Welcome to the Prospectus

1. This is the first City Council Prospectus of support it gives to Community and Voluntary Organisations. It is a shortened one that contains:

> Section 1 saying how funding will be allocated in 2007/8.
> There are limited changes for most Community Grants for 2007/8. Community Grants will be assessed against 16 prioritised objectives as opposed to 7 unprioritised criteria. The possible exceptions are the funding for Advice Work and some work with Homeless people that may be subject to commissioning.

> Section 2 setting out the function and scope of a review to be carried out of all (not just grants) Oxford City Council Support for Community and Voluntary Organisations.

2. The appendix contains Guidance Notes for Community Grants funding in 2007/08 and criteria for the Small and Emergency grants.

Introduction

3. The Council has a long history of working with community and voluntary organisations to meet the needs of the city through grants and other support.

4. We would like to work with Community and Voluntary Organisations to strengthen this relationship further, through developing a more comprehensive Prospectus.

5. The City Council wants to make the Council's support more focussed, more strategic, and more responsive to changes in need. It also wants to ensure it is getting value for money, and that the reasons for giving support are clear to all. An additional reason is that the City Council is obliged by law to secure Best Value by continuous improvement in its work.

6. In June this year the City Council decided on three key actions to help achieve this. It wants to work with the Community and Voluntary Organisations to carry out these in as a helpful way as possible:

I. **Publication of an annual Prospectus** covering all support by the City Council, year 1 in detail, years two and three in outline. It will set out the outcomes desired, the Council's priorities, and its funding methods.

II. **Use of Outcomes** to prioritize funding and select organisations and projects to fund. Outcomes are the effects or changes [to people or the environment] brought about by the activities provided by an organisation.

III. **Selective use of commissioning** to allocate funding to organisations.

7. The Prospectus will enable funding and other support to be more strategic (for example identifying where more co-operation can take place, planning structural change to meet new needs, and co-ordinate all support from the City Council and funding from other funders). The prospectus also brings into the open the priorities of the City Council (in terms of financial sums) between different areas of work.

8. Using outcomes to define what we want to achieve should help strategic thinking by linking policies better to the services and activities funded. Outcomes should allow more flexibility in how to achieve them, as opposed to closely defining services. Developing agreed outcomes with the community and voluntary sector and other funders would aid co-operation and joint planning.

9. The use of commissioning (with, in appropriate cases, competition for funds) in selective areas should help:
- Implement changes to reflect needs identified in the Prospectus
- Give more flexibility in funding timing and conditions than grants.
- Add transparency to the process of choosing between providers
- Help secure value for money
- Help community and voluntary groups secure the full cost of providing a service
- Enable the City Council to comply with national and EU law and guidance on contracts

10. This is a lot to introduce, so the City Council is making some small changes this year, while conducting a review working with Community and Voluntary Organisations to develop a comprehensive Prospectus next year which implements the rest of the changes.

How we will work with Community and Voluntary Organisations

11. We'll work with Community and Voluntary Organisations on developing a comprehensive Prospectus next year through:

➢ The CVO forum being set up in the City in September 2006

➢ Direct contact with organisation by the specialist staff in the City Council's Business Units (Art, Play etc.), working through established forums and through consultation.

➢ Having representatives of the Community and Voluntary Sector on the formal Project Board set up to implement the changes.

Section 1   Allocating the Community Grants for financial year 07/08

Deciding funding priorities

12. The City Council is proposing to allocate funds broadly to the same areas of work as it has in the last few years.

13. Organisations with whom the City Council last had 3 year grant assistance agreements with from 2003 – 2006 <u>and</u> that were funded during 2006/07 will <u>not</u> have to submit an application for 2007/08. These organisations will be separately notified of this. All other organisations are required to submit an application. Advice agencies and some organisations providing support to homeless people may be subject to a separate process, please see the paragraphs below.

If you are unsure whether you need to submit an application please contact the Grants Team for clarification.

