

REPORT FOR: Grants Advisory Panel

Date of Meeting: 29 July 2010

Subject: Grant Appeals 2010/11

Key Decision: No

Responsible Officer: Brendon Hills – Corporate Director
Community and Environment

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Rekha Shah – Portfolio
Holder for Community and Cultural
Services

Exempt: No

**Decision subject to
Call-in:** Yes

Enclosures: **Appendix 1:** Recommendations for appeal
Appendix 2: Appeals and background
information: -
Schedule a: Healthy Living Centre
Schedule b: Home Group
Schedule c: Harrow Mencap/MAB/Age Concern
Consortium
Schedule d: Alan Senitt Memorial Trust
Schedule e: Girl guiding Middlesex North West
Schedule f: Aspire
Schedule g: Association of Senior Muslim
Citizens
Schedule h: Harrow Mencap
Appendix 3: Whittlesea Life Skills Association's
letter
Appendix 4: Email from National Autistic Society
Harrow Branch

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report presents the appeals received against the recommendations made on 3rd March 2010 by the Grants Advisory Panel and/or the decisions made by Cabinet on 18th March 2010 by the deadline of 19 April 2010.

Recommendations:

The Grants Advisory Panel is requested to consider and recommend to the Portfolio Holder for Community and Cultural Services the following:

- To uphold the appeals of the Harrow Healthy Living Centre and Home Group and award grants subject to the availability of funds as mentioned below
- To decline the appeals of Harrow Mencap/MAB/Age Concern Consortium, Alan Senitt Memorial Trust, Aspire, Association of Senior Muslim Citizens, Girlguiding Middlesex North West and Harrow Mencap
- To place unallocated funds into a reserve fund (paragraph 3.1.1)
- As there are insufficient funds available in the grants budget to meet the cost of appeals to be upheld, the panel is requested to recommend one of the options, set out in paragraph 3.1.3, for allocating funding to the Portfolio Holder.

Reason: (For recommendation)

- To ensure that those that were successful on appeal are notified of the outcome and allocated funds as they become available
- To ensure that those who are unsuccessful on appeal are notified of the outcome of their appeal
- As there are insufficient funds in the grants budget to support successful appeals, to put arrangements in place to meet the cost of successful appeals.

Section 2 – Report

2.1 Introductory paragraph

- 2.1.1 Harrow Council is empowered to make grants to voluntary and community organisations under Section 48 of the Local Government Act 1985, as well as under other legislation.
- 2.1.2 Organisations applying for funding from the Council's Main Grants Programme are given the opportunity to appeal against the recommendations that were made by the Grants Advisory Panel (GAP) on 3 March 2010 and the decision made by Cabinet on 18 March 2010. The grounds for appeal are that the **“information presented to the Grants Advisory Panel was incorrect or information was omitted and that this had a material effect on the decision”**. These grounds relate to the information that was presented to GAP in the officers' report, which was based on the original grant application form submitted by the deadline of 30 October 2009. Information submitted after the initial application has not been taken into account.

2.2 Options considered

- 2.2.1 Following the meetings of the Grants Advisory Panel on 3rd March 2010 and Cabinet on 18th March 2010, letters were sent to all grant applicants on 22nd March 2010 to inform them of Cabinet's decisions. The letter also informed the grant applicants of their right to appeal against the recommendations/decisions and the appropriate procedure.
- 2.2.2 In response to the letter of 22nd March 2010, correspondence was received by the deadline of 19th April from 8 organisations as listed below:
- Alan Senitt Memorial Trust
 - Aspire
 - Association of Senior Muslim Citizens
 - Girlguiding Middlesex North West
 - Harrow Healthy Living Centre
 - Home Group
 - Harrow Mencap
 - Harrow Mencap /MAB/Age Concern Consortium
- 2.2.3 In addition to this, a letter was received from KSIM Senior Citizen Association requesting an extension to the appeals deadline of 10 days. This request was rejected because it was deemed unfair to extend the deadline for one organisation but not for all other applicants.
- 2.2.4 The summary reports in appendix 2 (a-h) consider whether each appellant organisation has met the grounds for appeal and assesses the claims in their appeal against the information provided in the original application. **However, it does not take into account any additional information that was provided by the applicant after the grant application closing date (30 October 2009)** or submitted as part of their appeal, as this does not provide a basis for grounds for appeal. It also takes into account the decision that was taken by the Grants Advisory Panel, at its meeting on 6th July 2006, not to allow an appeal simply because an organisation felt that the grant recommended was less than what they applied for. Based on this assessment, the following is recommended. (See appendix 2 for details.)
- 2.2.5 Appeals to be upheld:
- Harrow Healthy Living Centre
 - Home Group
- Appeals not to be upheld:
- Harrow Mencap/MAB/Age Concern Consortium
 - Alan Senitt Memorial Trust
 - Girlguiding Middlesex North West
- Appeals that have not met the appeals criteria:
- Aspire
 - Association of Senior Muslim Citizens
 - Harrow Mencap
- 2.2.6 Copies of original officer reports presented to the Grants Advisory Panel at the

