



GRANTS TO THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR PANEL – 19TH JULY 2012

SUBJECT: APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

REPORT BY: DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present to Members the applications for financial assistance received during the current financial year.

The Panel's budget for 2012/2013 is as follows:

Budget 2012-13	£247,732.00
Less Discretionary Rate Relief (Projected)	£202,000.00
Remaining Budget	£45,732.00
Carry forward balance from 2011-12	£89,600.86
Total Budget 2012-13	£135,332.86
Total Grants awarded to date	0
Balance Remaining	£ 135,332.86

- 1.2 The total of amounts requested for applications listed in **Appendix 2** is **£21,776.45** (32 No.) The total requested under **Appendix 3** is **£22,600.00** (41 No.). This currently gives a total sum requested of **£44,376.45**. These awards are based on the revised criteria as agreed at the meeting on 14th December 2011. The revised criteria are more generous in every category and are outlined in **Appendix 1**.
- 1.3 If all grants requested are awarded as per their requests the balance remaining will be £90,956.41. If there were no carry forward amount of £89,600.86 the budget would be almost fully committed at this panel meeting. Hence there is a problem affording the revised criteria in future years when only the budget is available. It appears that this revised criteria has not been publicised and as such members need to consider reducing the criteria to levels that are sustainable. The revised criteria was introduced in April 2012 to ensure the surpluses were spent. There has also been an increase in Discretionary Rate Relief; hence members are requested to consider reverting back to the former criteria for awards made after the next panel meeting.

2. WELSH CHURCH ACTS FUND

- 2.1 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 £2,000 to be given to partly fund projects of £6,000 and over;
 - (ii) Smaller projects less than £6,000 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 is allowed to apply in consecutive years.
- 2.2 At 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.
- 2.3 Caerphilly county borough council received written confirmation on 17th May 2012 that the budget for 2012/13 is **£77,084.00**. Monmouthshire CC have confirmed that the underspends from previous years of **£113,321.00** can be carried forward, resulting in a total available budget for the current year of **£190,405.00**. **We have been advised by Monmouthshire CC that due to the present economic climate, allocations in the future could be reduced considerably.**
- 2.4 Applications received since the last meeting are appended in **Appendix 3**. The total of amounts requested in accordance with the agreed criteria is **£17,518.27**. **Two grants have already been paid out in early April, these were authorised by the previous panel chair. The revised criteria had not been available to applicants in this panel round and if members require the applicants who requested the full allocations be advised that should their project have spent over £6,000.00 the revised grant be allocated.**
- 2.5 We need to ensure processes are in place to safeguard the financial situation of the funds, revised practices will be adopted. In order to access the funds the applicants will need to sign the terms and conditions attached in Appendix 5. This will help the applicants to understand the processes to access the grant.

3. DECISIONS OF OFFICERS

All applications shown above as allocated have not been processed. Once panel have met, the necessary action will be taken. This is to ensure that the correct procedure has been carried out.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The financial implications are those set out in the foregoing report.

5. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

There are no personnel implications

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members review the criteria in appendix 1 in line with the available resources.

That Members assess the applications contained in Appendix 2 and note the applications in Appendix 3.

That Members decide whether to offer the applicants in Appendix 4 the revised full allocation, subject to spend, and if one of the applicants is eligible for the award.

That Members endorse the new Terms and Conditions contained in Appendix 5.

Author: D. Roberts - Principal Group Accountant (Financial Advice and Support)
Consultees: Nicole Scammell – Head of Corporate Finance
A Southcombe – Finance Manager

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Criteria
Appendix 2 Panel Awards
Appendix 3 General Criteria Awards
Appendix 4 Welsh Church Fund Awards
Appendix 5 WCF Terms and Conditions