

South Oxfordshire District Council

Revenue Grant Scheme 2022-2024

Guidance notes

INTRODUCTION

The council provide grants to voluntary and community organisations to help build and support thriving communities and improve the quality of life for the residents of South Oxfordshire. 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 and have a greater impact in the communities they serve.

WHAT TYPE OF SERVICE WILL THE SCHEME FUND?

Activities must take place in the district and be able to demonstrate direct benefits to meet a clearly identified need for South Oxfordshire residents.

The service we fund must meet at least one of the council's Corporate Plan priorities for 2020-2024;

- improved economic and community well-being
- to protect and restore our natural world
- action on the climate emergency

Information about the Corporate Plan priorities can be found on the council's website www.southoxon.gov.uk

We encourage applications for services that make a positive contribution towards the council's equality objectives in particular;

- Ensure new projects, policies or strategies, changes to services, and communication take account of the needs of all users.
- Increase our understanding of the communities we serve, through consultation, engagement and using existing evidence (e.g. census data) to inform the decisions we make.
- Support communities to deliver better outcomes for disadvantaged groups and encourage community cohesion.

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/costs such as;

- salary costs relating to the activities being supported.
- fundraising/income generation activities, that may include exploring establishing a social enterprise in the district or other new income streams to boost the sustainability of the applicant organisation (see appendix 2 for suggestions).
- 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 is 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
- activities that take place outside of Oxfordshire
- topping up savings and reserves, or setting up an endowment fund
- repayment of debts or loans
- staff bonuses
- redundancy costs
- purchase of large items of equipment
- purchase of vehicles
- new heating systems
- the purchase of a new lease
- the purchase of a building
- extensions to premises
- statutory services that are the responsibility of the council or another public sector's responsibility for delivering

WHO CAN APPLY TO THE SCHEME?

Any constituted **local** voluntary sector organisation delivering services that will benefit residents of South Oxfordshire can apply online through the council's website. By **local** we mean the organisation is either based in the district, or in Oxfordshire, preferably with a local hub/branch.

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, PTAs and similar)
- profit-based businesses (private businesses)
- political and lobbying groups
- Nationwide organisations (except where they have a local constitution and/or local bank account. We may also make exceptions if the activities clearly relate to a local hub/branch of the organisation.)

WHAT ARE THE MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM AWARDS?

We will accept applications for a **minimum** grant of £10,000 and a **maximum** grant of £125,000 per annum over the two-year period.

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

This is likely to be a highly competitive grant scheme and the council receives applications from many excellent and worthy organisations. Therefore, it is not always possible to fund every eligible application or award the full grant that is requested. We would advise applicants to have a thorough fundraising plan with contingencies in place.

BUDGET

We have a provisional budget of £667,992 over the two-year period; this is subject to annual approval by the council when setting budgets.

SCHEME ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

In addition to meeting the requirements above, applicants must:

- submit all required documentation at the point of application submission to be eligible.
- have a specific and relevant activity or service they provide locally (in South Oxfordshire) and that contributes to at least one of our Corporate Plan priorities and/or equality objectives.

- provide evidence that there is a need for such an activity or service, that it benefits residents of South Oxfordshire with clear outcomes, including local strategies, official reports and similar.
- provide details of the estimated costs to provide the activity or service each year (over the two-year period) and how they will fund the rest of these costs.
- provide a signed constitution, articles of association or equivalent.
- provide full accounts for the last three years 2018/19 – 2020/21 (or a detailed working budget and financial plan for new organisations).
- provide a detailed organisation-wide budget for year one (2022/23).
- provide a three-year funding plan for 2022/23, 2023/2024 and 2024/25 which includes how a proportion of the revenue grant, if awarded, will be ringfenced for fundraising and for diversifying income streams (see appendix 2 for suggestions).
- provide project delivery and development plans showing plans for more collaborative work with others to become more sustainable in the longer term.
- demonstrate how their service users and other stakeholders, where appropriate, are consulted and involved in service planning and delivery.
- have insurance, safeguarding, H&S, equalities, data protection and other relevant policies.
- submit outcomes or targets we can use to help measure the success of the service/work/activity each year over the grant period – these will be subject to agreement with the council each year and should focus on the achievable outcomes for residents.
- two references from other funders (for organisations the council has not worked with before).
- Must confirm that they haven't received funding subject to domestic or International Subsidy Control Commitments in the last three fiscal years and that any paid is below 325,000kSDR or otherwise as updated pursuant to the Chapter 3 UK-EU TCA or domestic law.

