

Report – The City Bridge Trust Committee

Thresholds for grant approvals under delegated powers

To be presented on Thursday, 12th September 2019

*To the Right Honourable The Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Commons
of the City of London in Common Council assembled.*

SUMMARY

At its July 2019 meeting, your City Bridge Trust Committee agreed to adjust the financial thresholds within which decisions on funding recommendations can be made by officers or the Chairman and Deputy Chairman under delegated powers. This is in order to increase the time available at meetings for discussion about strategy and wider policy issues.

These thresholds were last reviewed and set in 2014. Changes to them are subject to the final approval of the Court of Common Council and this report, therefore, seeks that approval.

RECOMMENDATION

That that the levels of delegation in respect of the consideration of grant applications be adjusted so that:

- (i) Applications of up to £50,000 may be approved by the Chief Grants Officer & Director of City Bridge Trust (CGO).
- (ii) Applications of over £50,000 and up to £100,000 may be approved by the CGO, in consultation with the Chamberlain.
- (iii) Applications of more than £100,000 are to be approved by the City Bridge Trust Committee.

MAIN REPORT

Background

1. In October 2014, the Court of Common Council considered a Review of City Bridge Trust's Priorities and Policies. This included a look at the financial thresholds associated with delegated approval arrangements, which have been employed over the years by the City Bridge Trust Committee.
2. Due to the volume of applications considered, it has been the long-standing practice that those associated with small sums are considered by the Chief Grants Officer & City Bridge Trust Director (CGO) acting alone, or by the CGO in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman for intermediate sums. This is to allow for the Committee meetings to focus on the larger funding decisions and strategic items. All such approvals are made in accordance with the approved funding strategy, Bridging Divides.

3. The levels of delegated authority for City Bridge Trust funding decisions are currently as follows:
 - (i) Up to £10,000 may be approved by the CGO.
 - (ii) Applications of over £10,000 and up to £25,000 may be approved by the CGO, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman.
 - (iii) Applications of over £25,000 and up to £50,000 may be approved by the CGO in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, with reference to the Chamberlain.
 - (iv) Applications over £50,000 to be approved by the City Bridge Trust Committee.

Proposal

4. With it having been five years since the levels were last reviewed, your City Bridge Trust Committee considered the suitability of the current delegation arrangements and the potential impact that altering the thresholds would have, also giving regard to the levels of delegation applied by other Committees.
5. Table 1, below, shows the number of applications dealt with where funding has been recommended, using the current levels of delegation and the number dealt with by Committee during 2018/19.

Table 1:

Grant level	Number of applications	Value of grants approved	% of number approved
< £10,000	19	£96,233	9.5%
£10,000 - £25,000	17	£292,005	8.5%
£25,000 - £50,000	17	£676,955	8.5%
> £50,000	147	£20,948,850	73.5%
Total	200	£22,014,043	100%

6. Following consideration, it is recommended that the levels of delegation be adjusted so that:
 - (iv) Applications of up to £50,000 may be approved by the Chief Grants Officer & City Bridge Trust Director (CGO).
 - (v) Applications of over £50,000 and up to £100,000 may be approved by the CGO, in consultation with the Chamberlain.
 - (vi) Applications of more than £100,000 are to be approved by the City Bridge Trust Committee.
7. The table below shows the impact that these changes would have on the number of applications dealt with by delegated authority and the number that would continue to come to Committee for approval, based on applications approved during 2018/19:

Table 2:

Grant level	Number of applications	Value of grants approved	% of number approved
< £50,000	53	£1,065,193	26.5%
£50,000 - £100,000	47	£3,609,030	23.5%
> £100,000	100	£17,339,820	50%
Total	200	£22,014,043	100%

8. Increasing the levels of delegated authority as proposed would make a sizeable difference to the amount of business that could be undertaken outside of Committee meetings, thereby increasing the time available for discussion about strategy and wider policy issues, whilst ensuring that Committee continues to make decisions on the more substantial applications which accounted for 50% of grants in 2018/19.

Conclusion

9. Your City Bridge Trust Committee considers that the financial thresholds associated with grant approvals should be adjusted to decrease the number of lower value applications requiring Committee approval, thereby providing for more time at meetings to allow for focus on strategic items and higher value applications. The Court is recommended to approve the recommended adjustments, as detailed in paragraph 6.

All of which we submit to the judgement of this Honourable Court.

DATED this 25th day of July 2019.

SIGNED on behalf of the Committee.

Dhruv Patel, O.B.E.
Chair, The City Bridge Trust Committee