

Meeting:	Grants Advisory Panel
Date:	19 <sup>th</sup> January 2009
Subject:	Application for use of the Community Premises building at 27 Northolt Road
Key Decision:	No
Responsible Officer:	Javed Khan – Director of Community and Cultural Services
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Chris Mote - Portfolio Holder for Community and Cultural Services
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Appendix 1: Criteria & Conditions for the Use of Community Premises Appendix 2: Copy of application from Harrow Over 50 Club Appendix 3: Report – Harrow Over 50 Club

## Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report presents an application received from Harrow Over 50 Club for use of the Community Premises building at 27 Northolt Road, South Harrow, HA2 0LH. Members are requested to consider this report in conjunction with the 'Update and Amendment of Allocations at the Community Premises at 27 Northolt Road' report on the same agenda.

### Recommendation:

The Panel is requested to recommend to the Portfolio Holder for Community and Cultural Services to:

1. Agree to allocate casual use accommodation to Harrow Over 50 Club.
2. Delegate authority to officers to issue a Facilities Use Agreement to the above organisation with immediate effect until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009.
3. Delegate authority to officers to review the allocation in line with the six-month probation period for new users.

### Reason:

To enable better utilisation of space at the Community Premises at 27 Northolt Road.

## **Section 2 – Report**

### **2.1 Introductory paragraph**

- 2.1.1 This report is to be considered in conjunction with another report on this agenda, ‘Update and Amendment of Allocations at the Community Premises at 27 Northolt Road’, which contains details of previous allocations of space and recommends future allocations for current users of the Community Premises building.

### **2.2 Options considered**

- 2.2.1 An application has been received from Harrow Over 50 Club requesting use of the Community Premises building (Appendix 2). The organisation is currently funded by the main grants programme and runs a monthly club for older people, primarily from the Asian community, at the Pinner Hill Community Hall (see Appendix 3 for more information on their services). The organisation wishes to make use of the Community Premises for committee meetings (use of meeting room), administrative work and photocopying facilities. It is proposing to use the Premises for 3 days per week for approximately 3-4 hours per day.
- 2.2.2 It should be noted that the current Criteria and Conditions of Use for the Community Premises state that the allocation of individual offices and designated desks is only drawn from existing casual users unless the Grants Advisory Panel makes a specific decision.
- 2.2.3 It is recommended that Harrow Over 50 Club be allocated casual user accommodation at the Community Premises building, as its application for accommodation (Appendix 2) demonstrates that it meets the Criteria set out in section A of the Criteria and Conditions of Use of the Community Premises (Appendix 1).
- 2.2.4 It is also recommended that officers review the allocation in line with the six-month probation period for new users, as set out in section C (4) of Appendix 1.

## **Implications of the Recommendation**

### **2.3 Equalities impact**

- 2.3.1 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 Black, minority ethnic and refugee groups in the Borough.

### **2.4 Staffing/Workforce**

- 2.4.1 There are no staffing/workforce issues.

### **2.5 Legal comments**

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

- 2.5.2 This power is supplemented by Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 with a power to promote 'community well being'.
- 2.5.3 Users of the Community Premises are required to sign a facilities use agreement. This is a legally binding document that will be updated with advice from legal services.
- 2.5.4 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 & Safety policies and procedures, Child Protection policies (where applicable), procedures for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults (where applicable).

## **2.6 Community safety**

- 2.6.1 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.

## **2.7 Financial Implications**

- 2.7.1 There are no additional costs arising from the recommendations.

## **2.8 Performance Issues**

- 2.8.1 NI 7 which relates to creating an environment in which the voluntary and community sector can thrive has been included within Harrow's Local Area Agreement. The proposals set out in this report contribute to creating such an environment.

## **2.9 Environmental Impact**

- 2.9.1 There are no significant environmental impacts arising from this recommendation.

## **2.10 Risk Management Implications**

- 2.12.1 The main risks associated with this proposal relate to determination of the application for use of the Community Premises building in a fair way. This risk is addressed through application of the standard grant criteria to all applications.
- 2.12.2 The Council's Overview and Scrutiny committee recently completed a review called 'Delivering a strengthened voluntary sector'. Cabinet noted the recommendations of this review at its meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> December 2008 and a further report addressing the recommendations is due in March 2009.
- 2.12.3 There is a further risk that Community Premises User Groups fail to fulfil their obligations regarding use of the Community Premises building. This risk is managed and mitigated through application of the Facilities Use Agreement and Criteria and Conditions of Use, which sets out criteria for use of the Community Premises and states expectations regarding usage and compliance to monitoring.