14. The following list gives the breakdown of funding available for allocation as community grants 2007/08, categorised according to the themes set out in the Oxford Community Strategy. It also gives the objectives to be used as criteria of selection of grant

Theme and objectives

A better living environment   £55,700
- Protect and enhance the natural environment/biodiversity
- Promote a sustainable lifestyle
- Protect and enhance the built environment
- Tackle and reduce homelessness in the city

Active and healthier communities   £165,800
- Ensure healthy lifestyles
- Increase active participation in cultural and recreational activities including as audience
- Increase range and numbers of children and young people playing in safety
- Promotion of Community Cohesion including mediation

Opportunities for life   £14,800
- Raise levels of income, education and skills attainment in most deprived areas
- Improve access to services and generalist advice

Vibrant and inclusive economy   £13,500
- Support sustained economic development and a skilled and employable workforce
- Encourage Social Enterprise
- Strengthen the role that the community and voluntary sector plays in the local economy
- Support key regeneration proposals

Safer Communities   £31,600
- Respond to local needs and concerns in reducing crime and fear of crime
- Respond to antisocial behaviour

(The amount allocated to the previously 3-year-funded organisations (£1,333,500) is deducted from the total amount available to allocate as community grants for 2007/08 giving £281,400 available through the grants process)

15. The £281,400 of Community Grants available for 2007/8 will be allocated through a similar grant process to previous years, but grants will only run for one year because of the review. Grant applications will be assessed against 16 objectives (see table above). The application period for grants in 2007/8 will be from early September to the end of November 2006.

16. The process of grant application and assessment is set out in appendix 1. There is also a new Withdrawal of Funding protocol, and internal review of grant decisions.

17. Guidance on how the new objectives relate to the previous criteria will be provided in the application pack.

There will be other smaller funds similar to existing funds

18. There will be an Emergency fund, a small grant fund, and small payments from an Arts Development Fund.

19. The City Council has £8,500 available in the Small grants fund and £9,600 in the Emergency fund, a similar sum to previous years. It is hoped to increase the Emergency Fund, but any increase will have to build up over the years through reduction in other Grants. Both funds will be open to applications during the year (2007/08). Small grants will operate under the same system as last year with three application dates.

20. The Emergency grant will operate in a similar way to the previous contingency grant, however the fund will be managed as a reserve. Any of the £9,600 not spent at the end of each year will be carried over and topped up from the grants budget back up to £9,600. Funding requested will need to be used to deliver objectives in the Prospectus. The limit for emergency grants will be £5,000, and will be open to any organization delivering objectives in the prospectus.

Advice work funding allocated using tendering

21. The City Council is considering commissioning welfare advice provision, either separately in different parts of the city, or as a whole. This is because of legal reasons relating to service specification and contracts and possible efficiency benefits.

22. The City Council is seeking clarification as to whether it has to use a competitive process. It may have to because:
  ➢ the specification of service to show value for money requires it

> ➢ most of the advice providers receive more than £144,000 over the 3-year term, the limit where current European Union contract regulations require tenders.

23. It is working together with the Treasury to resolve this by October. This will allow a decision in October by the Council's Executive Board on funding method for 2007/8. If the Council uses commissioning, the process will be carried out in time for a contract in 2007/8. If not, funding will be renewed for one year by letter.

Funding for organisations supporting homeless people

24. Oxford City Council is part of the Supporting People Partnership that procures services for people in supported housing. The City Council also provides additional funding for such services, including hostels and support for those on the street. The City Council is considering joint procurement processes for some of the services. The proposals have yet to be consulted on in detail, but some could be in place for funding from April 2007. Unfortunately details are not available at this time. If commissioning is not used, funding from Oxford City Council will be renewed for one year by letter.

Section 2- Reviewing all support for community and voluntary organisations

25. The Council wants to do work with community and voluntary organisations, area committees, and other funders on this review.

26. It will be carried out in the context of the Council's wish to direct funding and support to help people organise to meet local needs. The Council is also eager to give on-going support to key provision where sufficient income cannot be raised, for example by supporting advice service for those on low incomes.

