

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
City Bridge Trust (CBT)	28 <sup>th</sup> January 2021
<b>Subject:</b> Delegated Authority Threshold Review	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Chief Grants Officer and Director of CBT (CGO)	<b>For Decision</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Scott Nixon, Head of Director's Office	

### Summary

As part of City Bridge Trust's (CBT) response to the COVID-19/Coronavirus pandemic during 2020, it was proposed that amendments be made to the corporate Scheme of Delegations in respect of CBT, and the CBT delegated authority policy, in order to enable the City's Central Grants Office to respond to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis effectively, and take decisions expediently in the interests of Bridge House Estates and its beneficiaries. Following agreement of this Committee, the Policy and Resources Committee and the Court of Common Council agreed to amend the Scheme of Delegations and for officer delegated authority approval thresholds to be increased and extended on a temporary basis.

This report summarises grant making made under the arrangements, which have been in place since April 2020, and seeks your approval to implement the existing arrangements on a permanent basis, due to imminent changes in staff structure and volume grants to be approved. Your approval is also sought for grant application rejections to be included in these revised delegated authority arrangements.

### Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- a) Note the current City Bridge Trust thresholds for grant approvals under delegated powers, and the Scheme of Delegation to Officers in respect of the Chief Grants Officer and Director of City Bridge Trust (CGO);
- b) Recommend the proposed amendment to the Scheme of Delegation to Officers as set out below, for the approval of the Policy and Resources Committee and the Court of Common Council;

- c) Agree that the existing CBT delegated authority thresholds, as set out below, should be implemented on a permanent basis, subject to the approval of the Court of Common Council; and
- d) Agree that grant application rejections can be approved under the revised delegated authority proposals.

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. In a bid to support those affected by the impact of the COVID-19/Coronavirus pandemic, the City of London Corporation as trustee of Bridge House Estates (1035628) established the London Community Response Fund, a separate trust fund within the ancillary object of Bridge House Estates. Decisions on the first wave of applications were agreed during the week commencing 6 April 2020, and a further four waves of funding have been subsequently agreed.
2. Ordinarily the CGO would consider and approve grants up to a certain threshold. However, during 2020 the CGO was frequently seconded full-time to the London-wide COVID-19 response. Furthermore, the City's ordinary tempo of decision making by Committee was disrupted by the cancellation of meetings and the redeployment of staff who would ordinarily support the decision-making process;
3. Therefore it was proposed to amend the Scheme of Delegations and CBT delegated authority policy, to allow the Deputy Director of City Bridge Trust (DCGO) to act in the CGO's absence and to increase the thresholds at which the CGO/DCGO could approve grants without recourse to the City Bridge Trust Committee or the Town Clerk.
4. Following an urgency report to the Court of Common Council on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2020, the below delegated authority thresholds were approved, which cover applications to the Investing in Londoners, Bridging Divides, Small Grants and Stepping Stones programmes.
  - a) Applications of up to £50,000 may be approved by the Chief Grants Officer (CGO) or, in their absence, the Deputy Director of City Bridge Trust (DCGO);
  - b) Applications of between £50,001 and £100,000 to be approved by the CGO or, in their absence, the DCGO, in consultation with the Chamberlain.
  - c) Applications of between £100,001 and £250,000 to be approved by the CGO or, in their absence, the DCGO, in consultation with the Chamberlain and the Chair and Deputy Chair;
  - d) Applications of more than £250,000 to be approved by The City Bridge Committee.

2. Furthermore, the Policy and Resources Committee, and subsequently the Court of Common Council, agreed to amend the Scheme of Delegations to Officers in respect of the CGO as follows:
  - e) Authority to be delegated to The Chief Grants Officer & Director of City Bridge Trust or, in their absence, the Deputy Director of City Bridge Trust, to be exercised either:
    - a. at the direction of the Town Clerk & Chief Executive or
    - b. in the absence of the Town Clerk & Chief Executive

to act in consultation with any relevant Chairman and Deputy Chairman in cases where urgent decisions may be required as provided for in Standing Order No. 41, in respect of Bridge House Estates and/or any other charity in which the City of London Corporation has a material interest, and also in cases (whether under Standing Order 41 or otherwise) where action may be taken under authority delegated by a Committee in respect of Bridge House Estates

3. Between 7 April 2020 (when Court of Common Council approved the changes to the approval thresholds), and 22 December 2020, Table 1 below shows the number of applications approved under the approved delegated authority arrangements:

**Table 1:**

	<b>Number of CBT/LCRF applications approved</b>
Applications of up to £50,000	40 (1,601 if including LCRF requests)
Applications of between £50,001 and £100,000	50 (51 if including LCRF requests)
Applications of between £100,001 and £250,000	66
Applications of more than £250,000	6 (approved at CBT committee)

4. In light of the imminent retirement of the DCGO in May 2021, and no current plan to recruit to that role, it is proposed that approval is extended to Funding Directors, in addition to the DCGO on a permanent basis, subject to the outcome of any staff restructuring.
5. The work of LCRF is also likely to continue in the future as a means of enabling us to work collaboratively with other funders.
6. The Covid-19 crisis has enabled us, and the wider funding community to adopt new and better funding practices, including fast turn-around times. Increasing the threshold levels on a permanent basis will enable us to retain faster turnaround times, thereby enhancing the Trust's reputation as a funder that is responsive to the needs of the sector

7. With the establishment of the BHE Committee still in progress, these delegated authority limits may be reviewed again in due course.
8. The current wording “*Applications* of ...” refers to the level of funding requested. It is proposed to revise the wording to reflect the level of funding *recommended* as this seems a more logical approach to the levels of delegation.
9. The proposed changes have been underlined below:
  - a) Recommendations of up to £50,000 may be approved by the Chief Grants Officer (CGO) in their absence, the Deputy Chief Grants Officer (DCGO) or a Funding Director;
  - b) Recommendations of between £50,001 and £100,000 to be approved by the CGO or in their absence the DCGO or a Funding Director, in consultation with the Chamberlain.
  - c) Recommendations of between £100,001 and £250,000 to be approved by the CGO or in their absence the DCGO or a Funding Director in consultation with the Chamberlain and the Chair and Deputy Chair;
  - d) Recommendations of more than £250,000 to be approved by The City Bridge Committee.

Scott Nixon  
Head of Director's office  
020 4526 1213  
[Scott.nixon@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:Scott.nixon@cityoflondon.gov.uk)