

## GRANTS TO THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR PANEL – 19TH MARCH 2013

**SUBJECT: APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

**REPORT BY: ACTING 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)	£210,000.00
Remaining Budget	£37,732.00
Carry forward balance from 2011-12	£89,600.86
Total Budget 2012-13	£127,332.86
Total Grants awarded to date	(£48,886.51)
Balance Remaining	<b>£78,446.35</b>

- 1.2 The total of amounts requested for applications listed in **Appendix 1** is **£5,140.00** (10 No.) The total requested under **Appendix 2** is **£3,530.00** (25 No.). This currently gives a total sum requested of **£8,670.00**. These awards are based on the revised criteria as agreed at the meeting on 19th July 2012.
- 1.3 If all grants requested are awarded as per their requests the balance remaining will be £69,776.35. If there had been no carry forward amount of £89,600.86 the budget would have been fully committed.
- 1.4 At the previous Panel Meeting members requested information on the "Discretionary Rate Relief". 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 2013; the earliest opportunity to make any changes will be 1st April 2014, providing we notify the relevant ratepayers by 31st March 2013. In practical terms, any decision to amend our policies on discretionary rate relief would need to have been made by 31st January 2013, so as to allow sufficient time for officers to notify the affected organisations accordingly in writing. Appendix 4 gives some examples of the effect on ratepayers of any decision to reduce the amount of relief granted.

- 1.5 The indicative budget allocation for 2013-14 has been agreed at £251,448. Of which the projected Discretionary Rate Relief is £212,626. which leaves a projected budget allocation of £38,822.

## **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 CBC 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 CBC that due to the present economic climate, the provisional allocation for 2013-14 will be £40,048 a considerable reduction on this year's allocation, as yet we have no indication that we will be allowed to carry forward the unspent allocations.**
- 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 **£12,852.00 (8 No.)**. The amount approved from the last meeting was £23,896.40, which brings the total requested to date of £52,966.67. Amounts claimed and paid to date amount to £10,749.11.

## **3. DECISIONS OF OFFICERS**

- 3.1 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**

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

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no direct equalities implications to this report and so no Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out. Any such assessment would be carried out where more directly relevant to applicants, for example on the criteria for assessing the applications received by the Council.

## **6. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no personnel implications

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 That Members assess the applications contained in Appendix 1 and note the applications in Appendix 2 and Appendix 3.

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Consultees: N. Scammell – Head of Corporate Finance

A. Southcombe – Finance Manager

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Panel Awards

Appendix 2 General Criteria Awards

Appendix 3 Welsh Church Fund Awards

Appendix 4 Discretionary Rate Relief Examples