



GRANTS TO THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR PANEL - 26TH NOVEMBER 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 the applications for financial assistance received to date for the current 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 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 2014/2015 is as follows:

Budget 2014-15	£255,220.00
Less Discretionary Rate Relief (Estimated)	£234,925.00
Remaining Budget	£20,295.00
Carry forward balance from 2013-14	£83,258.00
Total Budget 2014-15	£103,553.00
Total Grants awarded to date	£7,215.00
Balance Remaining	£96,338.00

- 4.1.2 The Discretionary Rate Relief for 2014-15 is now forecast to be £234,925; this is an increase from the last panel meeting projections of some £12,959. This now leaves a projected budget allocation of £20,295. Together with the carry forward from previous years of £83,258.00 this gives a total budget allocation of £103,553.00. To date grant awards total £7,215.00. Budget remaining for allocation is £96,338.00.
- 4.1.3 The total amount requested in respect of the applications listed in Appendix 1 is **£8,080.00 (5 No.)**. These applications do not meet the revised criteria agreed by Panel at its last meeting, 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 under delegated powers.
- 4.1.4 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 **£6,820.00 (43 No.)**.
- 4.1.5 The balance remaining if all grants requested are awarded as set out in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 will be £81,438.00.

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 groups 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 2014/15 budget allocation will be **£40,084.00**. Monmouthshire CC 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**. Due to the present economic climate, allocations in the future could be reduced considerably due to declining returns on investments.

Budget 2014-15	£40,084.00
Carry forward balances	£132,720.00
Total Budget 2014-15	£172,804.00
Total Grants awarded to date	£7,568.00
Balance Remaining	£165,236.00

- 4.2.4 Applications received since the last meeting are appended in **Appendix 3**. The total of amounts requested in accordance with the agreed criteria is **£4,000.00 (2 No.)**.
- 4.2.5 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 the grant has now been withdrawn. These withdrawn grants total £4,400.00.

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 Interim 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.
- 9.4 That Members note the process outlined in 4.2.5 in relation to time limits on claiming approved Welsh Church Fund 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 - Interim Head of Corporate Finance
A Southcombe - Finance Manager

Appendices:
Appendix 1 Panel Awards
Appendix 2 General Criteria Awards
Appendix 3 Welsh Church Fund Act -2014/2015
Appendix 4 General Criteria
Appendix 5 Welsh Church Fund Grants Withdrawn.