OPENING AND CLOSING DATES

We will open for applications in October 2021 and will close for applications in November 2021. We will publish the opening and closing dates on our website.

DECISION-MAKING

Community Enablement Team

The community enablement team will review the eligibility of every application before using the scoring matrix in appendix one to suggest scores to the Community Grants

Panel. They will also flag any concerns or issues for additional consideration, in order to support the panel's decision making.

Head of Service

In accordance with the council's constitution, the council's Head of Service for Community Enablement and when relevant, in consultation with the services cabinet member (using delegated powers) will decide:

- if we will accept requests for over 33.33 per cent of the total annual running cost in any financial year
- if we will accept applications that don't meet all the eligibility criteria

Community Grants Panel (known at the CG Panel)

The CG panel considers officers suggested scores for each application and makes recommendations to the relevant cabinet member for awards based on the scoring matrix, appendix one.

The relevant cabinet member, in consultation with relevant Head of Service, 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.

Competition for the fund means that not all worthy and eligible organisations can receive funding in each round.

Even if an application scores enough points, the panel can recommend not funding it if they:

- have serious concerns around the management of the organisation now or in the future.
- believe the applicant has sufficient unrestricted reserves to fund the service themselves.
- have serious concerns about the appropriateness of the service or its financial viability, such as if the organisation has not demonstrated having a sound fundraising plan with contingencies should any of their grant applications (to the council and others) be unsuccessful or award less than requested.
- believe the service and/or organisation doesn't meet the criteria or help deliver the council's Corporate Plan objectives and /or equality objectives.

STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR ALL GRANT AWARDS

- All organisations must agree to enter into either a formal agreement and/or sign up to our standard terms and conditions before any grant payment is released.
- Any grant awarded is declared and offered as De Minimis pursuant to domestic and International Subsidy Control Bill commitments and offered on the basis that the organisation has not received any subsidy in excess of relevant thresholds set out pursuant to domestic law or international commitments in the

last three fiscal years (currently 325kSDR) and so outside the scope of the Chapter 3 UK-EU TCA obligations to apply the principles relating to subsidies and domestic subsidy laws (where relevant).

- Organisations must declare our grant award amount to any other sources of state funding in the future; they must advise the council if they receive any subsidy during the life of the Revenue grant award and declare that the de minimus threshold will not be exceeded by accepting the revenue grant award or in the future.
- Awards are conditional on a proportion of the grant being ringfenced for fundraising and for diversifying income streams (see appendix 2).
- 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 to continue receiving payments.
- 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.
- Organisations should actively consider how their organisation, activities and services can contribute positively towards addressing the climate emergency.

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

The relevant Head of Service has delegated authority 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 the agreed conditions may delay or reduce payment or, in extreme cases, result in us withdrawing our grant offer.

PAYMENT OF GRANTS

We will pay annual grants of less than £20,000 in one payment, the first in April 2022 and subsequently on an annual basis after a **satisfactory** monitoring review against targets.

We will pay annual grants of over £20,000 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 set.

We reserve the right to change the grant payment schedule, as above, to staged payments, closely linked to performance, should a monitoring return not be submitted after year 1; should year 1 target actuals be unsatisfactory or as we deem appropriate.

APPENDIX ONE - REVENUE GRANT SCHEME 2022 - 2024 - SCORING MATRIX

PRIORITY LEVEL	AWARDS (all awards are subject to sufficient budget)
High priority	Award full amount requested - (capped at 33.33 per cent of total organisational cost) For the high priority level - we would expect applications to perform strongly across all eight of the scoring categories, as detailed below.
Medium priority	Will only receive funding if there is budget left after all the high priority projects are awarded. The percentage of funding awarded will be dependent on remaining funds.
Low priority	Will NOT receive funding

Financial Review

Do they have?	0 - 1 points	2 - 3 points	4 - 5 points
A balanced three-year financial/fundraising plan covering 2022/2023, 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 with evidence of a diverse funding base?	<p>(0) Unfortunately, no plan has been submitted.</p> <p>(1) A limited plan which doesn't cover the required three-year period and there doesn't appear to be the detail on how a proportion of the revenue grant award will be ringfenced for fundraising and for diversifying income streams.</p>	<p>(2) A realistic three-year plan that includes evidence of how a proportion of the revenue grant award will be ringfenced for fundraising and for diversifying income streams. Whilst some over reliance on certain income streams and small gaps in funding, this is unlikely to impact service delivery.</p> <p>(3) As above <u>however</u> Clear movement towards a more sustainable and balanced funding base, with a realistic plan to reduce budget deficits.</p>	<p>(4) A detailed three-year plan demonstrating a diverse range of secured income streams; includes evidence of how a proportion of the revenue grant award will be ringfenced for fundraising and for diversifying income streams.</p> <p>(5) As above <u>and</u> There is a healthy balance of both restricted and unrestricted funds.</p>

