

GRANTS ADVISORY PANEL

20 NOVEMBER 2008

Chairman: * Councillor Chris Mote

Councillors: * Don Billson * Joyce Nickolay
 * G Chowdhury * Asad Omar
 * Thaya Idaikkadar (3) * Mrs Rekha Shah
 * Manji Kara (1) * Mrs Sasi Suresh
 * Mrs Myra Michael

Adviser: * Mike Coker, Voluntary and Community Sector Representative

* Denotes Member present
 (1) and (3) Denote category of Reserve Member

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS**RECOMMENDATION 1 - Update on Harrow Council for Racial Equality**

An officer introduced the report of the Director of Community and Cultural Services which provided an update on the independent investigation of Harrow Council for Racial Equality (HCRE).

The Chairman informed that Panel that no member of the Transition Board would sit on the Board of the as yet to be established new equalities organisation. He added that he would be writing to Members of Harrow Labour Group, HCRE trustees and members of other appropriate groups.

Resolved to RECOMMEND: (To the Portfolio Holder for Community and Cultural Services)

That the remaining grant of £49,942.74 be released to Harrow Association of Volunteers (HAVS) to provide interim management support of HCRE staff and resources pending the development of a new equalities organisation in the event that HCRE votes to dissolve.

[Reason for Recommendation: To provide a way forward for the organisation].

(See also minute 135).

PART II - MINUTES128. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Members:-

Ordinary Member

Councillor Ashok Kulkarni
 Councillor Nana Asante

Reserve Member

Councillor Manji Kara
 Councillor Thaya Idaikkadar

129. **Declarations of Interest:**

RESOLVED: To note that the following interests were declared:

<u>Agenda Item</u>	<u>Member</u>	<u>Nature of Interest</u>
7. Monitoring of Grant Funding Received in 2007/08	Councillor Myra Michael	Councillor Myra Michael declared personal interests in Harrow Gingerbread and Harrow in Europe. She remained in the room for the discussion of all items.
	Councillor Joyce Nickolay	Councillor Joyce Nickolay declared a personal interest in Agenda 21 Environmental Forum, Bentley Priory Nature Reserve, Harrow Association of Voluntary Service, Harrow in Europe, Weldon Activity Group,

Harrow Weald Common Conservators and was an LEA Governor. She remained in the room for the discussion of all items.

Councillor Golam Choudhury

Councillor Golam Choudhury declared personal interests in Harrow in Europe, Harrow Refugees and Minorities and that he was a LEA Governor. He remained in the room for the discussion of all items.

Councillor Rekha Shah

Councillor Rekha Shah declared personal interests in the UK Asian Women's Fundraising and Harrow Association of Voluntary Services. She remained in the room for the discussions of all items.

Councillor Thaya Idaikkadar

Councillor Thaya Idaikkadar declared a personal interest in the Pakistani Society of Harrow. He remained in the room for the discussion of all items.

Mike Coker, adviser to the Panel

Mike Coker, adviser to the Panel declared a prejudicial interest in that he was an Executive Director of Community Link-Up. As the report was merely for noting and no decisions were made regarding funding he remained in the room for discussion of all items.

130. **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 June 2008 be agreed, subject to the following amendment:

The second sentence of paragraph one at minute item 127, in regards to HCRE, should be amended to read: 'The Chairman replied that the purpose of the urgent release was to show that everything was aboveboard'.

131. **Public Questions:**

RESOLVED: To note that no public questions were received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 16 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

132. **Petitions:**

RESOLVED: To note that no petitions were received at this meeting under the provisions of the Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 14 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

133. **Deputations:**

RESOLVED: To note that no deputations were received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 15 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

134. **Monitoring of Grant Funding Received in 2007/08:**

An officer introduced the report which provided an update on the individual performance of voluntary and community organisations in receipt of grant funding in 2007/08, through a process of monitoring. The report provided background information in advance of the Panel considering new grant applications for 2009/10 and allowed them to consider any important issues arising out of the individual monitoring reports at an early stage.

An officer reported that monitoring of the organisations was achieved in two ways: those groups in receipt of funding above £5,000 were monitored by way of formal

meetings with the organisations and Grants Officers, and those groups in receipt of funding below £5,000 were monitored by way of a self-monitoring process. To date, 11 organisations had failed to return their self-monitoring forms.

In considering the report, the Chairman made a number of comments: -

- Harrow Shopmobility supplied mobility machines to anyone with limited mobility that used the town centre and surrounding areas. The demand on the service had been compounded by a shortage of volunteers. It was suggested that Harrow Association of Voluntary Services might be able to assist with the situation.
- There was concern at the underspend by Harrow Sports Council so close to the end of the year.
- Victim Support Harrow should be commended for their work in exceeding their projected targets in relation to the number of victims of crime supported.
- Both Harrow African Caribbean Association and Harrow Somali Women's Action Group were claiming a flat rate for expenses and were therefore being taxed on the amount.
- The London Kalibari had been reminded of the stipulation of funding in that it should not be allocated to the payment of religious fees.

Members made a number of comments on the organisations which were responded to as follows:

- A loan of £7,500 had been given to Harrow Weald Common Conservators as an exception in order to pay the warden's salary. Normal funding had now resumed.
- Hestia Housing Support would not dictate which women they legally could or could not work with.
- In relation to notifying organisations that they were no longer eligible for a grant, the Chairman advised that the rules presented by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were adhered to by officers. It was, however, recognised that the same organisations had become ineligible for funding through no fault of their own, and those that still provided essential services to the borough would be assessed to see if an equitable solution could be reached.
- It was suggested that it had been incorrect to apply additional criteria for receipt of funding to the Edward Harvist Trust. The Chairman confirmed he would check the legality of the additional criteria and advised that, if necessary, the decision should be reversed. The Panel requested that advice be sought from the Council's Legal department and a response sought from the Edward Harvist Trust.

The adviser to the Panel reported that some of the organisations in receipt of funding between £5,000 and £10,000 felt that the information required for the application was disproportionate to the amount of funding given. He added that the groups would welcome a review of the process.

A Member congratulated the Grants Team in regards to the production of a new form, and requested that future forms could be brought to the Panel for consideration. The Chairman indicated that draft copies would be sent to all Members of the Panel.

RESOLVED: That (1) the officer's comments relating to the monitoring of all voluntary groups in receipt of funding in excess of £5,000 in 2007/08 as detailed in Appendix 1a of the report of the Director of Community and Cultural Services be noted;

(2) the summary of activities/services of voluntary and community groups in receipt of funding below £5,000 in 2007/08 through self-monitoring (using the Monitoring and Assessment Form), as detailed in Appendix 2a of the report of the Director of Community and Cultural Services be noted.

135. **Update on Harrow Council for Racial Equality:**
(See also Recommendation 1).

RESOLVED: That the report and the recommendation of the independent investigation of the HCRE be noted.

136. **Date of Next Meeting:**

RESOLVED: The date of the next Grants Advisory Panel meeting was confirmed as 19 January 2009.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.31 pm, closed at 8.31 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR CHRIS MOTE
Chairman