

GRANTS ADVISORY PANEL

MINUTES

3 MARCH 2010

Chairman: * Councillor Jean Lammiman

Councillors:

* Ms Nana Asante	* Joyce Nickolay
* Don Billson	* Asad Omar
† G Chowdhury	* Mrs Rekha Shah
* Ashok Kulkarni	* Mrs Sasi Suresh
* Mrs Myra Michael	
(1) Manji Kara	

Adviser: * Mike Coker, Representative, Voluntary and Community Sector Representative

In attendance: Husain Akhtar
(Councillors) Julia Merison
Bill Stephenson

* Denotes Member present
(1) Denotes category of Reserve Member

RECOMMENDED ITEM

214. Grant Funding 2010/11

The Panel received a report of the Corporate Director Community and Environment, which set out the applications received from the Voluntary and Community Sector for grant funding for 2010/11. The report also set out the process undertaken to determine the allocations, and the Council's commitment to establish a new Equalities Body and maintain Harrow Weald Common.

Prior to the consideration of the proposals the Chairman proposed that Appendix 1 to the report, which set out the levels of grants recommended to individual organisations, be replaced with revised proposals which were

circulated at the meeting. Upon agreement that the revised proposals be considered, a further amendment was received. Following a vote this second amendment was lost.

The meeting was adjourned for ten minutes to allow the Panel and members of the public time to consider the implications of the revised proposals.

The Panel also received deputations from the Sangat Advice Centre, Harrow Healthy Living Centre and Harrow Mencap. Questions received from Harrow Mencap, Age Concern, Middlesex Association of The Blind and Flash Musicals were responded to. A petition from The Alan Senitt Memorial Trust was noted. A representation from the Pakistan Society of Harrow was also reported at the meeting. The Chairman referred to the issues raised by those who had addressed the meeting, and stated that their suggestions would be incorporated into the proposed future evaluation process.

A Member stated that she felt the grants process would need careful evaluation in terms of the advice given to organisations during the application process. She added that consultation with the political groups within the Council would be advantageous.

The Adviser to the Panel voiced his appreciation of the efforts made by officers and Members in attempting to achieve a more transparent process. He felt it was necessary to apply objective criteria that were fair to organisations and to move forward as part of the evaluation and review process.

In response to a question, the Corporate Director Community and Environment stated that officers would monitor specific equalities issues. A Member was concerned that the work undertaken in relation to equalities had not been given consideration in an impact assessment.

The Panel noted the officer's report and acknowledged the work that had been carried out in developing and administering a new assessment process, following Cabinet's acceptance of recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee review. The Panel also noted that the marketing of the grants process this year and the support provided through the grants workshops had stimulated an unprecedented level of demand for grants compared to previous years. It was recognised that a new process would inevitably result in successful outcomes for some organisations and less successful outcomes for others. The assessment process had led to uncertainty, and further work was required in this area. As a consequence, and given the importance attached to the Voluntary and Community Sector, it was proposed that Cabinet be requested to agree a one-off payment for 2010/11, to ensure that no currently-funded organisation, which had made an application for 2010/11 suffered any reduction of grant. It was further noted that this would not affect organisations that had applied for a grant for the first time, for whom no grant was being recommended.

Resolved to RECOMMEND: (to Cabinet) That

- (1) Cabinet approve an additional one-off payment towards the grants budget to meet the value of the recommended awards;
- (2) the grant awards for 2010/11 detailed at appendix 1 to the minutes be agreed;
- (3) authority be delegated to the Corporate Director Community and Environment to withdraw grant awards from successful applicants that failed to provide the Council with supporting documentation by the published deadline;
- (4) unallocated funds be re-distributed to organisations on the reserve list based on the score achieved during the assessment process;
- (5) £58,000 be ring-fenced in the grants budget to enable the Council to meet its commitment to establish a new Equalities Body for 2010/11;
- (6) £18,000 be transferred to the Council's Public Realm department to maintain Harrow Weald Common on behalf of Harrow Weald Common Conservators through a service level agreement;
- (7) a grant of £15,000 be awarded to the Harrow Heritage Trust out of the Council's Capital Programme for the financial year 2010/11;
- (8) that a review of grant-making arrangements which reports on this year's process and outcomes takes place to ensure appropriate support for the Voluntary and Community Sector in 2011/12.

Reason for Decision: To enable the allocation of funding to voluntary organisations for 2010/11.