



GRANTS TO THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR PANEL – 25TH MARCH 2015

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 provide details of indicative budget allocations for the 2015/16 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)	£223,095.00
Remaining Budget	£32,125.00
Carry forward balance from 2013-14	£83,258.00
Total Budget 2014-15	£115,383.00
Total 2014-15 Grants awarded to date	£15,035.00
Balance Remaining	£100,348.00

- 4.1.2 The Discretionary Rate Relief for 2014-15 is now forecast to be £223,095.00; this is a decrease from the last panel meeting projections of some £11,830.00. This now leaves a projected budget allocation of £32,125.00 for Grants to the Voluntary Sector. Together with the carry forward from previous years of £83,258.00 this gives a total budget allocation of £115,383.00. To date grant awards for 2014/15 total £15,035.00. Budget remaining for allocation is £100,348.00.
- 4.1.3 The total amount requested in respect of the applications listed in Appendix 1 is **£2,740.00 (3 No.)**. These applications do not meet the revised criteria agreed by Panel at the July 2015 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 **£7,720.00 (45 No.)**.
- 4.1.5 The balance remaining if all grants requested are awarded as set out in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 will be £89,888.00. This balance will be now be carried forward to 2015/16 financial year.
- 4.1.6 Any further applications received before the 31st March 2015 will now be considered in the 2015/16 financial year.
- 4.1.7 The indicative budget allocation for 2015/16 has been agreed at £229,048, of which the projected Discretionary Rate Relief is £228,592. This leaves a projected budget allocation of £456 (which will increase by the final balance to be carried forward from 2014/15).

Budget 2014-15	255,220.00
Less Agreed Savings as per the Budget Report agreed by Council on 25/2/15	(30,000.00)
Non Pay Inflation	3,828.00
Budget Estimate for 2015-16	229,048.00
Less Discretionary Rate Relief (Estimated)	228,592.00
Balance Remaining	456.00

- 4.1.8 As previously agreed by the Panel grants awarded during the 2015/16 financial year 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 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 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**.

Budget 2014-15	£40,084.00
Carry forward balances	£132,720.00
Total Budget 2014-15	£172,804.00
Total Grants awarded to date	£11,568.00
Balance Remaining	£161,236.00

- 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 **£6,000.00 (3 No.)**.
- 4.2.5 No further grant awards have exceeded the 18 month time limit to claim funding as set out in the Terms and Conditions.
- 4.2.6 We have been advised by Monmouthshire County Council that the provisional allocation for 2015-16 will be £49,334 i.e an increase of £9,286 on this year's allocation. We have also been advised that we will be allowed to carry-forward the unspent allocations.

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.

9.3 Members note the indicative budget allocations outlined in 4.1.7 and 4.2.6.

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. STATURORY 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