meeting on 3rd March 2010 are listed in Appendix 2 (a-h).

2.3 Current situation

Recent grants round

2.3.1 119 grant applications were received by the deadline of 30th October 2009 and were subjected to a three-stage assessment process.

2.3.2 The first stage of the assessment process checked that applicants were eligible for funding against the current grants criteria.

2.3.3 Five applicants, including Home Group were eliminated at this stage of the assessment process. Home Group were eliminated because it was concluded that they were not a registered charity and had an annual turnover in excess of £230 million. Home Group has appealed against the decision that arose from this stage of the process. See Appendix 2b for details.

2.3.4 Second stage of the assessment process - The remaining 114 applicants were assessed and scored, using the assessment tool that was approved by Cabinet in September 2009. Each applicant's response was assessed and scored. Applicants were then ranked by the score achieved and were positioned either below or above the threshold as described below.

- Small grant applicants with a score of 7 out of 14 and above (more than 50% of the overall score)
- Medium grant applicants with a score of 9 out of 16 and above (more than 60% of the overall score)
- Large grants applicants with a score of 11 out of 18 and above (more than 65% of the overall score).

2.3.5 A number of applicants, including the Association of Senior Muslim Citizens application (who have appealed) were eliminated at this stage of the process because they scored below the threshold. (See appendix 2g for details.)

2.3.6 Third stage of the assessment process

A number of applicants were rejected during the first and second stage of the process, however due to the unprecedented number and the total value of grant requests; remaining applications were subjected to further tests.

Although all applicants were initially assessed against the eligibility criteria, which is as follows: **“Grant aid will be available to support voluntary and community organisations to deliver services, where this resource is used for the benefit of people living, working or schooling in Harrow.”** Further scrutiny was required to ensure that where applications were delivering services outside the borough, it was clear how Harrow's community would access or benefit; and where this was not the case these applications were eliminated from the process.

The following essential questions were weighted and applicants were eliminated if they scored '0' on one of the following:

- “Has the applicant demonstrated the need for this service and how it will be met?”

- “Does the applicant demonstrate how it will address the funding priorities and expected outcome?”

Each application was scrutinised further and if the budget breakdown provided did not match the activities outlined in the application, they were also eliminated from the process.

Other applicants were eliminated from the process if they had received a grant during 2008/09, but did not submit outstanding monitoring information or evidence by the deadline, as agreed by GAP on 19 November 2009.

