



GRANTS TO THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR PANEL – 21ST NOVEMBER 2018

SUBJECT: APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION & CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Panel of the applications for financial assistance received between 1st July and 31st October 2018.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report advises Panel members of the budget allocations for both the Voluntary Sector budget and the Welsh Church Fund and provides details of applications received between 1st July and 31st October 2018.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 Voluntary and community sector organisations make an important contribution to public service provision across the county borough and are key participants in the 'Caerphilly We Want' Well-being Plan published on 3rd May 2018 under the Well-being Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The Well-being Plan has four priorities – Positive Change, Positive Start, Positive People and Positive Places.
- 3.2 This report links to the following Well-Being Goals within the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015:
- A prosperous Wales
 - A healthier Wales
 - A more equal Wales
 - A Wales of cohesive communities
 - A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language.

4. THE REPORT

4.1 GRANTS TO THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR BUDGET

- 4.1.1 The Panel's budget for 2018-19 is as follows:

Budget 2018-19	£179,333.00
Less Discretionary Rate Relief (Estimated)	£171,689.00
Remaining Budget	£7,644.00
Carry forward balance from 2017-18	£140,507.01
Total Available Budget 2018-19	£148,151.01
Total 2018-19 Grants awarded as per last Report	£10,410.00
Balance Remaining	£137,741.01

- 4.1.2 The projected Discretionary Rate Relief for 2018-19 is **£171,689.00**. Allowing for the projected spend on the Discretionary Rate Relief, the available balance for schemes is **£148,151.01** which includes the carry forward balances.
- 4.1.3 At the previous Panel meeting in July 2018, Panel members recommended approval of a total of **£9,190.00** in respect of General Criteria awards and **£500.00** in respect of Panel awards, a total of **£10,410.00**. These recommendations were subsequently approved by the Head of Corporate Finance and S151 Officer under delegated powers. This resulted in a balance remaining of **£137,741.01**.
- 4.1.4 The maximum amount requested in respect of the applications listed in Appendix 1 (Panel Awards) is **£3,100 (3 No.)**. These applications do not meet the criteria as set out in Appendix 4. Panel Members are asked to consider these applications and make appropriate recommendations to the Head of Corporate Finance and S151 Officer for approval or otherwise under delegated powers.
- 4.1.5 Panel members will recall that at the meeting in July 2018 they approved the new process for dealing with General Criteria applications, whereby applications are approved by the Head of Corporate Finance and S151 Officer on a monthly basis under delegated powers before being reported to the Panel for information when they meet. This process has been implemented successfully and Appendix 2 details the General Criteria applications that have been received between 1st July and 31st October 2018, and approved by the Head of Corporate Finance and S151 Officer. These total **£3,140 (22 No.)**.
- 4.1.6 The balance remaining if all grants are awarded as set out in Appendix 1 and those already approved in Appendix 2 will be **£131,501.01**.
- 4.1.7 As previously agreed by the Panel, grants awarded during the 2018-19 financial year that exceed the budget allocation will be funded from the brought forward balances.
- 4.2 WELSH CHURCH FUND**
- 4.2.1 Members will recall that at the 17th January 2018 meeting of the Panel, they were presented with a number of options for increasing the upper limits on grants available, and the intervention rate to be applied, in order to make better use of the funding available. The recommended preferred option of the Panel when considering applications for assistance from the Welsh Church Fund was as follows:
- (i) Applications of up to £5,000 to be fully grant funded;
 - (ii) Applications above £5,000 to be subject to a grant rate of 75% on the sum in excess of £5,000 (e.g. an application requesting £8,000 that meets the criteria would receive £7,250 - £5,000 plus 75% of £3,000);
 - (iii) The maximum grant payable to be £10,000;
 - (iv) The grants process to be reviewed to expedite payments wherever possible and that options be explored for publicising the funding more widely;
 - (v) The number of quotes/estimates to be provided with applications be reduced to two for grant applications under £5,000 and three for applications over £5,000;
 - (vi) Grants should be restricted to community organisations and community based projects in the first instance and that this position is reviewed in 12 months;
 - (vii) Grants cannot be applied for in consecutive years;
 - (viii) The maximum time period in which a grant awarded can be claimed is 18 months.

