



## GRANTS TO THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR PANEL – 15TH JULY 2010

**SUBJECT: APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

**REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES**

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### 1. STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURE

#### 1.1 Outturn 2009/10

The draft accounts for 2009/10 indicate that the expenditure for last year came in on budget.

#### 1.2 The Panel's budget for 2010/2011 is £245,279. Members are reminded that growth of £40,000 was awarded as part of the 2010/2011 Budget. The following amounts have been allocated to date:

	£
Discretionary Rate Relief (projected)	155,405
Grants awarded by Panel	0
<b>Total Budgeted Expenditure</b>	<b>155,405</b>

Therefore, the balance available for grants to the voluntary sector is £89,874

The total of amounts requested for applications listed in Appendix 1 is £4,069.31 (13 No) including one for which no amount has been specified. The total requested under the General Criteria in Appendix 2 is £7,495 (48 No.) and has been arrived at by applying the original criteria levels. This currently gives a total sum requested of £11,564.31.

### 2. APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

#### 2.1 Members agreed some changes, as detailed in Appendix 4, to the original criteria in the Panel meeting in September 2009 due to the concerns regarding the number of applications received in previous years and the increase in the amount of Discretionary Rate Relief (DRR) awarded. However, the amount of DRR awarded in 2009/10 was some £9k less than the estimate and the current estimate for 2010/11 shows a further reduction of some £8.5k.

Given the increase in budget, the reduced estimate of DRR for 2010/11 and the current level of applications received to date, it seems likely that there will be sufficient funds available to grant all awards submitted during 2010/11.

#### 2.2 In relation to DRR, Members are reminded that the Non-Domestic Rating (Discretionary Relief) Regulations 1989 (SI No.1059) state that the charging authority (CCBC), in making a decision to revoke or vary a determination as to discretionary relief must give notice in writing to the ratepayer(s) concerned. Where the amount of rates payable is to increase (i.e. the discretionary relief is to be revoked or reduced), the notice or variation must have effect at the expiry of a financial year and at least **one year's notice** must be given.

Consequently, it is therefore already too late to amend our policies from 1st April 2011; the earliest opportunity to make any changes will be with effect from 1st April 2012, providing we notify the relevant ratepayers by 31st March 2011. Appendix 4 gives some examples of the effect on ratepayers of any decision to reduce the amount of relief granted.

- 2.3 Therefore, Members' views are sought as to whether they still wish to review the level of Discretionary Rate Relief and to proceed with the previously agreed changes to the General Criteria.

### **3. WELSH CHURCH ACTS FUND**

- 3.1 At previous meetings of the Panel it was decided that the following criteria would apply when considering applications for assistance from the Welsh Church Fund.

- (i) A grant of no more than £1,500 be given to partly fund projects of £4,500 and over;
- (ii) Smaller projects less than £4,500 be grant aided up to a third of the total cost;
- (iii) All organisations receiving grants produce the necessary financial records to show the expenditure has been incurred;
- (iv) No organisation be allowed to apply in consecutive years.

- 3.2 The meeting of 13th July 2009 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.

- 3.3 The Council's normal annual allocation from the Fund is £46,045. However, Monmouthshire C.C. have advised us that additional funding of £30,697 has again been allocated for 2010/11 giving a total for this year of £76,742. Thirteen new applications are appended in Appendix 5. The total of amounts requested in accordance with the agreed criteria is £16,257.47, of which £3,243.99 has been approved and released in accordance with the previous paragraph.

### **4. DECISIONS OF OFFICERS**

- 4.1 No applications under the general criteria have yet been processed for 2010/11 due to the backlog of payments needed to be actioned for 2009/10. However, it is anticipated that these awards, as detailed in Appendix 2, will be released in the next two weeks.

### **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The financial implications are those set out in the foregoing report

### **6. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no personnel implications.

### **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 That Members assess the applications contained in Appendix 1 and consider whether they wish to consider recommending any changes to criteria to Cabinet.

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#### Appendices

Appendix 1 Panel Awards  
Appendix 2 General Criteria Awards  
Appendix 3 General Criteria & Changes Agreed 21/09/2009  
Appendix 4 Discretionary Rate relief Examples  
Appendix 5 Welsh Church Fund Awards