Function of the review

27. The review will:
  o Draw up a good prospectus. The Prospectus states what outcomes we want to fund and why, what our priorities are, and how we want to fund outcomes (e.g. straight grants, competitive grants, commercial procurement), and how funding will be monitored. It should be strategic, be evidence based and reflect a clear understanding of the organisations working in the field and the conditions (for example other funding streams) they work in.

  o Introduce commissioning to allocating support for community and voluntary groups in as helpful and practical way possible.

  o Identify actions needed by the City Council to ensure:
    ▪ Support for the Community and Voluntary Sector to take part in commissioning, e.g. training in submitting a proposal
    ▪ Future publication of an annual prospectus based on updated information,
    ▪ Effective co-ordination of applications for, and monitoring of, all support from the City Council to the Community and Voluntary Organisations.

  o Be challenging, so that assumptions are reviewed and evidence collected of needs and ability to meet needs, as necessary.

Timing of the review

28. Between September 2006 and March 2007.

29. The findings of the review will be the basis of the Prospectus setting out the framework for funding in 2008/9, including three-year grants. The Prospectus will be published in summer 2007.

Carrying out the review

30. The review will be carried out by the staff that have specialist knowledge in the areas of work, for example- play, arts, social cohesion, parks etc. . They

will be in contact with organisations to ensure the prospectus reflects accurately the needs on the ground and the work, capacity and knowledge of existing organisations.

31. Central Grants staff will co-ordinate the work to ensure a consistency of approach across all the City Council's work with community and voluntary organisations, particularly with regard to having outcomes (desired effect on people or the environment); relates to the Community Strategy; and ensuring it is non-discriminatory, has equal treatment and is transparent (EU law and guidance on spending of public funds).

Scope of the review

32. The Review will look at how we can work together more effectively- including between CVOs , and between funders. One idea from consultation is to enable Community and Voluntary Organisations to order supplies and services through Oxford City Council contracts. Possible examples are stationary, security, and agency staff.

33. The review will identify where commissioning will increase efficient delivery of outcomes, or are required legally. To do this the City Council will:
   o Develop funding models appropriate to different situations, from competitive tendering to allocated grants, and an agreed model for Full Cost Recovery
   o Identify all the current support the City Council gives to community and voluntary organisations,
   o Understand where relevant the capacities of different community and voluntary organisations
   o Identify external factors such as government and County Council funding.

34. The review will provide the knowledge for informed choices when deciding priorities for funding. It will do this by:
   o Providing understanding of the current situation;
   o Integrating City Council and other plans, particularly Area Plans
   o Consulting on possible options for change; and
   o Investigating the options in more detail.

35. The review will develop agreed broad and narrow outcomes and derived outputs to:
   o Describe what community and voluntary organisations deliver
   o Help the City Council to set priorities clearly and focus funding to deliver its desired outcomes.

36. The review will develop a method to allow for new needs identified by the community and voluntary sector to be funded, and for new organisations to receive funding.

37. The review will develop ways to co-ordinate and streamline decision-making and reduce bureaucracy.

The use of commissioning for CVO support

38. The City Council wants to work with Community and Voluntary organisations to ensure commissioning is applied in as a practical and helpful way as possible.

39. 'Commissioning' is used here to mean the process of specifying, securing and monitoring services to meet people's needs. It involves drawing up a specification, and where appropriate securing value for money through tendering and competition.

Why the City Council is introducing commissioning

40. The City Council wants to use commissioning for support to community and voluntary organisations where it has to for legal reasons, and where otherwise appropriate to improve delivery of outcomes.

41. The legal reasons relate to national legislation on local government contracts, and EU law and guidance on the spending of public money. EU law and guidance seek to ensure:
   o No discrimination between providers,
   o Potential providers are treated equally,
   o The whole process is transparent.
In effect where there is more than one potential provider there needs to be a fair and open way of deciding between them. The Council is working with the Treasury to clarify if it needs to use commissioning with a competitive element when giving large sums of money, and/or where it specifies in some detail what is to be provided in return for the grant.

42. The City Council also believes it is appropriate to put together many of outcomes and services it wants to fund in a package, and have them delivered by one community or voluntary organisation, consortium or groups working together. Its reasons for doing this are:
   o Cost savings and better services could be gained through economy of scale by grouping.
   o Benefits could be gained by the better planning of services through the choice of outcomes and bid processes run with other funders.
   o Support for developing new services could be funded
 Because of the financial size and/or the detail used to specify the services required these packages may be subject to commissioning with competition.

