

Appendix 4: Guidance notes for Panel Observers

1. The role of Panel Observers is to observe the grant application assessment process in an objective and impartial manner.
2. The role of the Panel Observers is to ensure transparency in the assessment process and provide feedback to the Council and the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) that will help improve the process for the future.
3. Panel Observers should provide feedback on the application assessment process and not on the scoring of individual applications.
4. Panel Observers will be provided with copies of grant application forms and assessment scoring sheets during the panel meeting. These documents are for reference only and all documents relating to the panel process should be handed back to the Chair at the end of the meeting.
5. Panel Observers should not comment or contribute to discussion during an assessment panel meeting, except where they have an immediate concern about the meeting (see 9 below).
6. Panel Observers should observe the process and at the end of the meeting provide their comments and feedback to the Head of Community Development on the feedback form provided.
7. Panel Observers are expected to maintain confidentiality at all times and should not discuss the contents of individual applications with anyone other than the Council Officers involved in the grant assessment panel.
8. Observers should declare their interests at the beginning of the Panel meeting. Observers with a personal/prejudicial interest should not participate in the meeting.
9. If a Panel Observer has an immediate concern about the conduct of a panel meeting, s/he can request that the meeting is adjourned whilst his/her concern is discussed with the Chair of the meeting or advice is sought from the Head of Community Development.