Do they have?	0 - 1 points	2 - 3 points	4 - 5 points
<p>Has the organisation achieved a balanced budget over the last three financial years AND a level of reserves that is sufficient to meet the needs of the organisation? (2018/2019, 2019/2020 and 2020/2021)</p>	<p>(0) Each financial year appears to show significant gaps in balancing the budget and / or unfortunately, no reserves policy has been submitted.</p> <p>(1) 2018/19, 2019/2020 show balanced budgets. 2020/21 budget negatively affected by COVID 19 or other factors, with evidence of significant reduction in services/activities. Officers note a concerning depletion of reserves over</p>	<p>(2) 2018/19, 2019/2020 balanced budgets 2020/2021 budget negatively affected by COVID 19 or other factors, leading to an overall reduction in services. The reserves policy, some depletion over the last three years with little explanation but officers can see it is still within reserves parameters</p> <p>(3) As above <u>however</u> Officers note only a marginal reduction in services/activities with a clear explanation for depletion of reserves.</p>	<p>(4) 2018/19 - 2019/2020 balanced budgets, 2020/2021 budget affected by COVID 19 or other factors, overall increase in in services/activities. Has a reserves policy, no depletion of reserves over the last 3 years.</p> <p>(5) 2018/2019, 2019/2020, 2020/2021 balanced budgets showing both an increase in services/activities and income and officers note some growth in reserves.</p>

Do they have?	0 - 1 points	2 - 3 points	4 - 5 points
	the three years.		
Deductions	<p>Officers can remove one point if the organisation's finances suggest they could contribute towards the service/activity costs but are not.</p> <p>Even if an application scores enough points, the community grants panel can recommend not funding it if they: have serious concerns around the management of the organisation now or in the future; believe the applicant has sufficient unrestricted reserves to fund the service themselves; have serious concerns about the appropriateness of the service or its financial viability, such as if the organisation has not demonstrated having a sound fundraising plan with contingencies should any of their grant applications (to the council and others) be unsuccessful or award less than requested.</p>		

The Service(s) / Activities

	0 - 1 points	2 - 3 points	4 - 5 points
Community need and consultation	<p>(0) There does not appear to be community need, most likely due to insufficient evidence/information submitted</p> <p>(1) Officers get a limited sense of community need, likely due to limited evidence/information supplied and / or limited</p>	<p>(2) Some indication of community need with consultation limited to existing service users only.</p> <p>(3) as above <u>however</u></p> <p>Officers can see evidence of regular consultation with service users.</p>	<p>(4) Strong and clear indication of community need, consultation is regularly carried out with the community/other stakeholders.</p> <p>(5) as above <u>and</u></p> <p>Substantial consultation is regularly carried out with the community/other stakeholders, including priority groups if the service/activities impact them.</p>

	0 - 1 points	2 - 3 points	4 - 5 points
	consultation has taken place with existing users.		
<p>Direct community benefit and inclusion</p> <p><u>This is not an exhaustive or definitive list yet</u> within the scope of this scoring matrix 'vulnerable' / priority groups can include, the elderly, isolated young families, homeless, economically disadvantaged, educationally disadvantaged, migrant groups, individuals with disabilities, and those with impairments.</p>	<p>(0) The service/ activities appears to offer little or no direct benefit to the community.</p> <p>(1) Up to 50 residents, which does not appear to include vulnerable/ priority groups.</p>	<p>(2) More than 51 and up to 500 residents and it is clear this includes some vulnerable/ priority groups.</p> <p>(3) As above <u>and</u> Providing services that compliment council services or indirectly will reduce the likelihood of needing support from the council.</p> <p>or (3) points if a service/activity is directly supporting up to 50 vulnerable residents and / or priority groups</p>	<p>(4) More than 501 residents and includes a large proportion of 'vulnerable' residents.</p> <p>(5) As above <u>and</u> Providing services that compliment council services or indirectly will reduce the likelihood of needing support from the council.</p>
District reach	(0) Appears to be minimal district reach (focused on town or village organisations located in) across the district.	(2 – 3) Good geographical reach (up to 10 wards) across the district as defined by the number of wards represented against similar population size.	(4) Very good geographical reach, (up to 15 wards), across the district as defined by the number of wards represented against similar population size.