Developing funding models

43. To be flexible and apply the least onerous commissioning process in any given situation the City Council is adopting Central Government advice to develop a variety of 'funding models'

44. The advice recommends developing different 'funding models' where different levels of competitive tendering are required, for example open to all, restricted to a few organisations where there is a limited number of potential suppliers or local factors dominate, or no competition because there is a unique supplier.

45. Bids submitted under 'Open to all tendering' will primarily be chosen on price and best quality of service. Bids under other tending arrangements will be chosen against cost and quality of service, which may not be the primary criteria. Other factors - such as social (for example the provision by an organisation with local people controlling it) or environmental benefits could be as or more important.

46. Other features may vary too- such as who takes on the risk of income shortfall (or other innovation risks), payment timing (for example in advance, quarterly or in arrears) and renewal processes (for example every three years, or three year agreement renewed every year).

Taking into account the full cost

47. Under commissioning the City Council wants community and voluntary organisation providers to be paid the full cost of a service they provide. The review will develop an agreed way of calculating the full cost of a service or other outcome funded by the Council (a 'Full Cost Recovery Model'). The full cost means all the costs incurred by the organisation, not just the project costs. (For example a proportion of central administration costs and fund raising costs).

48. The model is needed for various reasons. If over a number of years the full cost is not paid, the organisation is weakened and could fail. Where there is open competition, without an agreed Full Cost Model there is a danger an organisation will under estimate the full cost in order to secure the work. Where there is not open competition, the City Council will need an agreed basis for deciding if the bid is value for money.

Developing Broad outcomes, narrow outcomes, and derived outputs

49. The City Council wants to move to specifying what funding will achieve in terms of outcomes; the effects or changes [to people or the environment] brought about by the activities provided by an organisation. This contrasts with using the description of services as the basis for monitoring success.

50. It wants to achieve a balance between being too prescriptive, and not specifying clearly what funding and support should achieve. To do this it wants to develop more general outcomes, and narrow outcomes where applicable.

51. The Council will work with community and voluntary organisations to devise Broad Outcomes that bridge the gap between needs of people, and

the policies of the City Council and the Community Strategy. These Broad Outcomes will be used to set priorities for funding.

52. The Council wants to develop with the community and voluntary sector, where applicable narrow outcomes that are measurable. These will be used in specifications for commissioning and agreements (and in some cases for setting priorities). Where narrow outputs are difficult to measure they would be replaced by derived outputs (actual services, for example number of hot meals provided) that have been worked out from the narrow outcomes.

Allowing for new needs and for new organisations to receive funding

53. The Council want to be open to projects and services meeting new needs that are not set out in the Prospectus. The review will look at options to set aside some of the Community Grant money for this purpose.

Considering together all funds and support a community and voluntary organisation receives

54. The City Council will co-ordinate its decision-making about all the types of support it gives Community and Voluntary organisations. Requests for all support would be assessed by the same criteria- set out in the Prospectus.

55. Support that needs to be considered together includes below market rent of premises, below cost fees and charges, secondment of staff, funding from Area Committee budgets and other grants (such as events grants from Leisure and Culture Business Unit) and emergency funding.

Streamlining applications for support

56. Over the next 9 months the City Council will review support, and develop ways of combining decision-making and assessment. The Council's recent consultation brought forward possible ways of doing this.

57. One example of this is applications to area committees for funding. The proposal is to assess them against the narrow outcomes and outputs in the Prospectus. Applications to Area Committees would be accepted at any time, to be reviewed by the Grants staff and specialist staff against the narrow outcomes and outputs. A decision could then be made by officers, allowing quick release of the money.

58. Other ideas included seeing if people are applying for relatively small amounts, and the same as the previous year, whether an exchange of letters is enough to release funding.

APPENDIX

Guidance Notes for Community Grants funding in 2007/08

Basic Requirements

To be eligible to apply and to safeguard the Oxford City Council investment and ensure that all City Council funded organisations are well managed and provide good quality services, organisations must achieve the following baseline standards:

Legal Structure
A legal structure that is appropriate to the size and nature of the organisation, set out in a constitution or memorandum & articles of association that clearly outlines the aims and rules governing the organisation.

