



GRANTS TO THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR PANEL – 25TH NOVEMBER 2013

SUBJECT: APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

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

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present the Panel with the applications for financial assistance received to date for the current financial year.
- 1.2 To seek Members views on the applications contained in Appendix 1 and request that they make appropriate recommendations to the Head of Corporate Finance for approval.
- 1.3 To ask members to note the awards made as set out in Appendices 2 and 3.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report advises panel members of the budget allocations for both the Voluntary Sector budget and the "Welsh Church Fund".
- 2.2 Appendices 1 and 2 relate to the Voluntary Sector budget; Appendix 1 sets out the applications, which do not meet the criteria as set out in Appendix 4. Appendix 2 sets out the applications approved by officers under their delegated powers in accordance with the criteria set out in Appendix 4 (but not actioned) and Appendix 3 sets out the Welsh Church Fund applications also approved by officers but not actioned.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 Voluntary and Community Sector organisations make an important contribution to public service provision across the borough and are key participants in the Community Strategy implemented through the Single Integrated Plan Caerphilly Delivers. The Single Integrated Plan has the following priority outcomes: Prosperous Caerphilly; Safer Caerphilly; Learning Caerphilly and Healthier Caerphilly.

4. REPORT

4.1 ASSISTANCE TO VOLUNTARY SECTOR BUDGET

- 4.1.1 The Panel's budget for 2013/2014 is as follows:

Budget 2013-14	£251,448.00
Less Discretionary Rate Relief (Projected)	(£214,114.00)
Remaining Budget	£37,334.00
Carry forward balance from 2012-13	£74,245.00
Total Budget 2013-14	£111,579.00
Total Grants awarded to date	(£9,990.40)
Balance Remaining	£ 101,588.60

4.1.2 The total of the amounts requested in respect of the applications listed in **Appendix 1** is **£7,813.00** (15 No.) The total requested and approved by officers (but not actioned) under **Appendix 2** is **£5,005.00** (28 No.). This gives an overall total sum of **£12,818.00**.

4.1.3 The balance remaining if all grants requested are awarded as set out in Appendix 1 will be £88,770.60.

4.2 WELSH CHURCH ACT FUND

4.2.1 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.

4.2.2 At the meeting of 13th July 2009 Members agreed that in future, officers would approve those applications meeting the Welsh 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.

4.2.3 Caerphilly County Borough Council received written confirmation from Monmouthshire County Council on 22nd February 2013 of the 2013/14 budget allocation of **£40,084.00**. Monmouthshire County Council have confirmed that the underspends from previous years of **£126,207.00** can be carried forward, resulting in a total available budget for the current year of **£166,291.00**. We have been advised by Monmouthshire County Council that due to the present economic climate, allocations in the future could be reduced considerably due to declining returns on investments.

4.2.4 Welsh Church Fund applications received and approved by officers (but not actioned) in accordance with the agreed criteria since the last meeting are set out in **Appendix 3 and total £22,945.20 (12 No.)**.

4.2.5 The amounts approved and reported to the last meeting of the panel was £6,000.00; to date none of the approved grants have been claimed.. Members will be aware that the terms and conditions of the grant award provide that the successful applicants have a period of 18 months from approval to spend and claim the grant. Some organisations have now exceeded this timescale, and as a result letters will be sent to these organisations advising them the grant has been withdrawn. A full list will be available for the next panel meeting.

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. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no personnel implications

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 There are no consultation responses, which have not been reflected in this report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That Members consider the applications contained in Appendix 1 and make appropriate recommendations to the Acting Head of Corporate Finance for approval.
- 9.2 That Members note the awards approved as set out in Appendices 2 and 3.
- 9.3 That Members note the process outlined in 4.2.5.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To ensure that the applications received under this report are determined in accordance with the Council's scheme of delegation criteria.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Government Act 1972 and 2003 and the Councils Financial Regulations.

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

Appendices:
Appendix 1 Panel Awards
Appendix 2 General Criteria Awards
Appendix 3 Welsh Church Fund Act -2013/2014
Appendix 4 General Criteria