	0 - 1 points	2 - 3 points	4 - 5 points
	(1) Limited reach (up to two wards) across the district.		(5) Full district-wide reach with clear evidence submitted to support statement of reach.
Are the targets reasonable and outcome driven?	(0) It is unclear as to how the targets have been arrived at. (1) Targets are high and officers feel could be unrealistic.	(2) Targets are mostly internally focussed, with some research/benchmark data to support, which includes some measurable outcomes for residents. (3) As above <u>however</u> Targets are specific and achievable with measurable outcomes for residents.	(4) Targets ambitious whilst still feel achievable. Outcomes for residents are specific and measurable. (5) As above <u>and</u> An increase in the percentage potential client base benefiting, in 2023/2024.
Add	Add an additional one point if a local organisation is delivering the same service/activities as a national organisation		
Add	An additional one/ two discretionary points can be awarded, <u>in addition to the above score banding</u> , for evidence of relevant partnership working, collaboration in and co-production of the service/activities.		
Deductions	The community grants panel can recommend not funding a service / activities if they have serious concerns about the appropriateness of the service.		

Corporate Plan Priorities and Equality Objectives

The application will be marked against the equality objectives and one of the Corporate Plan priorities, depending on which Corporate Plan priority the applicant selected in the application.

	0 - 1 points	2 – 3 points	4 – 5 points
<p>How will the organisation/ service help us to meet one or more of our Corporate Plan priorities?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">To protect and restore our natural world</p> <p><i>“We will champion the opportunity to restore our natural world in both biodiverse and bio-depleted areas through nature recovery networks and other means. We will connect urban communities to their local green spaces and restore nature to urban environments.”</i></p> <p>This theme focuses on delivering positive outcomes for the community and our natural world.</p>	<p>(0) Unfortunately limited evidence of consultation or partnership working, difficult for officers to assess and unclear of links to county or national priorities for restoring nature.</p> <p>(1) Very small geographical remit, village or individual site, service/activities are short-term in focus.</p>	<p>(2) Evidence of a long-term substantive commitment to restoring the natural world through the organisation’s governance and / or strategic plan.</p> <p>(3) Evidence of aiming to restore nature over a wide area, Parish wide, collaborative working with relevant NGO’s and partners where others are contributing to success.</p>	<p>(4) Evidence of large-scale restoration of the natural world - District wide, clearly evidence how they are contributing to County or national targets for restoring the natural world.</p> <p>(5) Evidence of long-term commitments to the restoration of the natural world and that will have a lasting legacy.</p>
<p>Action on the climate emergency</p> <p><i>“We will help our communities to plan a fair transition to a future that will be defined by climate change.”</i></p> <p>This theme focuses on supporting</p>	<p>(0) Appears to be offering a limited contribution to addressing Climate Emergency.</p> <p>(1) Initial research carried out into possible actions that address the Climate Emergency.</p>	<p>(2) One-off event or activity planned that contributes to Climate Emergency</p> <p>Examples include: commission an energy audit of premise(s); staff training on climate literacy; signpost to active travel options.</p>	<p>(4) One Climate Emergency related event, activities or services as part of routine work of the organisation per year.</p> <p>Examples include: marketing and campaigns on active travel; set up car sharing scheme; use</p>

<p>communities to take action on the climate emergency.</p>	<p>Examples include: research into improving the energy efficiency of building; research into promotion of waste minimisation.</p>	<p>(3) One event, activity or service that contributes to the Climate Emergency implemented per year.</p> <p>Examples as above but annual.</p>	<p>of local suppliers/plant-based foods for events and activities; commission a service to implement waste minimisation framework.</p> <p>(5) More than one Climate Emergency related event, activity or service per year are part of routine work of the organisation.</p>
<p>Improved economic and community well – being</p> <p><i>“We will help our community groups to strengthen cohesion, reduce social isolation and tackle areas of deprivation”.</i></p> <p>This theme focuses on positive outcomes for the wellbeing of the community as a result of the project activities.</p>	<p>(0) Unfortunately limited evidence provided on community wellbeing or limited evidence provided to support proposed economic activities/growth, difficult for officers to assess.</p> <p>(1) Some evidence of community wellbeing examples include using active travel and outdoor activities that benefit physical and mental well-being or some evidence provided showing a need for the proposed economic activity such as surveys showing support for the proposed activities.</p>	<p>(2) The organisation can demonstrate the well-being benefits physically and mentally in their activities, including use of outdoor space and promotion of active travel or a business plan supporting the proposed economic activity with details of costs and potential income.</p> <p>(3) As above <u>and</u></p> <p>The organisation works towards combating loneliness and isolation or has supplied market research to support the business plan.</p>	<p>(4) The organisation can demonstrate that it reduces loneliness and isolation amongst our most vulnerable residents. For example, training is offered to support mental wellbeing or the organisation has supplied a detailed business plan with supporting market research clearly showing how potential income from the economic activity will help support the organisations financial situation going forward.</p> <p>(5) As above <u>however</u></p> <p>Training is mandatory to support</p>