Accounts
All applicants must prepare and maintain accounting records. Based on simplified Charity Commission guidelines, accounts appropriate to the size and nature of the organisation are required as detailed.

Organisations whose annual gross income or total expenditure is less than £10k	Organisations whose annual gross income or total expenditure is over £10k but less than £100k	Organisations whose annual gross income or total expenditure is over £100k but less than £250k	Organisations whose annual gross income or total expenditure is over £250k
Signed annual receipts and payments accounts (income and expenditure and statement of assets and liabilities at end of the year).	Signed annual receipts and payments accounts (income and expenditure and statement of assets and liabilities at end of the year).	Signed accruals accounts.	Signed accruals accounts.
No external scrutiny required.	External scrutiny required (audit if organisations constitution specifies).	External scrutiny required (audit if organisations constitution specifies).	Full external audit by a registered auditor.

Financial Management
Organisations must (1) give the Council their regular budget for the overall organisation and any associated projects and (2) have in place procedures that enable the trustees to undertake their legal obligation to monitor income and expenditure on a regular basis (i.e. quarterly financial reporting as a minimum).

Equal Opportunities
Organisations must show adoption and implementation of an equal opportunities statement or policy that reflects current legislation, including the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Human Rights Act 1998 and provide appropriate training for trustees, staff and volunteers.

Employment
Organisations must comply with all employment law including legislation on stakeholder pensions (if appropriate). Demonstrate good practice in personnel matters by having clear policies and procedures.

Insurance
Organisations must ensure that appropriate insurance certification and licences are in place. For example, public liability, professional indemnity (where appropriate) and employer's liability.

Confidentiality
All organisations are expected to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 and where personal records are kept, personal services, advice & counselling are being provided, organisations will be expected to have a written policy of confidentiality.

Monitoring & Evaluation
Organisations must demonstrate a commitment to collate appropriate qualitative and quantitative information for the purpose of monitoring and evaluating the organisations performance, and equalities impact in line with City Council requirements.

Management Committee
Organisations must ensure that management committee members are aware of and are capable of carrying out their legal responsibilities. Make stringent efforts to ensure the make up of trustees reflects all sections of the community being served, and specifically involves where possible representation from service users.

Health & Safety
Organisations who receive financial investment, or in-kind support must meet legal requirements under current Health and Safety regulations. In particular statutory obligations covering employees, volunteers and members of the public and buildings. For example, carrying out risk assessments and having fire certificates where appropriate.

Child Protection
Organisations which provide services which involve access to, or having contact with, children up to the age of 18 years to meet the statutory requirements under the Protection of Children Act 1989 and to have a policy and guidelines for the protection of children.

Vulnerable Adults

Organisations to be aware of their responsibilities towards vulnerable adults within their service provision and to have a policy and guidelines for the protection of vulnerable adults.

What Oxford City Council Will Fund:

We will consider applications that:

- Meet the needs of the CVO Prospectus consisting of a list of Themes, Objectives and broad outcomes that the Council would like to achieve in partnership with community and voluntary organisations.

- Meet the basic requirements previously outlined and are from organisations with a good track record in terms of service delivery, management and compliance with basic quality standards, or from new organisations that can demonstrate the ability to meet the standards required.

- Can demonstrate that they are financially sustainable and will not rely on the City Council as their only source of income

- Can show that they have a commitment to ensuring that their activities support the sustainability of local communities and the environment.

The funding themes and objectives that Oxford City Council has chosen are based on those published in the Oxford Community Strategy and are:

Opportunities for life
Active and healthy communities
A better living environment
A vibrant and inclusive economy
Safer communities

These are outlined in more detail in following pages.

