



GRANTS TO THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR PANEL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN PARK
ON WEDNESDAY, 14TH MARCH 2018 AT 5.00 PM

PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs G. Oliver - Chair
Councillor R. Gough - Vice Chair

Councillors:

Mrs C. Andrews, M. Davies, Ms A. Gair, D.T. Hardacre, L. Jeremiah and D.W.R. Preece.

Together with:

S. Harris (Interim Head of Corporate Finance), D. Roberts (Principal Group Accountant - Financial Advice and Support), Mrs G. Elliot (Communities First Finance Assistant) and C. Evans (Committee Services Officer).

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors L. Binding, A. Farina-Childs, A. Higgs, M.P. James, A. Leonard, R. Saralis and A. Whitcombe.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received during the course of the meeting.

3. MINUTES – 22ND NOVEMBER 2017

The minutes of the Grants to the Voluntary Sector Panel held on 22nd November 2017 (minute nos. 1 – 4.4) were received and approved as a correct record.

4. APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

4.1 Assistance to the Voluntary Sector Budget

Members noted the budget available for 2017-2018 is £175,817.00, which included the estimated reduction for Discretionary Rate Relief (£145,389.68) and budget carried forward from 2016-2017 (£90,422.65). If all awards in the report are agreed the remaining budget would be £104,009.97.

4.2 Members were asked to consider the applications listed in Appendix 1 to the report and to make appropriate recommendations to the Interim Head of Corporate Finance for approval.

RECOMMENDED that the following applications for financial assistance be referred to the Interim Head of Corporate Finance for approval under delegated powers:-

(a)	Music in Hospitals and Care Cymru	£250.00
(b)	Ysgol Feithrin, Abertridwr	£210.00

Members discussed the awards at length and sought further information on any previous applications made by the organisations and the Care Homes in which they would provide the service. Members noted that there has not been any previous applications and the application didn't specifically state the Care Homes in which they would provide the service, but funding was sought to provide a service within the Caerphilly County Borough.

4.3 Applications for Financial Assistance: General Criteria Awards

Members noted the applications received since the last meeting totalling £1,850.00, as listed in Appendix 2, which are in accordance with the agreed criteria and to be processed by officers.

4.4 Welsh Church Act Fund

Monmouthshire County Council have advised that the allocation of £61,600.00 is available for 2017-18 and the underspends from previous years totalling £218,568.33 could be carried forward, resulting in a total available budget for 2017/18 of £280,168.33. Members noted that, with the total Grants awarded to date of £14,995.13, the remaining balance is £265,173.20.

The Panel were advised that Monmouthshire County Council have provided a provisional allocation of £61,600.00 for 2018/19, along with estimated carried forward balances of £263,239.00, there is an estimated provisional budget of £324,839.87 for 2018/19.

As a result of concerns raised for some time due to the high level of balances being carried forward for the Welsh Church Act Fund, an informal workshop took place with the Grants to the Voluntary Sector Panel in January in which 5 options were considered in respect of the level of grants awarded from the Welsh Church Act Fund. These options were as follows:

Option 1 – Applications of up to £2,500 to be fully grant funded with applications above £2,500 to be subject to a grant rate of 50% on the sum in excess of £2,500 e.g. an application requesting £4,000 that meets the criteria would receive £3,250 (£2,500 plus 50% of £1,500). Members may wish to consider a maximum grant award.

Option 2 – Award all applications that meet the WCAF criteria at 50% with a maximum award of £10,000.

Option 3 – Award grants of up to 90% with a maximum award of £10,000.

Option 4 – Applications of up to £5,000 to be fully grant funded with applications above £5,000 to be subject to a grant rate of 75% on the sum in excess £5,000 e.g. an application requesting £8,000 that meets the criteria would receive £7,250 (£5,000 plus 75% of £3,000). Members may wish to consider a maximum grant award.

Option 5 – Keep grant awards as they currently stand.

Following consideration of the options the preferred approach of the Panel was option 4 with a maximum grant payable of £10,000. The Panel also requested that the grants process be reviewed to expedite payments wherever possible and that options be explored for publicising the Fund more widely. The Panel also requested that the number of quotes/estimates to be provided with applications should be reduced to 2 for grant applications under £5,000 and 3 for applications over £5,000.

The Panel noted that the proposed options will be considered by Cabinet on 28 March 2018. Subject to its approval, Members were assured that the changes would be widely publicised in publications by GAVO, CCBC Publications such as Newsline and the website and an All Councillors email would be disseminated.

The meeting closed at 5.29 p.m.

Approved and signed as a correct record subject to any amendments agreed and recorded in the minutes of the next meeting.

CHAIR