



## CABINET - 7TH MAY 2014

**SUBJECT: TRANSFER INTO REVENUE SUPPORT GRANT OF PUBLIC FACILITIES GRANT 2014/15**

**REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES & SECTION 151 OFFICER**

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Cabinet of notification of a transfer of specific grant into the Revenue Support Grant for 2014/15 that as a consequence of its low value did not form part of the Welsh Government Settlement papers circulated in December 2013.
- 1.2 To ask Cabinet to consider and agree the interim arrangements in respect of this transfer.

### 2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report details the recent history in respect of this grant and proposes interim arrangements in respect of funding for 2014/15, prior to the setting of the Council's Budget for 2015/16.

### 3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Single Integrated Plan (Caerphilly delivers) includes a range of priorities linked to creating and maintaining a prosperous, greener, healthier and safer Caerphilly and the provision of facilities in local communities consequently contributes to these priorities.
- 3.2 The Authority has a Medium Term Financial Strategy to achieve savings over the period 2014-2017. The rationalisation of public convenience provision is one of the items that will contribute to these financial savings targets.

### 4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 In the last few years, Welsh Government (WG) have provided 100% grant funding in respect of payments to businesses who have made their toilet facilities available to the public.
- 4.2 The grant totalled £17,000 in 2013/14 and comprised of 32 payments of £500 per business and one payment of £1,000.
- 4.3 During late March 2014, WG announced that this grant was ending from 1 April 2014, but that funds had been transferred to Local Authorities in the settlement from Welsh Government. It was a matter then for each Authority to determine how much and how any allocations would be made in the future.

- 4.4 Unfortunately, grants transferred with very low values, do not form part of any formal notification. WG have advised that this grant was too small to mention in the settlement papers circulated in December 2013.
- 4.5 Officers contacted WG and were advised on 28 March 2014 that funds had been put into the formula allocation that distributes funding to Welsh Local Authorities. WG advised Officers of the formula allocation used for this grant which, when applied, gives CCBC £12.1 k for 2014/15.
- 4.6 Members are reminded that the Budget has been set for 2014/15 on the basis that this grant funding would continue in the three areas that Council agreed to close public conveniences. These areas are Newbridge, Fleur de Llys and Nelson. Members should note that no grant payments were made in 2013/14 to any business in Fleur De Lys.
- 4.7 Hence, it is proposed that the organisations in Newbridge and Nelson that received a grant in 2013/14 continue to be funded at the same levels for the 2014/15 financial year. This funding totals £2,000. A full list of the organisations receiving grants in 2013/14 is attached at Appendix 1.
- 4.8 In the meantime, a review needs to be undertaken in respect of this funding to determine: -
- (i) Whether the whole sum is required bearing in mind a saving to compensate will need to be identified elsewhere in 2015/16 as part of the budget setting process.
  - (ii) Criteria to allocate the funds.

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 No impact assessment has been undertaken on this report. This will be undertaken as part of the review referred to in paragraph 4.8.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Funding of up to £12 k can be taken from the Directorate of Environment service reserves for 2014/15. To create a budget for this spend in 2015/16 will require further savings to be identified as part of the MTFP process.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 None.

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

- 8.1 Ward Members in Newbridge, Fleur De Lys and Nelson have been consulted on this report.
- 8.2 Two Ward Members have raised the fact that some of the businesses that have previously taken up the grant do not provide facilities that are as disabled friendly as the Public Conveniences previously operated by CCBC.
- 8.3 One Ward Member raised concerns that following the closure of the Public Convenience in Nelson there is currently no suitable provision for people with a disability.
- 8.4 Concerns have been raised again about the closure of the Nelson facility in particular. However, the purpose of this report is to present interim proposals for the distribution of the Public Facilities Grant and not to revisit the Council decision to close the facilities.

- 8.5 Some of the Ward Members have queried whether the grant could be paid to other organisations such as Community Councils where there may be interest in reopening and operating the closed facilities from their own funds. This will be considered as part of the wider review that will be undertaken to determine whether there will be further allocations of funding in 2014/15 and 2015/16.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 Cabinet agree to allocate £2,000 in 2014/15 to those businesses in Newbridge and Nelson as shown at Appendix 1. In the event that a business does not wish to participate, funds will be offered to other businesses in that area.
- 9.2 Cabinet agree that a review is undertaken to determine whether the £12 k is needed in full or part for further allocations of funding to businesses in 2014/15 and 2015/16. This review to consider criteria in respect of allocation. A further report will be presented to Cabinet when the review is complete.

## **10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 10.1 To ensure that Cabinet are made aware of a transfer into RSG of a grant for Public Conveniences including proposals for allocation.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

- 11.1 Local Government Acts.

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Background Papers:  
MTFP File V2

Appendices:  
Appendix 1 Public Convenience Grant Payments 2013