What Oxford City Council Will Not Fund:

- Party political activities
- Promotion of religious activity
- Retrospective funding for project costs that have already occurred
- Individuals (unless art development projects)
- Projects that do not primarily benefit Oxford City residents
- Where a more appropriate funding source exists
- For functions that are within the responsibility of other public agencies

How to apply

Invitations to bid for projects £5k and under

- An application form must be completed
- Provide a reference from someone who knows about the project but that is independent of the organisation
- Provide recent bank statements (letter from bank confirming account name and number if new group)
- Enclose accounts and budget (if a new group it is accepted that there may not yet be accounts available)
- Provide an annual report if produced

Invitations to bid for projects over £5k to £100k

- Application form must be completed
- Provide a written reference from someone who knows about the project but that is independent of the organisation
- Provide recent bank statements of all accounts held
- Accounts and budget to be enclosed
- Latest annual report
- May be required to submit 3 year business plan with financial projections
- Clear exit plan provided if requested
- May be required to present project at bidding / application stage and evaluation stage

Invitations to bid for projects over £100k

- Application form must be completed
- Provide a written reference from someone who knows about the project but that is independent of the organisation
- Submit 3 year business plan with financial projections
- Clear exit plan provided
- Latest annual report
- Provide recent bank statements of all accounts held
- Accounts and budget to be enclosed with application
- May be required to present project at bidding / application stage and evaluation stage

Conditions for receipt of financial support
These will be described in the application form.

Monitoring requirements and framework

Level £	Type of Agreement	Monitoring Process
For projects £5k and under	Annual or one off grant with simple contract letter	Feedback report on what benefits and outcomes the funding enabled. Possible structured visit by officer
For projects over £5k to £100k	1 year contract	At least one structured visit by officer **or** presentation of project to officer/ member panel. Financial monitoring reports for release of payments x2 if grant over £10k
For projects over £100k	1 year contract	Financial monitoring reports for release of payments x 3 At least one structured visit by officers to monitor compliance with basic standards, evaluate services match outputs and organisational planning **or** presentation of these to officer/ member panel.

Evaluation of applications / bids

For transparency and Compact compliance the City Council will use an evaluation process that has the capacity to review provisional allocations in case of major disagreements.

Applications will be submitted to an evaluation panel that consists of a Finance Officer, Grants Officer(s), Officer(s) from the relevant service areas, and an Area Coordinator where applicable. Applications will be assessed against the published criteria.

The evaluation panel makes provisional allocations and informs the Portfolio Holder, the appropriate Area Committee Chairs and appropriate ward Councillors for information and comment.

If no objections are raised within ten working days of the evaluation panel considering the application, the officer allocations will be confirmed and ratified by the relevant Council committee.

If objections are raised within ten working days, the application will be submitted to the Grants Portfolio Holder, Neighbourhood Renewal Manager and the Director of Housing Health & Community for reconsideration. The decision reached will be final and ratified by the relevant Council committee.

The Scoring System for Applications
In order to make decisions about investment in Community and Voluntary Organisations as open and transparent as possible, a scoring system will be used which will assist officers to make objective assessments about requests for funding. The scoring system will be based on:

- How the organisation's activities/services support the CVO Prospectus and match the objectives set out within it.

- A risk assessment looking at the organisation's track record in terms of compliance with basic standards, monitoring and evaluation requirements and service delivery.

- The quality of the organisation's application and its sustainability.

Competing eligible bids – additional criteria
Where a number of applications are competing for limited funds the following additional criteria will apply:

- Qualitative and quantitive evidence of the need for the project is provided.

- That the project meets or is nearing completion of becoming compliant with a relevant quality standard e.g. Pqasso

- That the project demonstrates good value in terms of cost, quality and best fit.

- Proposals that add value to the specification

Withdrawal of funding protocol

This protocol does not cover instances where funding is withdrawn or reduced during the budget round as a result of financial pressures on the council or because the project no longer meets the Council's aims and priorities as published within the prospectus.

