



GRANTS TO THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR PANEL – 14TH MARCH 2018

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 inform the Panel of the next steps to be taken in respect of the review of grant levels for the Welsh Church Act Fund.

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.
- 2.2 The report also provides details of the current position in respect of the review of grant levels for the Welsh Church Act Fund and sets out proposals that will be presented to Cabinet at its meeting on the 28th March 2018.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 Voluntary and community sector organisations make an important contribution to services to the public across the county borough and are key participants in the Compact Agreement between the public and third sector.
- 3.2 This report links to the following Well-Being Goals within the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015: -
 - A Wales of cohesive communities
 - A prosperous Wales
 - A healthier Wales

4. REPORT

4.1 ASSISTANCE TO VOLUNTARY SECTOR BUDGET

- 4.1.1 The Panel's budget for 2017/2018 is as follows: -

Budget 2017-18	£175,817.00
Less Discretionary Rate Relief (Estimated)	£145,389.68
Remaining Budget	£30,427.32
Carry forward balance from 2016-17	£90,422.65
Total Available Budget 2017-18	£120,849.97
Total 2017-18 Grants awarded to date	£17,040.00
Grant Returned in Year	£200.00
Balance Remaining	£104,009.97

- 4.1.2 The projected Discretionary Rate Relief for 2017-18 is £145,389.68. Allowing for the projected spend on the Discretionary Rate Relief and the grants awarded to date, the available balance for schemes is £104,009.97 which includes the carry forward balances and the returned award.
- 4.1.3 The total amount requested in respect of the applications listed in Appendix 1 is **£710.00 (2 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 Interim Head of Corporate Finance for approval or otherwise under delegated powers.
- 4.1.4 Appendix 2 details those applications that meet the criteria set out in Appendix 4 that have been approved by officers (but not actioned). These total **£1,850.00 (15 No.)**.
- 4.1.5 The balance remaining if all grants requested are awarded as set out in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 will be £101,449.97. This balance will now be carried forward to the 2018/19 financial year.
- 4.1.6 Any further applications received before the 31st March 2018 will now be considered in the 2018/19 financial year.
- 4.1.7 The indicative budget allocation for 2018/19 has been agreed at £179,333.00, of which the projected Discretionary Rate Relief is £150,002.35. This leaves a projected budget allocation of £29,330.65 (which will increase by the estimated final balance of £101,449.97 to be carried forward from 2017/18).

Budget 2017-18	£175,817.00
Non Pay Inflation	3,516.00
Budget Estimate for 2018-19	179,333.00
Less Discretionary Rate Relief (Estimated)	150,002.35
Carry forward balance from 2017-18 (Estimated)	£101,449.97
Total Available Budget 2018-19	£130,780.62

- 4.1.8 As previously agreed by the Panel grants awarded during the 2018/19 financial year that exceed the budget allocation will be funded from the brought forward balances.
- 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 Act 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 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 has received written confirmation from Monmouthshire CC that the 2017/18 budget allocation is £61,600.00. Monmouthshire CC have confirmed that the underspends from previous years of £218,568.33 can be carried forward, resulting in a total available budget for the current year of £280,168.33.

Budget 2017-18	£61,600.00
Carry forward balances	£218,568.33
Total Available Budget 2017-18	£280,168.33
Total 2017-18 Grants awarded to date	£14,995.13
Balance Remaining	£265,173.20

- 4.2.4 Details of applications received since the last meeting that meet the Welsh Church Act Fund criteria are set out in Appendix 3. The total of amounts requested in accordance with the agreed criteria is **£1,933.33 (1 No.)**.
- 4.2.5 If all awards approved to date spend to their maximum allocation there will be a balance of £263,239.87 remaining.
- 4.2.6 Appendix 5 contains a list of previously approved applications that have exceeded the 18 month time limit to claim funding as set out in the Terms and Conditions. These applicants have been advised that the grants have now been withdrawn. These withdrawn grants total £3,479.00 (2 No.).
- 4.2.7 We have been advised by Monmouthshire County Council that the provisional allocation for 2018-19 will be £61,600 i.e. no increase on this year's allocation. We have also been advised that we will be allowed to carry-forward the unspent allocations.

Budget 2018-19	£61,600.00
Estimated carry forward balances	£263,239.87
Total Available Budget 2018-19	£324,839.87

- 4.2.8 Members will be aware that concerns have been raised for some time at the high level of balances being carried forward for the Welsh Church Act Fund. As a result an informal workshop was held for Panel Members on the 17th January 2018 where 5 options were considered in respect of the level of grants awarded from the Welsh Church Act Fund. These options were as follows: -

Option 1 - Applications of up to £2,500 to be fully grant funded with applications above £2,500 to be subject to a grant rate of 50% on the sum in excess of £2,500 e.g. an application requesting £4,000 that meets the criteria would receive £3,250 (£2,500 plus 50% of £1,500). Members may wish to consider a maximum grant award.

Option 2 - Award all applications that meet the WCAF criteria at 50% with a maximum award of £10,000.

Option 3 - Award grants of up to 90% with a maximum award of £10,000.

Option 4 - Applications of up to £5,000 to be fully grant funded with applications above £5,000 to be subject to a grant rate of 75% on the sum in excess £5,000 e.g. an application requesting £8,000 that meets the criteria would receive £7,250 (£5,000 plus 75% of £3,000). Members may wish to consider a maximum grant award.

Option 5 - Keep grant awards as they currently stand.

4.2.9 Following consideration of the options the preferred approach of the Panel was option 4 with a maximum grant payable of £10,000. The Panel also requested that the grants process be reviewed to expedite payments wherever possible and that options be explored for publicising the Fund more widely. The Panel also requested that the number of quotes/estimates to be provided with applications should be reduced to 2 for grant applications under £5,000 and 3 for applications over £5,000.

