

To: City Executive Board
Date: 9 February 2017
Report of: Head of Community Services
Title of Report: Grant Allocations to Community and Voluntary Organisations

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To allocate grants to community and voluntary organisations through the Community Grants Programme.
Key decision:	Yes
Executive Board Member:	Cllrs Christine Simm, Culture and Communities; and Susan Brown, Customer and Corporate Services
Corporate Priority:	Strong and Active Communities.
Policy Framework:	Oxford City Council Corporate Plan
Recommendations: That the City Executive Board resolves to:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the recommendations for the 2017/2018 commissioning programme as set out in Appendix 1; 2. Approve the recommendations for applications received to the grants annual open bidding programme as set out in Appendix 2 ; 3. Delegate authority to the Executive Director for Organisational Development and Corporate Services in consultation with the Executive Members for Customer and Corporate Services and Culture and Communities to allocate the residual funding in the Advice and Money Management commissioning theme. 	

Appendices	
Appendix 1	2017/2018 recommendations for the community and voluntary organisations grants commissioning programme
Appendix 2	Grant applications received to the 2017/2018 open bidding grants programme.
Appendix 3	Evaluation Framework
Appendix 4	CEB Report Risk Register.

Introduction

1. Oxford City Council supports the local community and voluntary sector with grant aid. The community and voluntary organisations (CVO's) grants programme is co-ordinated and monitored through the Communities Team in consultation with lead commissioning officers and their portfolio holders.
2. The CVO's grants programme has two elements:-
 - Open Bidding – one off grants that can be applied for on an annual basis or on a smaller scale throughout the year.
 - Commissioning – funding for activities that have been identified by the Council as making a substantial contribution to the achievement of our corporate priorities.
3. The proposal in this report is to broadly maintain the funding pattern established in previous years through the City Council's prospectus and maintaining existing relationships and funding patterns for 2017/18.
4. In recent years the funding has come under increasingly intense competition as other sources are reduced reflecting the general tightening in public sector funding, particularly for supported housing and the children's centres.

Grants Budget

5. The total indicative budget for the CVO's grants programme, as currently proposed for 2017/2018, is set out below.

Table 1	2017/18 Budget
Advice & Money Management commissioning theme	£518,379
Homelessness commissioning theme	£442,279
Inclusive arts & culture commissioning theme	£235,262
Community Safety commissioning theme	£61,082
Community & voluntary sector infrastructure commissioning theme	£43,736
Inclusive leisure & play for disabled children and young people commissioning theme	£15,000
Open Bidding	£107,500
Small grants programme to run during the year.	£7,732
Total	£1,430,970

Commissioning

6. During 2016/17 officers have worked closely with the commissioned organisations. Achievements by funded organisations will be reported in the next annual monitoring report to the City Executive Board later in 2017.
7. This report recommends allocations for the third year of a 3 year commissioning programme ending 31 March 2018.
8. Commissioning themes, which remain the same as in previous years, were selected to prioritise grant funding for those most disadvantaged communities in our city. A review of the prospectus for post 2018 will be undertaken during the first part of 2017/18.
9. Based on the previous performance of commissioned organisations, some of the main achievements that we can expect to be delivered under each theme are:
 - People suffering hardship or distress will get the support they need from the advice centres. In particular by the provision of information, advice and assistance on all matters relating to welfare benefits and debt.
 - Children and young people from different societies will be supported to better understand the local context, stay safe and take advantage of opportunities.
 - Specialist support for victims of violence, intimidation and abuse, will be provided giving practical and emotional support.
 - There will be improved opportunities for the diverse range of communities in the city to actively participate in high quality cultural activities and events. This will be achieved by offering reduced and/or free tickets and places to low income families.
 - Work will be done to support homeless people or those threatened with homelessness or rough sleeping into sustainable accommodation. They will be given opportunities to access education, training and employment.
 - Community & voluntary organisations will be supported to bid for funding and improve their sustainability.
 - Volunteering will be promoted giving local people the opportunity to increase their skills, knowledge and confidence.
10. Funding agreements will be put in place with each of the commissioned organisations and a feature of the agreement will be that funding in any given year will be subject to an assessment of performance and budget availability.
11. The Grants Officer works with a number of lead officers from other service areas that have specialist knowledge of specific commissioning themes.
12. The 3 year commissioned advice services agreement (2015/2018) makes provision for agreeing on an annual basis a priority area to focus on. The priority for 2017/18 is still being negotiated with the Advice organisations, but the chosen priority will in part include supporting people to manage their money, dealing with debt and helping them maximise their income. A specific set of outcome measures will be developed in partnership with the Advice Organisations.