Reason for withdrawal
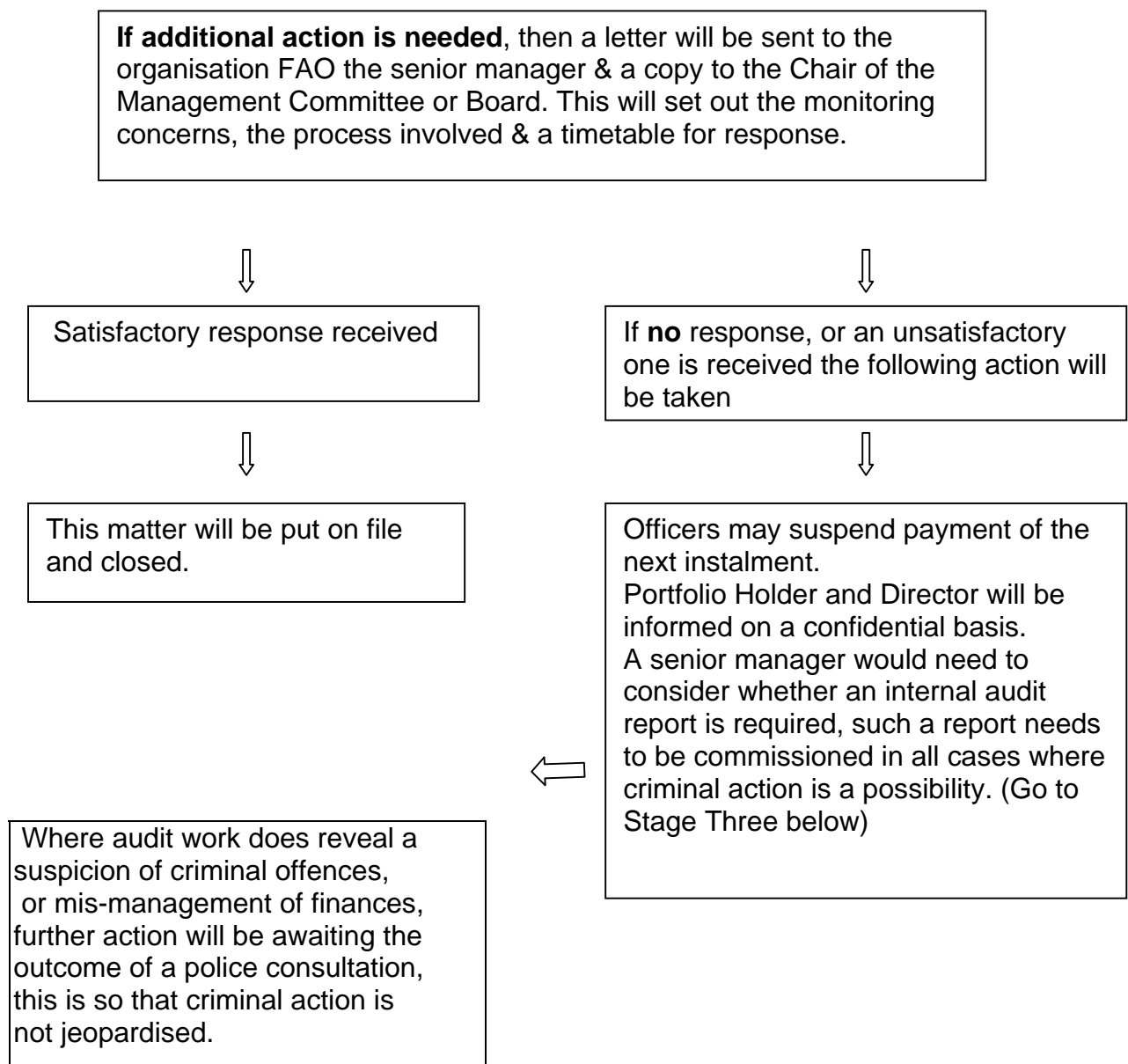This protocol will be used in the following instances:

- Where an organisation does not provide the quality of service agreed between the council and the organisation

- Where there is prima facie evidence of misuse or inappropriate use of public funds including fraud

- Where an organisation does not fulfil or meet the agreed grant conditions / contract (and has not responded adequately to early warnings)

- Where an organisation is no longer financially viable or insolvent.

STAGED PROCESS FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF INVESTMENT

Stage One

Where officers have concerns that fall within the four categories identified above, the relevant business manager will review the information and assess whether normal monitoring procedures are no longer sufficient. At all times and at each stage of the process officers will keep dated notes of meetings held with the group and copies of all correspondence to and from the group, details of assistance offered etc

If additional action is needed, then a letter will be sent to the organisation FAO the senior manager & a copy to the Chair of the Management Committee or Board. This will set out the monitoring concerns, the process involved & a timetable for response.

