

Report of: Neighbourhood Renewal Manager

Title: Grants to Voluntary and Community Groups 2005/06.

Wards: All

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Key Decision: No

Lead Member: Councillor Maureen Christian

Scrutiny responsibility: Finance & Community

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board agrees to:

1. To fund the rent support payable by the organisations occupying City Council owned premises set out in paragraph 8.
2. The recommendations to renew grant assistance agreements (partnerships) to the organisations set out in Appendix 1.
3. The recommended annual grant allocations for city-wide applicants as set out in Appendix 2.
4. Consider each of the grant applications set out in paragraphs 1,2, and 3 above in the context of the well being provisions of Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 and where it agrees to make such grants that it is satisfied that such grants will promote or improve the social economic or environmental well being of the area concerned.
4. Note the recommendations being considered by the Area Committees as contained in Appendix 3 noting the Area Committees use of use of the well being power.
5. Note the continuation of the small grants scheme for 2005/06 and the upcoming grants review.

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out a summary of grant applications received from voluntary and community groups for the 2005/06 financial year and makes recommendations for consideration.

2. Declarations of Interest

- 2.1 A Councillor who sits on the managing committee or board of a voluntary body or charity (whether in a private capacity or as a representative of the Council) is required to declare a personal and non-prejudicial interest if that body is applying for grant aid from the Council.

3. Council's Vision and strategic aims

- 3.1 Local community and voluntary organisations assist the Council to deliver its strategic goals of; creating local prosperity, improving our environments, making Oxford a safer City, improving dialogue and consultation, providing more affordable leisure activities and providing more affordable housing.

4. Background and context

- 4.1 Grant availability to Oxford's community and voluntary groups was publicised in late September.
- 4.2 Applications received have been assessed by officers against grant criteria that the Executive Board approved in August 2002. These are available from the Grants Officer or from the website.
- 4.3 Application forms and supporting documents such as accounts are available for Councillors or members of the public to view by contacting the Grants Officer.
- 4.4 As a pilot, this year the recommendations were also considered by a separate panel, which included a representative from the voluntary sector, to try and further improve the transparency and robustness of the process.
- 4.5.1 129 applications for one off annual grants were received for the whole City, 23 more than last year. 105 applications were from groups who have applied previously, and 24 from groups who have not previously applied. 52 applications have been considered by Area Committees.

5. Legal Powers

- 5.1 The legal power enabling the making of the grants is the "well being" power of Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000. Members must have satisfied themselves that the purposes for which the grant is made are likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well being of the City and must also be consistent with and support the Council's Community Strategy.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1 The budget agreed for allocation as grants to voluntary and community organisations for the 2005/06 financial year is £1,592,918. The sum of £5,300 is to be added to this figure to cover increased rents due in 2005/06. Any further rent increases during 2005/06 will be credited in due course. Therefore the total amount for allocation is £1,598,218.
- 6.2 Executive Board committed £1,281,877 of this budget to be allocated to 35 projects for 3 year grants. This amount was agreed up until March 2006.
- 6.3 The balance therefore for allocation during 2005/06 is £316,341. The amount requested totalled £1,023,617, over three times the amount available to allocate.
- 6.4 Recommendations total £316,341 to 74 groups including £32,649 for the small grants scheme and £10k for the arts development fund available to be allocated throughout the year. 9 new groups who have not previously applied have been recommended grants for 2005/06.

7. Recommendations.

Total budget for allocation	£1,598,218
Total 3 year Partnership grants (Recommended)	£1,281,877
Total City wide annual grants (recommended)	£181,669
Total Area Committee grants (recommended)	£134,672

- 7.1 The applications are summarised in Appendices 1, 2 and 3. Appendix 1 details recommendations for renewal of partnership (grant assistance) agreements. Appendix 2 contains annual grant requests for city-wide projects. Appendix 3 summarises requests being considered by Area Committees.

8. Rent Support for organisations occupying City Council property.

- 8.1 Executive Board have agreed a transparent system of recording Council support to organisations through rents. For new and existing groups in HRA premises, rent costs have to be found from within the grants budget. Rent is deducted from the actual grant and the balance remaining credited to the organisations bank account.
- 8.2 For groups in non HRA properties a paper transaction takes place. The only cost to the City Council in these cases is the opportunity cost if the premises were let out on the marketplace.
- 8.3 Applications for rent support are summarised below. There have been increases for Donnington Doorstep, Agnes Smith Advice Centre, and

Modern Art Oxford. An increase for Falcon is expected during the year. As Agnes Smith Advice Centre occupies HRA property the increase has to be met from within the existing grants budget.

Organisation	Rent 2005/06	Grant recommended 05/06	Comments
Phoenix Sports Association	5,500	nil	No application received
Blackbird Leys Bowls Club	10,000	4,800	80% of request supported. Future support for Bowls Clubs to be considered in Grants Review (see Appendix 3)
Falcon Rowing & Canoe Club	3,000	3,000 rent (will increase to 4250 and a credit adjustment will be made during the year).	Additional contribution towards young peoples activities of £1k (see Appendix 3)
Florence Park Bowls Club	8,220	6,000	80% of request supported. Future support for Bowls Clubs to be considered in Grants Review. (see Appendix 3)
Oxford Sexual Abuse & Rape Crisis Centre	5,000	5,000 rent	Additional contribution towards running helpline of £1k (see Appendix 2)
Agnes Smith Advice Centre	7,250	7,250 rent	1,250 increase. Full grant detailed in Appendix 1
Donnington Doorstep	1,000	1,000 rent	300 rent increase. Full grant detailed in Appendix 1.
Modern Art Oxford	45,000	45,000 rent	4k increase. Full grant detailed in Appendix 1.
Oxford Film & Video Makers	5,000	5,000 rent	Full grant detailed in Appendix 1.
Oxon. Chinese Community & Advice Centre	3,336	3,336 rent	Full grant detailed in Appendix 1.

Oxford Community Work Agency (Barton)	10,000	10,000 rent	Full grant detailed in Appendix 1.
Total		90,386	

9. Small Grants / Grants Review

9.1 An amount has been set aside within the recommendations to be allocated as small grants and arts development grants during the 2005/06 financial year. This will be publicised in due course. If eligible, unsuccessful applicants from this grants round will be encouraged to reapply to these schemes. The Executive Board is requested to note that a review of grant allocation will be undertaken before the next grant cycle, and Executive Board will be advised of this in more detail at a later date.

<p>THIS REPORT HAS BEEN SEEN AND APPROVED BY: Portfolio Holder: Grants, Councillor Maureen Christian Business Manager: Neighbourhood Renewal, Val Johnson, Legal and Democratic Services: Lindsay Cane Financial Management: Andy Collett Property: John Kulasek</p>

Background papers: Grant Applications 2005/06.