			mental wellbeing, the organisation can show how the economic activity will create employment opportunities in the organisation.
How will the organisation/ service help us to meet one or more of the council's equality objectives?	<p>(0) There doesn't appear to be an equality policy/statement in place, or other evidence that services are designed to meet the needs of all users.</p> <p>(1) An equality policy or statement in place.</p>	<p>(2) Evidence of implementation of policy/statement through provision of the services via multiple channels.</p> <p>(3) as above <u>and</u> Evidence of increasing awareness of the service provision, to those in need through a variety of channels.</p>	<p>(4) Evidence of customer satisfaction data implemented, with service users (e.g. including priority group/ vulnerable people, at the heart of the improving service design and delivery.</p> <p>(5) as above <u>and</u> Evidence that the service is designed to meets the needs of all users and delivering better outcomes for vulnerable/priority groups and/ or improving areas of deprivation and/or encouraging community cohesion.</p>
Deductions	The community grants panel can recommend not funding a service / activities if they believe the service and/or organisation doesn't meet the criteria or help deliver the council's Corporate Plan objectives and /or equality objectives.		

APPENDIX 2

Diversifying Income Streams

COVID has brought a new hybrid way of fundraising; mixing digital methods with more traditional routes and giving more confidence to try new things to help your organisation weather future storms.

MAKE IT EASY FOR PEOPLE TO CHOOSE YOUR CHARITY TO SUPPORT

- Invest in digital resources. Update your IT hardware and software to support online fundraising and income streams like Crowdfunding.
- Develop your website to make it simple for people to make a donation via your homepage or to set up a direct debit.
- Explain the story of your organisation and explain why you are the best at what you do. Create a short film or create a virtual tour of your premises. These visual assets are vital to help reach out to new supporters.
- Purchase a good Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. It is important to build and manage lasting relationships with your supporters/donors. They aren't as expensive as you might think, especially if you are a small organisation with a small supporter base.

THINK BEYOND ONE-OFF DONATIONS TOWARDS REGULAR FINANCIAL SUPPORT

- Memberships and subscriptions bring in new streams of regular, dependable income and supporters to help you become more sustainable.
- Create long term relationships with donors using digital platforms to communicate online with regular posts, blog, tweets and emails updates about your day-to-day work. Why not ask your supporters what they want to hear about to make sure they feel connected to your cause?
- Remember, trusts and foundations also want to build strong relationships with local organisations. A good understanding of their priorities will help you target your applications and hopefully lead to multi-year funding.

MAXIMISING THE POTENTIAL WITHIN YOUR STAFF/ TRUSTEES/ VOLUNTEERS

- Invest in training existing staff, trustees and volunteers in fundraising, financial management, business planning, IT skills and marketing.

- A skilled workforce will efficiently manage new income generating activities. Contact the [Directory of Social Change](#), [OCVA](#), and [NCVO](#) for training opportunities and guidance.
- Deliver training courses to external organisations/ businesses. This harnesses the skills and expertise in your own organisation.

TAKE A STEP BACK AND LOOK AT THINGS DIFFERENTLY

- What products and/or services can your organisation offer at a cost to others? e.g, training programme.
- Could you establish a business/ social enterprise that supports your charity, e.g, café or shop?
- Do you have any capital assets e.g, buildings, office space or equipment that can be rented out?
- Create a Business Plan which could help you create a fully costed plan to see if your ideas support themselves and create a profit.

DON'T FORGET YOUR SUPPORTERS WANT TO HAVE FUN

- Think about booking charity places in races like Oxford Half Marathon, or devising a challenge like '[Brave the Shave](#)' and '[Movember](#)' where supporters can do something different, involve others and raise money!
- Events like raffles, auctions and quiz nights may be an easy way to get new supporters involved – they bring people together to support your cause and help raise your profile.
- The council has set up the [SO Charitable Lottery](#) for local organisations to get involved and raise regular funds. It is free to join, proceeds are paid directly to your organisation's bank account and players can win prizes up to the £25,000 jackpot.
- Have a plan to develop those new contacts and make sure they have a reason to keep supporting you for years to come.