



GRANTS TO THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR PANEL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN PARK ON MONDAY, 13TH JULY 2009 AT 4.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor R.W. Gough – Chairman (presiding for this meeting only)

Councillors:

Mrs E.M. Aldworth, Mrs A. Blackman, A.G. Higgs, K. James, K. Lloyd, M. Prew

Together with:

N. Scammell (Head of Corporate Finance), S. Grant (Finance Manager, Corporate Services), A. Morgan (Group Accountant, Revenue Advice and Support), G. Elliott (Communities First, Finance Assistant) and R. Thomas (Committee Services Officer)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R. Bidgood, D. Cullen, W. David, J.O. Evans, G.J. Hughes, Mrs G. Oliver, Mrs K. Presley, Mrs J.A. Pritchard

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of interest were received at the start of the meeting as follows:

- (1) Councillor R.W. Gough declared an interest in the application from Llanbradach Community Centre because he is a member of the committee.
- (2) Councillor K. Lloyd declared an interest in the application from Trinant Sports Club RFC because a family member is the club's secretary.
- (3) Councillor Mrs E.M. Aldworth declared an interest in the application from St Barrwg's Church, Bedwas because she is a member of the church.

2. TO APPOINT A CHAIRMAN

Councillor J.O. Evans was appointed Chairman for the ensuing year.

3. TO APPOINT A VICE-CHAIRMAN

Councillor R. Bidgood was appointed Vice-Chairman for the ensuing year.

4. MINUTES

Members noted the minutes of the Grants to the Voluntary Sector Panel meeting held on 23rd March 2009 (minute nos. 1 - 9 on page nos. 1 - 3).

5. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE – AMENDMENTS TO CRITERIA

The panel agreed to consider the amendments to funding criteria prior to the applications for financial assistance.

Members noted the reduced overall available budget resulting from an increase in Discretionary Rate Relief (6.12%) versus the inflationary increase (2%). The need to revise the criteria or format of the panel was debated. Members were keen for the panel to remain in order to offer financial assistance to the most vulnerable people/groups in the borough such as the young and elderly. However it was acknowledged that to achieve this, changes had to be made. A general debate followed in which members considered the following:

- Requesting an up-to-date bank statement to ensure funds were allocated to the most needy;
- Reviewing community first group funding as alternative funds were available;
- Possible reduction of set funding awards to national groups;
- Possible removal of double payments for initial applications;
- Review of ceiling limit for credit unions.

Officers were asked to collate additional information for members to fully consider the available options. This was to include the following:

- Possible reduction in the percentage of rate relief offered;
- Ascertainment of alternative funding schemes available.

The panel agreed to hold a further meeting in late September to debate the necessary review and that any changes made in relation to Discretionary Rate Relief would come into effect from April 2010, whilst others would have an immediate effect.

6. STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURE

Members noted the statement of expenditure detailed within the report.

7. APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

7.1 Consideration of the following applications were deferred pending a review of the grant criteria:

- (a) Cambrian Educational Foundation for Deaf Children
- (b) Smart Money Credit Union Ltd (formerly Caerphilly & District)
- (c) The Salvation Army, Risca Corps
- (d) Stepping Stone Church, Aber Valley
- (e) Stepping Stone Church, Rhymney
- (f) Crosskeys College Choral Society
- (g) Crosskeys Silver Band
- (h) Arthritis Care, Ystrad Mynach
- (i) Machen Over 50's Club
- (j) Rhymney Valley Music Club
- (k) Crosskeys Community Gardening Group

- (l) Cefn Hengoed Ladies Friendship Club
- (m) Gilfach Fargoed Primary – Friends of the School Association
- (n) Britannia Community Association
- (o) Bargoed, Aberbargoed & Gilfach Credit Union
- (p) Cobden Street Allotments Association, Crosskeys

7.2 It was agreed that officers would write to the applicants to advise them of the deferment and that a decision would be made at the next meeting of the panel.

8. WELSH CHURCH ACTS FUND

8.1 RESOLVED that in accordance with the previously agreed criteria, grants of either up to one third of costs or a maximum of £1,500.00, be made from the Welsh Church Act Fund to the following:-

- (a) Ebenezer Baptist Church, Llanbradach
- (b) Hafodyrynys Congregational Church
- (c) Blackwood Town Cricket Club
- (d) 2nd Pontllanfraith Scout Group
- (e) Llanbradach Community Centre
- (f) Manmoel Welfare Association
- (g) Trecenydd Community Centre
- (h) Ainon Baptist Chapel, Gilfach
- (i) Calfaria Baptist Church, Nelson
- (j) St. Peter's & St. Cenydd's Church, Senghenydd
- (k) Trinant Sports Club RFC
- (l) 212 (Risca) Squadron ATC
- (m) Zion Baptist Church, Cwmcarn
- (n) St Barrwg's Church, Bedwas

8.2 Members agreed that in future, officers would approve those groups meeting the Church Act Fund criteria, using delegated powers. Such decisions would then be reported to the Panel for information, where Members could ask for further information if required.

8.3 Members agreed that any applications with questions over eligibility would still come before the Panel for determination.

9. TROPHIES, FOOTBALLS, ETC

Members deferred any payment to the Sports Development Team, pending addition information to assist them in a possible review of allocated funds.

10. DECISIONS OF OFFICERS

Members noted that no applications had been processed during the financial year to date, due to the anticipated review of grant criteria.

11. ADDITIONAL APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

11.1 Consideration of the following applications were deferred pending a review of the grant criteria:

- (a) Eisteddfod y Cymru 2009

- (b) Rotary Club of Pontllanfraith
- (c) Cyfeilion Bro Allta

11.2 It was agreed officers would write to the applicants to advise them of the deferment and that a decision would be made at the next meeting of the panel.

12. ADDITIONAL APPLICATIONS FOR WELSH CHURCH ACT FUND

12.1 RESOLVED that in accordance with the previously agreed criteria, grants of either up to one third of costs or a maximum of £1,500.00, be made from the Welsh Church Act Fund to the following:-

- (a) St Margaret's Church, Pontymister
- (b) St David's Church, Brithdir

The meeting closed at 4.55 p.m.