⇩   ⇩

| Satisfactory response received | If **no** response, or an unsatisfactory one is received the following action will be taken |

⇩   ⇩

| This matter will be put on file and closed. | Officers may suspend payment of the next instalment. Portfolio Holder and Director will be informed on a confidential basis. A senior manager would need to consider whether an internal audit report is required, such a report needs to be commissioned in all cases where criminal action is a possibility. (Go to Stage Three below) |

Where audit work does reveal a suspicion of criminal offences, or mis-management of finances, further action will be awaiting the outcome of a police consultation, this is so that criminal action is not jeopardised.

Stage Two

A meeting will be arranged between senior officers in the relevant business unit and the management committee and senior worker (if appropriate) of the organisation. Officers will outline the concerns and potential consequences.

⇩   ⇩

If the group does not agree to take action, following the meeting a formal letter will be sent to the group outlining the process to be followed.

If the cvo agrees to action
a further meeting (within 1 month)
 will be convened to agree a
timetabled action plan to address the problems.
Funding will be re-instated on
a month by month basis with the option to re-suspend if progress is not maintained.

⇩

Following the meeting a formal letter will be sent to the group with a copy of the Action Plan to be signed by the Executive Members of the Management Committee.

⇩

A regular series of meetings will be arranged to monitor the progress of the Action Plan

⇩

If progress is satisfactory and the plan completed the matter is placed on file and closed. However normal monitoring will need to check that progress is sustained.
Normal release of payments re-instated

Stage Three

If no remedial action is possible following the meeting in Stage 2, the group will be advised to take appropriate legal/financial advice and notified that the funding will be withdrawn.

Other known funders of the group will be informed of the City Council's action.

⇓

A report will be prepared for the Executive Board for the next available meeting. The organisation is kept informed of each stage of the process & is given sight of the report with the opportunity given to submit a written response for consideration by members. The Executive Board decision is final.

SMALL GRANTS and EMERGENCY FUND CRITERIA 2007/2008.

A small budget is available for allocation to voluntary or community groups as small grants or contingency / emergency requests. To apply for this fund you will need to complete the same form used for applications under £5,000. When you have completed the application form return it along with the accompanying documents listed in the criteria below.

The closing dates for considering these grants for 2006/07 and 2007/08 are as follows:

- Friday 8th September 2006

- Friday 12th January 2007

- Friday 11th May 2007

- Friday 7th September 2007

- Friday 25th January 2008

- Friday 14th May 2008

- Friday 5th September 2008

Notification of the decision on the application may take up to eight weeks after the closing date unless an urgent decision is required whereby the application may be considered and a decision made quickly 'in the best interests of the Council.'

SMALL GRANT CRITERIA 2007/08

- An application form must be completed.
- Groups applying must provide their constitution or aims, an equal opportunities statement, accounts or budget if a new group and a recent bank statement.
- The grant must primarily benefit Oxford City residents.
- A maximum amount of £1,000 may be requested for small grants.
- For small grants the group must not have received any other grant funding from the city council for 2007/08 for the project applied for.
- The Application must fit with the City Councils funding themes and objectives as outlined in the Prospectus.
- Priority will be given to applications that target work in areas with high indices of deprivation or with groups that are at risk of social isolation or exclusion.
- Priority will be given to those applications for which the small grant will lever in / match other funds.
- Group must comply with grant conditions e.g. monitoring, publicise City Council's support etc.

EMERGENCY FUND GRANT CRITERIA 2007/08

- An application form must be completed.

- Groups applying must provide their constitution or aims, an equal opportunities statement, accounts or budget if new group and recent bank statement.
- The application must fit with the City Councils funding themes and objectives as outlined in the Prospectus.

The purpose of an emergency grant is to:

- Support unforeseen shortfalls and emergencies which would result in serious consequences for the applicant group e.g. rent increases
- To support unplanned opportunities, for example by offering match funding which is only available for a short time or where the leverage of the grant would be substantial (over the amount of grant awarded)
- Priority will be given to applications that target work in areas with high indices of deprivation or with groups that are at risk of social isolation or exclusion.
- The upper threshold not to exceed £5k