



GRANTS TO THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR PANEL - 18TH MARCH 2014

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 details of applications received for financial assistance in the current financial year.
- 1.2 To provide details of indicative budget allocations for the 2014/15 financial year.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report advises Panel members of the budget allocations for both the Voluntary Sector budget and the "Welsh Church Act Fund" and provides details of applications received.

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)	(£217,481.00)
Remaining Budget	£33,967.00
Carry forward balance from 2012-13	£74,245.00
Total Budget 2013-14	£108,212.00
Total Grants awarded to date	(£17,452.40)
Balance Remaining	£90,759.60

- 4.1.2 The total amount requested in respect of the applications listed in Appendix 1 is £9,953.00 (16 No.). These applications do not meet the criteria as set out in Appendix 4. Panel Members are asked to consider these applications and make appropriate recommendations to the Acting Head of Corporate Finance for approval under delegated powers.
- 4.1.3 Appendix 2 details those applications that meet the criteria out set in Appendix 4 that have been approved by officers (but not actioned). These total £3,360.00 (25 No.). This gives an overall total sum of £13,313.00.
- 4.1.4 The balance remaining if all grants requested are awarded as set out in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 will be £77,446.60.
- 4.1.5 The indicative budget allocation for 2014/15 has been agreed at £255,220, of which the projected Discretionary Rate Relief is £221,966. This leaves a projected budget allocation of £33,254 (which will increase by the final balance to be carried forward from 2013/14).
- 4.1.6 Any further applications received before the 31st March 2014 will now be considered in the 2014/15 financial year.

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 to be grant aided up to a third of the total cost.
 - (iii) All organisations receiving grants to 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 its meeting on the 13th July 2009, Panel 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.
- 4.2.4 We have been advised by Monmouthshire County Council that the provisional allocation for 2014-15 will be £40,048 i.e. no change on this year's allocation. We have also been advised that we will be allowed to carry-forward the unspent allocations.
- 4.2.5 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 £5,719.33 (4 No.).
- 4.2.6 The amounts approved and reported to the last meeting of the Panel for this financial year amount to £28,945.20 and to date £12,545.06 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 may have exceeded this timescale, we will shortly be reviewing all previous applications and any that have exceeded the agreed timescale will be sent letters advising them that the grant has been withdrawn. When this process has been completed a list will be circulated at the next available 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 under delegated powers.
- 9.2 That Members note the awards approved as set out in Appendices 2 and 3.
- 9.3 Members note the indicative budget allocations outlined in 4.1.5 and 4.2.4.
- 9.4 That Members note the process outlined in 4.2.6 in relation to time limits on claiming approved Welsh Church Act grants.

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.

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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