

Meeting:	Grants Advisory Panel
Date:	9 th June 2008
Subject:	Applications for Community Premises 2008/09
Responsible Officer:	Javed Khan, Director of Community and Cultural Services
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Chris Mote
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Appendix 1: - Summary Reports; Appendix 2: - Guidance Notes for Community Premises Applicants 2008/09; Appendix 3:- Current Community Premises Plan.

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report presents further applications received from 2 organisations that are currently using the facilities at the Community Premises as an External Agency.

Recommendations:

Members are requested to:

1. Consider the 2 applications from:
 - Hindu Council Harrow;
 - Harrow Tamil Association.
2. Agree that the new allocations be effective immediately; and
3. Delegate authority to officers to undertake a 6-monthly review (i.e. October 2008) of all accommodation allocated to new and existing users at the Community Premises; and

4. Make recommendations to the Portfolio Holder for Community and Cultural Services on the allocation of space at Community Premises.

Reason: (For recommendation)

To finalise the allocation of space at the Community Premises to enable it to become better utilised.

Section 2 – Report

2.1 Background

- 2.1.1 The Grants Advisory Panel meeting of 22nd November 2007 recommended the allocation of all available accommodation to existing and new users who applied and met the eligibility criteria with effect from 1st January 2008.
- 2.1.2 All qualifying applicants were offered some form of accommodation at the Community Premises, i.e. individual office, designated desk or casual use.
- 2.1.3 Following the allocation of accommodation to eligible organisations, there is still availability for 2 designated desks, and casual use.
- 2.1.4 Applications have been received from Hindu Council Harrow and Harrow Tamil Association by the deadline of 9th May 2008. These organisations failed to submit their application by the previous deadline of 19th October 2007, therefore they were not presented to the Panel for consideration at the meeting on 22nd November 2007. However, they have been permitted to use the facilities at the Community Premises as external agencies.

2.2 Options Considered

- 2.2.1 Officers have assessed the applications from Hindu Council Harrow and Harrow Tamil Association against the Council's Qualifying Conditions and Common Grants Criteria (see Appendix 2 – Guidance Notes for Community Premises Applicants 2008/09), and have also provided summaries with their proposed recommendations (attached as Appendix 1 of this report).

2.3 Why a change is needed

- 2.3.1 No changes are required to the current process.

2.4 Other options considered

- 2.4.1 No other options have been considered.

2.5 Resources, costs and risks

- 2.5.1 The cost and resources are met within the existing Community Premises budget. Registered users of Community Premises are required to sign and abide by the Facilities Use Agreement.

2.6 Staffing/workforce

2.6.1 No direct implications.

3.7 Equalities impact

2.7.1 The Community Premises are an important resource for the voluntary sector in Harrow. The provision of office facilities provides valuable support to small, often unfunded organisations, many of which support BME and refugee groups in the Borough.

2.8 Legal comments

2.8.1 The Council has power to make facilities available for voluntary and community organisations charging as it thinks fit, and contributing to grants and loans under Section 19 (2) of the Local Government Act 1976.

2.8.2 This power is supplemented by Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 with a power to promote 'community well being'.

2.8.3 Users of the Community Premises are required to sign a facilities use agreement, which is a legally binding document that has recently been updated with advice from Legal Services.

2.8.4 Current organisations and prospective new users based at the Community Premises are expected to comply with all relevant legislation. They are expected to have Health and Safety policies and procedures, Child Protection policies (where applicable), and procedures for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults (where applicable).

2.9 Community safety

2.9.1 Many of the organisations supported at the Community Premises play an active role on partnership committees such as the Safer Harrow Management Group. Some of the organisations deal with and contribute directly to issues of crime prevention, fear of crime, youth offending and anti-social behaviour.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: ...Sheela Takrar.....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 28 th May 2008		
Name:Helen White.....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 28 th May 2008		

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact:

Kashmir Takhar, Service Manager, Community Resources & Projects (ext. 5332);

Parveen Vasdev, Principal Grants Officer (ext. 7625);

Charlotte Clark, Senior Grants Officer (ext. 2335).

Background Papers:

Available on request.

If appropriate, does the report include the following considerations?

1.	Consultation	YES - Draft report sent to Voluntary Sector Advisor for comments.
2.	Corporate Priorities	YES

Appendix 1

SUMMARY REPORTS

HINDU COUNCIL HARROW:

Current Accommodation: New Applicant
Requested Accommodation: Designated Desk or Casual Use

Hindu Council Harrow has been operational since 1998, and has vast experience in sustaining local community and assist various community organisations in improving quality of life and providing support, assistance and representing them on various community issues.

The Organisation hopes to provide the following services at the Community Premises:

- Health seminars – twice a year;
- Workshops on Cultural Awareness – 4 times a year;
- Advice sessions on Business Start-Up – quarterly;
- Immigration issues – as and when required.

The intended usage of their requested accommodation is likely to be on average 6-10 hours per week.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: Casual Use

Usage of their accommodation will be reviewed by officers in October 2008.