- 4.2.2 The Panel recommendation of the preferred option was approved by Cabinet at its meeting on 28th March 2018, with the revised criteria introduced with effect from 1st April 2018.
- 4.2.3 At the meeting of 13th July 2009, Members agreed that officers would approve applications meeting the Welsh Church Fund criteria using the delegated powers of the Head of Corporate Finance and S151 Officer. Such decisions would then be reported to the Panel for information, where Members could ask for further information if required.
- 4.2.4 The total budget available for 2018-19 is **£324,839.89**, including the annual allocation from Monmouthshire County Council (**£61,600**) and underspends from previous years (**£263,239.89**).

Budget 2018-19	£61,600
Carry forward balances	£263,239.89
Total available budget 2018-19	£324,839.89
Total 2018-19 grants awarded to date	£59,202.33
Adjustments within year	-£2,502.39
Balance remaining	£268,139.95

- 4.2.5 Panel Members may recall that at the last Panel meeting awards totalling **£59,202.33** were reported as being allocated to new projects in 2018-19. Since the last meeting a number of approved projects have submitted their claims for expenditure, with 3 No. projects spending less than the amount originally allocated, a total sum of **£2,502.39**. This amount has been re-absorbed back into the funding pot to be used for other projects. Therefore the sum available is **£268,139.95**.
- 4.2.6 Details of applications received since the last meeting which meet the Welsh Church Fund criteria are set out in Appendix 3. The total of amounts requested in accordance with the agreed criteria is **£101,143.49 (20 No.)**.
- 4.2.7 If all awards approved spend to their maximum allocation there will be a balance of **£166,996.46** remaining.
- 4.2.8 No previously approved applications have exceeded the 18 month time limit to claim funding (as set out in the Terms and Conditions) since the last Panel meeting.

5. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

- 5.1 Grants awarded from the Grants to the Voluntary Sector budget and the Welsh Church Fund contribute to the following Well-Being Goals for Wales:-
- A prosperous Wales – grants offered to the voluntary and community sector will help these organisations and the buildings they own and manage to become more financially sustainable, and help them to provide much needed services to their local communities.
 - A healthier Wales – providing opportunities for residents to receive local services that are suited to their needs will help to improve their physical and mental well-being.
 - A more equal Wales – providing local services in community settings will help to ensure that residents are able to fulfil their own potential, regardless of their background or personal circumstances.
 - A Wales of cohesive communities – community buildings are often at the heart of the local community, which helps to ensure that our communities can thrive and there is a focal point where residents can come together.
 - A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language – the activities that are provided by the community and voluntary sector encourage residents to participate in the arts, sports and recreational activities.

6. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report so no Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The financial implications are those set out in the report.

8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no personnel implications.

9. CONSULTATIONS

- 9.1 There are no consultation responses which have not been reflected in this report.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 That Panel Members make recommendations for approval or otherwise in relation to the requests for Financial Assistance listed in Appendix 1. These recommendations will then be considered and approved by the Head of Corporate Finance and S151 Officer under delegated powers.
- 10.2 That Panel members note the applications listed in Appendix 2 and 3, which have already been approved by the Head of Corporate Finance and S151 Officer under delegated powers, and which are reported to the Panel for information.

11. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 To ensure that the applications received under this report are determined in accordance with the Council's scheme of delegation criteria.

12. STATUTORY POWER

- 12.1 Local Government Act 1972 and 2003 and the Council's Financial Regulations.

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Appendices:
Appendix 1 Panel Awards
Appendix 2 General Criteria Awards
Appendix 3 Welsh Church Fund 2018/19 Criteria Awards
Appendix 4 List of General Criteria