of their accounts for the year in which the grant has been made, with copies of relevant invoices and receipts. Accounting requirements vary, dependent upon the size of your organisation. Please refer to the information below and consult with the Grants Officer if you have any queries.

ACCOUNTING REQUIREMENTS

Accounts received from organisations will only be satisfactory if they meet the following requirements, based on gross income and expenditure from all sources.

- a) Not exceeding £25,000 per year.
 - A detailed list of payments and income.
 - A statement of assets and liabilities.
 - Both documents must be signed by a Committee Member.
- a) From £25,000 to £100,000 per year
 - A detailed list of payments and income.
 - A statement of assets and liabilities.
 - Both documents must be signed by a Committee Member and verified by a suitable independent person e.g., Accountant, Bank Manager
- a) Above £100,000 per year
 - Detailed audited accounts.
 - Statement of assets and liabilities.
2. Publicise grant aid from Oxford City Council on all your publicity material and stationery. A sheet of logos can be provided for this purpose.
3. Return a monitoring form after six months. This will request details of how the grant expenditure is progressing, how it has been publicised, and how the organisation has complied with project specific monitoring requirements. Grants are given only to organisations, which provide monitoring information as required by the Council.
4. Operate in accordance with the Council's Diversity / Equal Opportunities Policy.
6. Be responsible, where a grant is made for salaries, for any redundancy payments for their employees.

The Council reserves the right to recover the grant, and/or moveable equipment purchased with the grant money, if the organisation ceases to operate, or if the grant is not used for the purpose agreed by the Council.

Failure to comply with any of the conditions could result in a loss of grant and the organisation or individual not being considered for grants in future years.

BANK DETAILS

The grant will be paid directly in to your organisations bank / building society account. Please provide the details below:

Name of Bank / Building Society:	
Building Society Reference Number:	
Sort Code:	
Account Number:	
Account Name:	

DECLARATION

On behalf of the organisation named above, I acknowledge receipt of the grant awarded and undertake to comply with the conditions listed above.

Signature

Position with Organisation

Date

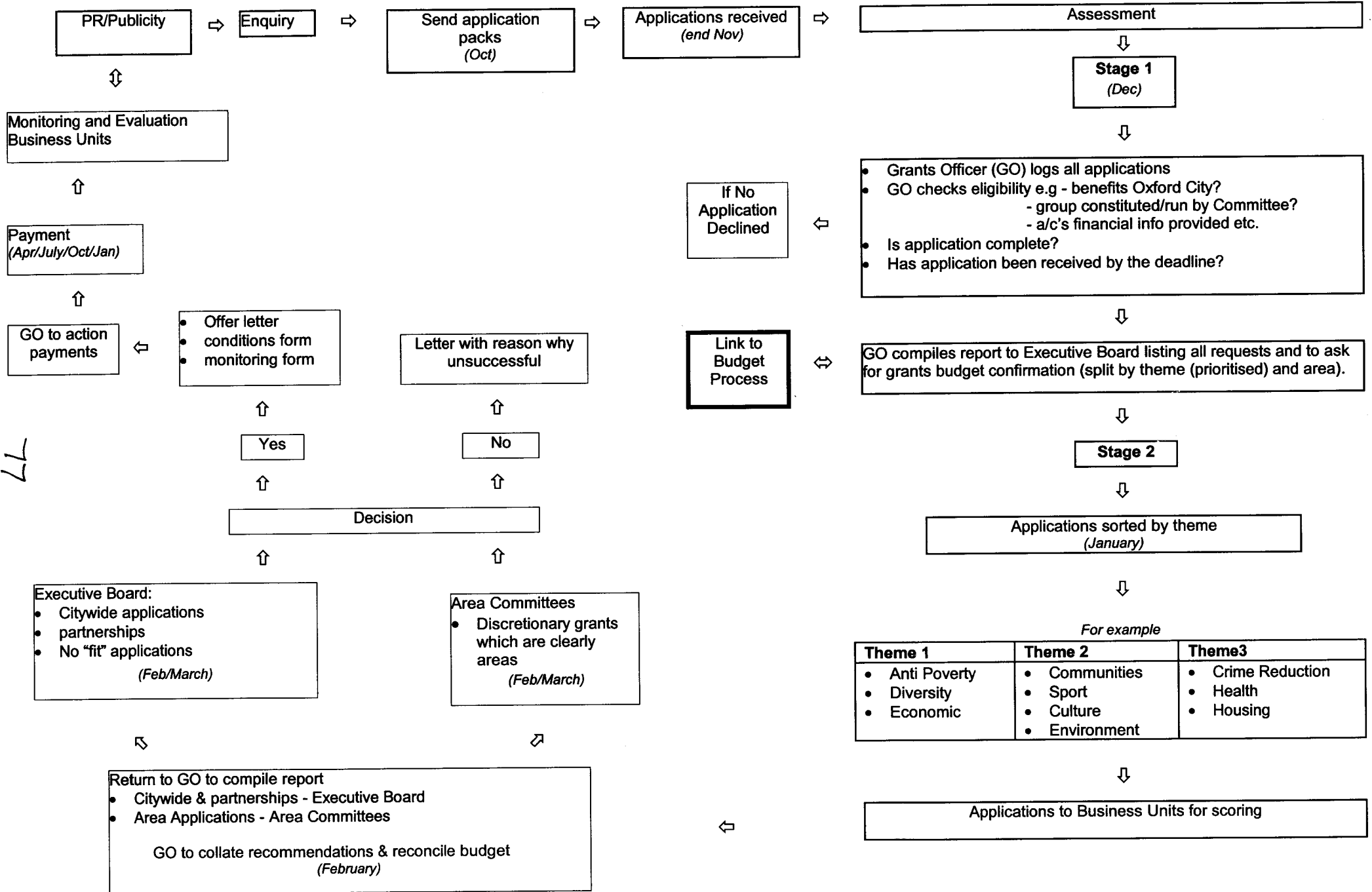
Please return one copy to:-

Nicola Harrison,
Grants Development Officer
Neighbourhood Renewal,
St Aldates Chambers,
109 – 113 St Aldates,
OXFORD OX1 1DF.

Retain the other copy for your file

K:/Grants/02.03 Conditions

GRANTS PROCESS 2003 →



77

For example

Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti Poverty • Diversity • Economic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communities • Sport • Culture • Environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime Reduction • Health • Housing