13. All but £20,000 has been allocated from the Advice and Money Management commissioning theme. It is proposed that this funding is reserved as an emergency pot to support organisation(s) where cuts have affected their work that supports the advice and money management theme plus the objectives of the Financial Inclusion Strategy which includes actions to help people support people into employment. The City Executive Board is recommended to delegate authority to the Executive Director for Organisational Development and Corporate Services in consultation with the Executive Members for Customer and Corporate Services and Culture and Communities to allocate the residual funding.
14. The City Executive Board is recommended to approve the recommendations for the commissioning programme as listed in Appendix 1.
15. A report will be submitted to the City Executive Board in March 2017 with the proposed allocations for both the Preventing Homelessness grant and the Council's Homelessness grant commissioning budget to voluntary sector organisations.

Annual Open Bidding

16. A total of 29 applications were received to the grants annual open bidding programme by the closing date of 3 November 2016.
17. The total amount requested was £206,553. The indicative budget allocated for the open bidding grants programme is £107,500.
18. Appendix 3 is a copy of the evaluation framework used by the officer grants panel that made the recommendations for each of the applications received.
19. Each application was first screened for eligibility, i.e. applicants must demonstrate that they are a constituted community organisation run by a committee, providing annual accounts, a bank statement and an equal opportunity statement. Those organisations working with children & young people or vulnerable adults also provided copies of their safeguarding and data protection policies. All applications are subsequently evaluated against criteria relating to:
 - Evidence of social need
 - Who the project is targeting
 - Risk
 - How the application meets Council priorities
 - Monitoring and evaluation
 - Whether the group receive any other subsidy from the Council
 - If the group is financially competent
 - Demonstration of financial need and
 - Value for money.
20. Appendix 2 is a listing of all applications received, the amount requested and the rationale for the recommendation.
21. The City Executive Board is recommended to approve the recommendations for the open bidding grants programme as listed in Appendix 2.

Rents & Business Rates

22. Some organisations recommended for funding through the CVO's grants programme occupy Council premises and pay business rates. Their rent and rates will be deducted from any funding awarded to them. These are set out in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Organisation	Grant (£)	2017/18 rent	2017/18 Business Rates	Balance to organisation
Agnes Smith Advice Centre	£85,290	£7,250	£704.80	£77,335.20
Arts at the Old Fire Station	£32,134	0	£6,227	£25,907
Film Oxford	£25,000	£5,000	£699	£19,301
Fusion Arts	£28,128	£8,837	£869.80	£18,421.20
Modern Art Oxford	£70,000	£70,000	£7,963	0
Oxford Community Work Agency	£122,611	£8,100	£2,726	£111,785
OVADA	£5,000	0	£1,561	£3,439
Oxford CAB	£200,000	0	£4,287.20	£195,712.80
Oxford Playhouse	£24,000	0	£5,436	£18,564
OCVA	£43,736	0	£3,122.20	£40,613.80
Parasol Project	£15,000	0	£1,540.70	£13,459.30
Pegasus Theatre	£25,000	0	£1,399.40	£23,600.60
Rose Hill & Donnington Advice Centre	£90,478	£3,000	0	£87,478
Rose Hill Junior Youth Club	£9,900	£1,110	0	£8,790
Street Revolution	£3,900	£3,900	0	0
Total	£780,177	£107,197	£36,536.10	£644,406.90

NB- business rates are estimated until the business rates have been revalued

Climate Change / Environmental Impact

23. Successful applicants are made aware of the Council's commitment to reducing its carbon footprint and encouraged to take similar action.

Equalities Impact

24. Each organisation must provide their equal opportunities statement to confirm they comply with this legislation and understand their responsibility to promote equality.
25. Some examples of how equality is positively enhanced by the grants programme include funding services for:

- Survivors of rape, sexual abuse and domestic violence
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people through recommending continued funding for the Oxford Friend helpline
- People with disabilities, particularly children and young people with disabilities through recommending funding for Parasol inclusive play
- Older people, through recommending support for specific activities
- BME groups, through funding dedicated work with asylum seekers and refugees.

Level of Risk

26. Successful applicants must agree to and sign terms and conditions before funding is released. Within these terms they must agree to:
- Spend the funding on the project described in their application
 - Repay any unspent grant
 - Keep financial records and receipts
 - Return a monitoring form
- 27 Each organisation awarded grant funding will be monitored by an officer. Please see Appendix 4 for the risk register.

Financial Impact

28. The allocations of grant funding as proposed are dependent on agreement of the Council's budget in February 2017.
29. The total amount of the grants budget currently recommended in this report is £988,691 because £7,732 has been allocated for a small grants programme that will take place during 2017/18 (see Table 1 above) and a report will be submitted to the City Executive Board in March 2017 with the proposed allocations for both the Preventing Homelessness grant and the Council's Homelessness grant commissioning budget (£442,279) to voluntary sector organisations working with rough sleepers and homeless people.

Legal Implications

30. There are no legal implications of this report.

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Background Papers: None