

POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 20TH JULY 2010

SUBJECT: DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF APPLICATIONS

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The following application for rate relief have been determined by the Head of Corporate Finance under delegated powers (Scheme of Delegation Item 5.2(t) refers).
- 1.2 In arriving at her determination the Head of Corporate Finance has been guided by Council policy laid down by the former Finance Committee on 14 February 1996 and 30 April 1996, together with Welsh Office criteria for considering such applications.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Council is able to assist a wide range of voluntary and sporting organisations by granting rate relief. This report deals with recent applications.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The granting of rate relief is a very cost effective way in which the Council can pursue its Regeneration objective by giving financial assistance to local organisations.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Crime Reduction Initiatives (CRI)

- 4.1.1 The organisation is a registered charity which has therefore been awarded 80% Mandatory Rate Relief under statutory provisions.
- 4.1.2 The charity's application is in respect of their offices and premises at Chambers House, Blackwood Road, Pontllanfraith which is used both as an admin office and also as interview/meeting rooms for clients.
- 4.1.3 The main objectives of the charity are stated to be "working to create a safer and healthier community, by helping people to break free from harmful patterns of behaviour, by delivering innovative services, which have a measurable input on both health and community safety issues".
- 4.1.4 To achieve its objective CRI provides specialised services to people within the Caerphilly County Borough who are:-
 - Over 18 years of age
 - Are in contact with the Criminal Justice System or leaving structured treatment
 - Have drug and or alcohol misuse issues.

The organisation's client base is mainly through Gwent Police and Court referrals.

- 4.1.5 The charity's premises currently undertakes drug intervention and drug rehabilitation programmes for clients involved in the Criminal Justice System through their substance misuse. Treatment is provided on both a one to one basis and through group sessions and forums.
- 4.1.6 CRI also provides advice and information on housing issues, education, training and employment opportunities.
- 4.1.7 Funding of individual projects is obtained through Welsh Assembly Government Grants which are administered and distributed on their behalf by the Community and Safety Partnership that is composed of Caerphilly CBC, the Local Health Board, Gwent Police, the Fire Authority and the Probation Service.
- 4.1.8 The current annual rate liability of the organisation's premises is £10,736 and the cost to the Authority of awarding the top up of 20% discretionary rate relief would be £1610 with the Welsh Assembly Government Pool funding the remainder of £537.
- 4.1.9 The Authority is currently awarding 20% discretionary top up rate relief to another charity, the Gwent Alcohol Project (GAP) on their premises at 42 Cardiff Road, Caerphilly which is used as an admin office/drop in centre for persons suffering from alcohol-related problems.

Decision: That 20% discretionary top-up relief be awarded.

5. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no personnel implications.

6. CONSULTATIONS

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

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 Members note the decisions taken under delegated powers.

8. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 To assist local voluntary organisations.

9. STATUTORY POWER

- 9.1 Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

Author: Mrs N. Scammell, Head of Corporate Finance
Tel: 01443 863022
Email: nicolescammell@caerphilly.gov.uk

Consultees: N. Barnett, Director of Corporate Services
Cllr C Mann, Deputy Leader/Policy & Resources
Cllr J Taylor, Chairman Policy & Resources
Cllr Mrs M E Sargent, Vice-Chairman Policy & Resources

Background Papers:
Rate Relief Application Forms