HARROW TAMIL ASSOCIATION:

Current Accommodation: New Applicant
Requested Accommodation: Designated Desk or Casual Use

Harrow Tamil Association was set up in 1996 for the relief, hardship and distress of the Tamil community in the Borough, particularly the elderly members. Their main aim is to provide social support and health awareness to the elderly members of their community. They also provide advice and advocacy on welfare benefits and pension schemes.

The intended usage of their requested accommodation is likely to be on average 4 hours per week.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: Casual Use

Usage of their accommodation will be reviewed by officers in October 2008.



GUIDANCE NOTES FOR COMMUNITY PREMISES APPLICANTS 2008/09

Please read the following notes carefully before completing your application form for Community Premises accommodation to ensure that your organisation is eligible and that your activities match the Council's funding priorities.

A. Qualifying Conditions

Organisations must meet the following conditions in order to apply:

- The applicant must be a voluntary group based in Harrow, with 80% of its users, management committee and members either living or working in Harrow;
- The organisation must be properly constituted, have a management committee and a bank account in the name of the organisation;
- The organisation must not promote or oppose any political party;
- The activities the organisation provides must not be of a religious nature;
- The organisation must demonstrate that it is a voluntary organisation and not a profit making concern;
- The organisation must demonstrate commitment to the Council's equal opportunities policy;
- The organisation must set out in its application any existing funding provided, from whatever source;
- The organisation must have no accommodation of its own. The Council reserves the right to review the tenure after a period of 3 years;
- The organisation must agree to provide accounts for the previous financial year signed by two members of its management committee, of whom one must be the Treasurer;
- New applicants should provide references that verify that the management committee members have been residents of Harrow for a certain period. References should be provided by agencies that have worked with the group, e.g. HAVS, HCRE, Harrow Refugee Forum or Council Officers.

B. The Council's Funding Priorities

The Council's Funding Priorities are based on the principles outlined in the Harrow Strategic Partnership's Community Plan 2006-2010. These priorities will be used to assess applications for Community Premises accommodation. Applicants will need to demonstrate that their proposed services/activities address one or more of the following priority areas:

- **Sustainable Communities in Harrow:** - meeting the diverse needs of existing and future residents of Harrow; being sensitive to their

environment; and contributing to a high quality of life. Promoting a safe and inclusive environment, offering equality of opportunity and good services for all. A sustainable community balances and integrates the social, economic and environmental components of their community; and respects the needs of other communities in the wider region.

- **Safer Harrow:** - ensuring a cleaner, greener and tidy built environment, contributing to feelings of security; to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour through education and awareness initiatives, and thus improve the quality of life by reducing the environment for crime and the fear of crime.
- **Stronger Communities in Harrow:** - creating and encouraging a neighbourhood where people feel a sense of belonging; where people look out for one another; where local people have a greater voice and influence over local decision-making; where people from different backgrounds get on well together, and where the most disadvantaged are valued. Stronger communities increase the quality of life for residents and make an area the sort of place where people want to live.
- **Healthier Harrow:** - improving the health of local people by introducing initiatives particularly aimed at protecting the health of children and older people; removing barriers to information and services; increasing adult participation in sport and active recreation; and improving the quality of life and independence of older people.
- **Young Harrow:** - planning and targeting services that address the needs of children and young people in the Borough. This includes the above average number of children with low birth weights; improving the nutrition from schools meals; ensuring play areas are safe and secure; supporting schools in developing their provision for young people's personal and social development; providing access to education, training and employment advice to hard to reach young people.

C. Criteria for the use of the premises

In addition, applicants for accommodation at the premises must satisfy the following criteria and conditions of grant aid:

1. The community premises are primarily for new and emerging groups.
2. The main purpose of the premises is to support community development initiatives, and priority will be given to those agreeing to set service development criteria linked to the priorities identified in the Harrow Strategic Partnership Community Plan 2006-2010.
3. Organisations allocated accommodation are required to demonstrate that their organisation has developed, evidence of which must be provided on request.
4. All users will be subject to monitoring, and their use of the premises will be evaluated to prioritise the allocation of accommodation.
5. Monitoring and evaluation of community premises' use is based on a combination of the monitoring of physical attendance and agreed criteria to evaluate community and organisation development (paragraph D).

6. All users of the premises will be assessed and monitored in accordance with agreed benchmarking criteria (paragraph F). Those groups which fail to make progress may be given 28 days notice to vacate the premises.
7. Umbrella organisations or organisations providing outreach services may make use of facilities booked under the External Agencies Booking Procedure.
8. Decisions to exclude an organisation are taken by Members, but officers are authorised to suspend an organisation until that decision is taken.