4.2.10 The proposed options are due to be considered by Cabinet at its meeting on the 28th March 2018 and Cabinet will be informed of the preferred option of the Panel.

5. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

5.1 Grants awarded from the Grants to the Voluntary Sector budget and the Welsh Church Act Fund contribute to the following Well-Being goals: -

- A Wales of cohesive communities – Through financially supporting community groups.
- A prosperous Wales – By helping organisations to be financially resilient.
- A healthier Wales – Through encouraging participation in sports.

6. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report so no Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no personnel implications.

9. CONSULTATIONS.

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

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 That Members consider the applications contained in Appendix 1 and make appropriate recommendations to the Interim Head of Corporate Finance for approval or otherwise under delegated powers.

10.2 That Members note the applications contained in Appendices 2 & 3, which will be approved by the Interim Head of Corporate Finance under delegated powers.

10.3 That Members note that a report will be presented to Cabinet on the 28th March 2018 in respect of options for revising the current grant levels for the Welsh Church Act Fund.

11. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

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

11.2 To ensure that consideration is given to revising current grant levels for the Welsh Church Act Fund.

12. STATUTORY POWER

12.1 Local Government Acts 1972 and 2003 and the Council's Financial Regulations.

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Consultees: Stephen R Harris – Interim Head of Corporate Finance
A Southcombe – Finance Manager

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Panel Awards

Appendix 2 General Criteria Awards

Appendix 3 Welsh Church Act Fund - 2017/18 Criteria Award

Appendix 4 General Criteria

Appendix 5 Welsh Church Fund Grants Withdrawn

Appendix 2 - General Criteria Awards 2017-18

Reference	Name of Organisation/Individual	Sport	Award Category	Criteria Award £
17/GC082	Ystrad Mynach OAP		OAP Association without own building.	150.00
17/GC083	Sporting Individual Representing Country	Shooting	Individuals (amateur) representing Wales at home.	130.00
17/GC084	White Rose Singers		Choirs.	100.00
17/GC085	Sporting Individual Representing Country	Bowls	Individuals (amateur) representing Wales at home.	130.00
17/GC086	Sporting Individual Representing Country	Bowls	Individuals (amateur) representing Wales at home.	130.00
17/GC087	Sporting Individual Representing Country	Rugby	Individuals (amateur) representing Wales abroad.	250.00
17/GC088	Pentwyn and District Allotment Association		Allotments	100.00
17/GC089	Ystrad Mynach Male Choir		Choirs.	100.00
17/GC090	Sporting Individual Representing Country	Bowls	Individuals (amateur) representing Wales at home.	130.00
17/GC091	Treowen Village Hall		Community Groups	100.00
17/GC092	Sporting Individual Representing Country	Bowls	Individuals (amateur) representing Wales at home.	130.00
17/GC093	Bedwas Writers Circle		Writers Clubs	100.00
17/GC094	Rhymney Badgers and Cadets		St John Ambulance (upto 50 members):- Cadets/Badgers	100.00
17/GC095	Thursday Club		Community Groups	100.00
17/GC096	Second Bedwas Brownies	0	Boys & Girls Clubs/YMCA/Scouts/Cubs/Brownies/Guides/Boys Brigade/Crusaders (upto 50 mem	100.00
15				1,850.00

Appendix 3 - Welsh Church Fund Act -2017/18

REF No.	Organisation	Category	Description	Award Sought
17/WCF009	St David's Church, Oakdale	other	Gas heating system	1,933.33
1	TOTAL			1,933.33

Appendix 4

Category	New Criteria	Annual Award
a	OAP Association with own building.	£ 300.00
b	OAP Association without own building.	£ 150.00
c	Individuals representing Wales at home.	£ 130.00
d	Individuals representing Wales abroad.	£ 250.00
e	Jazz Bands.	£ 100.00
f	Choirs.	£ 100.00
g	Junior Sports Club (up to 50 members).	£ 100.00
g1	Junior Sports Club (over 50 members).	£ 200.00
h	Boys & Girls Clubs/YMCA/Scouts/Cubs/Brownies/Guides/Boys Brigade/Crusaders (upto 50 members).	£ 100.00
h1	Boys & Girls Clubs/YMCA/Scouts/Cubs/Brownies/Guides/Boys Brigade/Crusaders (over 50 members).	£ 200.00
i	St John Ambulance (upto 50 members):- Cadets/Badgers	£ 100.00
j	St John Ambulance (over 50 members):- Cadets/Badgers	£ 200.00
m	Brass and Silver Bands	£ 400.00
n	Allotments	£ 100.00
o	Arts Society	£ 100.00
p	Writers Clubs	£ 100.00
q	Theatre Groups	£ 200.00
r	Community Groups	£ 100.00
s	Beekeepers Groups	£ 100.00
t	Garden Clubs	£ 150.00
u	Tennants & Residants Association	£ 100.00
v	Websites - Initial Design stage only	£ 100.00
w	Pigeon Clubs	£ 200.00
x	Clubs run From Churches/Chapels	£ 200.00
y	Sports Club (up to 50 members).	£ 100.00
z	Sports Club (over 50 members).	£ 200.00
aa	Other - upto max	£ 400.00

Appendix 5 - Welsh Church Fund Grants Withdrawn

Organisation	Approved Amounts	Panel Date
Hephzibah Baptist Chapel, Bedwas	1,479.00	23 March 2016
First Love Community Church, Senghenydd	2,000.00	23 March 2016
	3,479.00	