



GRANTS TO THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR PANEL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN PARK ON TUESDAY, 16TH JULY 2014 AT 5.00 PM

PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs G. Oliver - Chair
Councillor R. Gough - Vice Chair

Councillors:

Mrs A. Blackman, C. Hawker, A. Lewis, K. Lloyd and E. Stenner.

Together with:

S. Harris (Interim Head of Corporate Finance), D. Roberts (Principal Group Accountant - Financial Advice and Support), C. Evans (Committee Services Officer).

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

Councillor Mrs Gaynor Oliver was appointed Chair of the Committee for the ensuing year.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

Councillor Robert Gough was appointed Vice Chair of the Committee for the ensuing year.

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors C. Cuss, A Higgs and R. Saralis.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors C. Hawker and K. Lloyd declared an interest in Agenda Item 5 (2) Revision of Criteria for Financial Assistance, when discussing budget allocation for Allotment grants. Details of the declaration are recorded with the relevant item.

5. MINUTES – 18TH MARCH 2014

The Panel received and approved the minutes of the Grants to the Voluntary Sector Panel held on 18th March 2014 (minute nos. 1 - 4; page nos. 1 - 3).

6. APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

6.1 Statement of Expenditure

Members noted the available budget for 2014-2015 together with the total amounts requested, as detailed within the report.

Further information was sought in regard to how Discretionary Rate Relief (DRR) works and the organisations in receipt of DRR awards. Officers agreed to prepare a detailed report for presentation at the next meeting of the Panel.

6.2 Welsh Church Act Fund

The report highlighted that Caerphilly County Borough Council has received written confirmation that the 2014/2015 budget allocation is £40,084.00. Monmouthshire County Council have confirmed that the underspends from previous years of £132,720.00 can be carried forward, resulting in a total available budget for the current year of £172,804.00. Members noted that it has been highlighted that due to the present economic climate, allocations in the future could be reduced considerably due to declining returns on investments.

Members noted the Welsh Church Act Fund applications received and approved by officers since the last meeting in accordance with the agreed criteria as set out in Appendix 4. The total allocated amounts to £7,568.00.

Members' attention was directed to Appendix 5, which provided a breakdown of applications that have exceeded the 18-month time limit to claim funding as set out in the terms and conditions. Members noted this amount totalled £20,075.45, the applicants have received notification that the grant has now been withdrawn.

Members noted the process and the information contained within the report.

6.3 Applications for Financial Assistance: Panel Awards

Members were asked to consider the applications listed in Appendix 1 to the report and to make appropriate recommendations to the Acting Head of Corporate Finance for approval.

RECOMMENDED that the following applications for financial assistance be referred to the Acting Head of Corporate Finance for approval under delegated powers:-

	£
(a) Croespenmaen Baptist Church	£250.00
(b) Newbridge Community Theatre Group	£250.00
(c) Rhymney Valley Music Club	£200.00
(d) Lower Machen Festival	£200.00
(e) Rhymney Valley South Wales Flying Club	£200.00
(f) Cardiac Fitness Solution	£400.00
(g) Blackwood Christian Centre (Oasis)	£50.00
(h) Mid Valleys East (Argoed Ward) Art Society	£100.00

RECOMMENDED that for the reasons outlined at the meeting, the following application for financial assistance be deferred, pending the receipt of further information:-

- (a) The Parent Network

RECOMMENDED that for the reasons outlined at the meeting, the following applications for financial assistance be refused:-

- (a) Aimee Casey
- (b) Newbridge Online
- (c) Salvation Army

6.4 Applications for Financial Assistance: General Criteria Awards

Members noted the applications received since the last meeting, as listed in Appendix 2, which are in accordance with the agreed criteria and to be processed by officers.

7. REVISION OF CRITERIA FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Councillors C. Hawker and K. Lloyd declared a personal interest when discussing budget allocation for Allotment grants, due to involvement with Cefn Fforest Allotment and Pentwyn Allotment respectively. They took no part in the discussion or vote.

In the form of an interactive group discussion and training session Members considered Appendix 2 of the report, which demonstrated how the 2013/14 spend of £24,315.40 could be allocated against a set of proposed revised criteria. During 2013/14 the Panel recommended approval of 39 applications that did not meet the current criteria. These were also reviewed and assigned under suggested new categories. Members were asked to consider the proposed revised criteria and suggest alternative categories and allocations wherever appropriate.

Having consideration for the Council's six Improvement Objects for 2014/15 and the revised criteria and award amounts as presented in Appendix 2, Members recommended to the Interim Head of Corporate Finance that the revised set of criteria be approved under delegated powers.

Members noted that, as a result of the revised criteria, it is anticipated that there would be less grant applications brought to the Panel for their consideration in future meetings.

The meeting closed at 6.06 p.m.

Approved and signed as a correct record subject to any amendments agreed and recorded in the minutes of the next meeting.

CHAIR