D. Types of accommodation

There are four types of accommodation: individual offices, designated desks, casual use, and post box for correspondence. All users are entitled to up to three keys or entry cards (which are time-limited) per organisation and are able to access the premises during the opening hours of 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday – Saturday and 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Sundays. **This does not apply to new users who are subject to a six-month probation period (see below).**

(1) Individual offices and designated desks

Users with individual offices or designated desks are able to install a telephone subject to certain conditions to that specified accommodation. Storage space is made available at the allocated space. Additional equipment can be installed and left at the premises subject to suitable insurance and acceptance risk. They are entitled to a set allocation of photocopies. The allocation of individual offices and designated desks is only drawn from existing casual users unless the Grants Advisory Panel makes a specific decision.

(2) Casual Use

Casual users are not allocated a desk and space is subject to availability and pre-booking (if necessary). Casual users have access to a limited number of photocopying facilities and use of meeting rooms but are not allowed to install telephones or other equipment. Limited locker facilities are available and storage space is allocated on the basis of need. Casual users are expected to leave the space they have used in a clear, clean and tidy condition at the end of the booked session. **Failure to do so will result in termination of their casual user status.**

(3) Post Box address for correspondence

Post box users are allocated facilities for receiving incoming mail, which can be collected by arrangement with the Community Premises Co-ordinator. Post box users also have access to a limited number of photocopying facilities and use of meeting rooms through the normal booking procedures.

(4) New users – probation period

All new users will be subject to a six-month probation period. During this period, they will only be able to access the premises when premises staff are present and will only be entitled to entry cards, which are time-limited. Premises staff will meet with new users on a monthly basis to monitor their progress and identify any needs they may have. After an organisation has passed the probation period successfully, they will be given keys/entry cards to enable them to access the premises between the times stated under C above.

There is no discretion on the part of the premises staff to vary the conditions.

E. Criteria for allocation of space

The Grants Advisory Panel has decided that allocation of premises should primarily be based upon the value that the people of Harrow obtain from organisations using the premises. To this end, all user groups are required to complete annually a simple form showing the performance of their organisation.

To achieve added value for the community, the organisations clearly have to demonstrate not only that their work achieves benefits, but that they can make use of the facilities that are available. Accordingly, usage (both past and predicted) is an important factor in allocation.

1. Individual office: To warrant an organisation being allocated an individual office, it must:

- be able to occupy the office for **more than 35 hours per week**
- provide evidence of achievements, which are in line with the Harrow Community Strategy and a level of activity, which justifies the hours spent in the premises.

2. Designated desk in a specified room: An organisation must:

- demonstrate that it uses the office **at least 20 hours per month**
- provide evidence of achievements, which are in line with the Harrow Community Strategy and a level of activity, which justifies the hours spent in the premises.

3. Casual use: For this an organisation must:

- demonstrate that it uses the office **at least 4 hours per month**
- provide an action plan, which outlines activities that are in line with the Harrow Community Strategy.

4. Post Box address for correspondence: For this an organisation must:

- provide an action plan, which outlines activities that are in line with the Harrow Community Strategy.

F. Conditions of use

1. All users will be required to sign a Facilities Use Agreement.
2. Keys/entry cards will be issued to all organisations after they have passed their six-month probation period. Key/card holders will be able to use the premises at evenings and weekends within the times specified in the Facilities Use Agreement.
3. New users are only permitted to use the premises Monday to Friday from 9.00am to 5.00pm during their probation period.
4. All visitors and users are required to log in and out of the premises as a condition of grant aid.
5. Keys to the premises are only given to users solely for the use of their organisations and must be signed for by individual members of the organisations.

6. Users are required to abide by the code of conduct and the complaints procedure of the premises.

G. Benchmarking criteria for the use of the community premises

1. Record of attendance (including attendance at quarterly User Group meetings);
2. Submission of quarterly monitoring forms, which will include statistical information on:
 - Number of cases dealt with;
 - Number of people visiting the project;
 - Evidence of an active management committee, i.e:
 - frequency of meetings
 - number of members attending regularly
 - written and verbal reports considered at each meeting
 - accurate minutes produced and circulated
 - Evidence of community involvement, i.e:
 - information provided to members/users regularly
 - members/users are consulted and invited to participate in activities and decision-making
 - number of members in relation to their numbers in the community
 - number of people attending social and cultural events
 - testimonials/ thank you letters from individual users and organisations/ agencies the group is working with.
3. Evidence of gradual improvement in the administrative and financial records and systems being used by organisations.
4. Annual return showing evidence of efforts made to raise funds from sources other than the Council.
5. Evidence of relationship with other projects/agencies/ Harrow Partnership:
 - Membership of consultative groups, umbrella organisations, consortia and partnerships
 - Records of referrals to and from other agencies.

Completed application forms should be returned by no later than **Friday 9th May 2008** to:

**Grants Unit
Harrow Council London
Community & Cultural Services
Civic 1, 2nd Floor, West Wing
Station Road
Harrow HA1 2XF.**

If you wish to discuss your application with an officer, please contact Charlotte Clark, Senior Grants Officer, on 020 8426 4531 or Tony O'Hara, Community Premises Co-ordinator, on 020 8426 4531.

Appendix 3

Current Community Premises Plan