Risk included on Directorate risk register? No  
Separate risk register in place? No

### Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Sheela Thakrar	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the* Chief Financial Officer
Date: 5 <sup>th</sup> January 2009		
Name: Jessica Farmer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the* Monitoring Officer
Date: 12 <sup>th</sup> January 2009		

### Section 4 – Performance Officer Clearance

Name: Liz Defries	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the* Divisional Director (Strategy and Improvement)
Date: 7 <sup>th</sup> January 2009		

### Section 5 – Environmental Impact Officer Clearance

Name: Andrew Baker	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the* Divisional Director (Environmental Services)
Date: 7 <sup>th</sup> January 2009		

### Section 6 - Contact Details and Background Papers

#### Contact:

Kashmir Takhar, Interim Head of Service, Community Development (ext. 5332);  
Parveen Vasdev, Principal Grants Officer (ext. 7625);  
Charlotte Clark, Senior Grants Officer (ext. 2335)

#### Background Papers:

Appendix 1: Criteria and Conditions for the Use of Community Premises  
Appendix 2: Copy of application from Harrow Over 50 Club  
Appendix 3: Report – Harrow Over 50 Club

## APPENDIX 1

### LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW

## **CRITERIA & CONDITIONS FOR THE USE OF THE COMMUNITY PREMISES**

### **A. General Conditions:**

The main purpose of the premises is to support Harrow community development. Access to the Community Premises is subject to the same criteria and conditions as grant aid. Therefore, a voluntary organisation applying for access to the premises must:

- Provide evidence of the community it represents in Harrow;
- be based in Harrow and be able to demonstrate that at least 80% of its users, management committee and beneficiaries live in Harrow;
- demonstrate that it is a voluntary organisation rather than a profit-making concern and that it has a majority of unpaid members;
- not promote or oppose any political party, or engage in any party political activity;
- demonstrate that it is properly constituted, and has appropriate management and financial controls;
- agree to comply with the Council's Standard Conditions of Grant Aid.

**References: Prospective new applicants should provide references that verify that the management committee members have been residents of Harrow for a certain period. References could be provided by agencies that have worked with the group, e.g. HAVS, HCRE or Council officers.**

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

### **B. Criteria for the use of the premises:**

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 Harrow Partnership Strategic Priorities.
3. All applications for accommodation are considered on an annual basis. Organisations allocated accommodation are required to demonstrate that their organisation has consolidated, and evidence must be provided of community development.
4. Accommodation will normally be allocated for a maximum of three years. Exceptions may be made where organisations can demonstrate that they are continuing to provide a valuable service to their community, but that, despite their best efforts, it has been impossible for them to generate sufficient income to relocate elsewhere.
5. All users will be subject to monitoring, and their use of the premises will be evaluated to prioritise the allocation of accommodation.

6. 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).
7. 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.
8. Umbrella organisations or organisations providing outreach services may make use of facilities booked under the casual use booking system, if available.
9. Decisions to exclude an organisation are taken by Members, but officers are authorised to suspend an organisation until that decision is taken.

### **C. Types of accommodation**

There are three types of accommodation: individual offices designated desks and casual use. 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. 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 remote from the office space 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 allocated accommodation on a casual use basis as above and 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 keys/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 entitled to 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.**

## **D. 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:

- satisfy the Council that 80% of its members and users are Harrow based
- be able to occupy the office for **more than 35 hours per week**
- provide evidence of achievements, which are in line with benefiting the Harrow Partnership Strategies and a level of activity, which justifies the hours, spent in the premises.

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

- satisfy the 80% criterion
- demonstrate that it uses the office **at least 20 hours per month**
- provide evidence of achievements, which are in line with benefiting the Harrow Partnership Strategies and a level of activity, which justifies the hours, spent in the premises.

**3. Casual use:** For this an organisation must:

- satisfy the 80% criterion
- demonstrate that it uses the office **at least 4 hours per month**
- provide an action plan, which outlines activities that are in line with benefiting the Harrow Partnership Strategies.

**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.

## **E. 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 9.00 am to 5.00 pm 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/entry cards 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.

**F. Benchmarking criteria for the use of the community premises:**

1. Record of weekly attendance using the Attendance Monitoring Form;
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
    - \*testimonials/ thank you letters from individual users and organisations/ agencies the group is working with.
  - 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.
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