- 2.3.7 A number of applicants, including Alan Senitt Memorial Trust and Girlguiding Middlesex North West (who have appealed) were eliminated at this stage of the process.
- 2.3.8 Alan Senitt was not recommended for funding because they (1) “... identified four schools that the project will be delivered in and only one is in Harrow and this is not reflected in their project costs” and (2) they scored nil on an essential question: They have “not identified or demonstrated the need for the service.” Girlguiding Middlesex North West was eliminated because (1) “their budget breakdown did not relate to the leadership-training programme as described in their grant application” and (2) “monitoring information for 2008/09 was not submitted by the agreed deadline”.
- 2.3.9 Other factors were considered as part of the final stage of the process, such as whether the proposed project duplicated another service delivered or considered for funding by the Council. A number of applicants, including Aspire, Healthy Living Centre and the Harrow Mencap/Middlesex Association for the Blind and Age Concern partnership consortium, were eliminated at this stage in the process. See appendix 2 for details.
- 2.3.10 Cabinet agreed at its meeting on 18 March 2010 that a one-off ‘top-up’ payment be made to applicants that were to receive no funding or less than they had received in the previous year. Harrow Mencap, who have appealed against Cabinet decision not to fund their project by the full amount, were not recommended for funding in the officers’ original report. However their funding was reinstated at the same level as in the previous year as a result of the supplementary funding that was made available.

2.4 Lessons to be learnt from the recent grants round

- 2.4.1 The appeals process has highlighted a number of issues, which will need to be addressed during the next grants round.
- 2.4.2 Eligibility - Although Home Group’s appeal has been upheld, it does raise questions about the current eligibility criteria in respect of an organisation’s turnover. Consideration should be given to prioritising small and emerging voluntary and community groups. However during the recent grants round such small groups were unknowingly competing for funding against groups, like Home Group, that have large annual turnovers.
- 2.4.3 Funding for one-year only - Although the grant application pack clearly states that funding is available for 2010-11, next year’s grant information pack should clearly state the duration of the funding period to avoid any confusion.

2.4.4 **Duplication** – Establishing whether the proposed project will duplicate other services is an important part of the process. Next year's grant information pack should clearly state that **duplication** will be considered as part of the assessment process.

2.5 **Funding position**

2.5.1 It should be noted that the total revised grants budget for 2010/11 is £983,360, which includes the original grants budget of £794,360 and a one-off 'top-up' of £189,000 which was approved by Cabinet at its meeting on the 18 March 2010. The total grants allocation in 2010/11 is £972,712, leaving a balance of £10,648.

2.5.2 The National Autistic Society Harrow Branch has recently declared that they did not spend the grant award of £4040 for 2009/10 for the School Link Pilot Project. They state that this sum was paid to their Head Office (the account details provided by the organisation) along with other grants and payments from the Council. As these funds were not released to the local branch they were unable to deliver the agreed activities. They have requested permission to carry this grant forward and that these funds be transferred to ADHD Support Harrow, as they are in the process of amalgamating with this group. The Portfolio Holder for Community and Cultural Services has agreed that NASH should return the grant of approx £4040 for 2009/10, as they were in breach of the grant agreement. This is because they failed to deliver the project or spend the grant in the year that it was approved and did not inform the grants team at the time that they were unable to access the funds from their Head Office. (See appendix 4 for details).

2.5.3 It should also be noted that Whittlesea Life Skills Association have declined their grant of £3,920. This is because the lease of The Lodge (for which funding was awarded) has now been transferred to the Council, and therefore the maintenance and running costs will be met by Shaftesbury High School. This means that this fund can be returned to the grants budget. See appendix 3 for details.

3. Implications of the Recommendation

3.1 **Financial Implications**

3.1.1 There is a total of £18,608 funds available for distribution through the appeals process, which includes £10,648 of unallocated funds from the grants budget, and £3,920 which has been returned by the Whittlesea Life Skills Association. Along with a grant of £4,040 which is to be returned from the National Autistic Society Harrow Branch (NASH). It is recommended that any unallocated funds be placed in a reserve fund.

3.1.2 It is recommended that the appeals of Harrow Healthy Living Centre and Home Group be upheld. It is recommended that they be awarded funding when there are sufficient funds in the reserve fund. This should be awarded in accordance with the recommendations set out in appendix 1, which are based on the assessment scores achieved during the recent grants round, and the formula that was used to determine final grant allocation. Therefore the Healthy Living Centre and the Home Group projects are recommended 70% of their grant

request (£20,790 and £14,000, respectively). The total value of these recommendations is £34,790, leaving a shortfall of £16,182.

3.1.3 Cabinet also agreed at its meeting on the 18 March that applicants who are successful on appeal be placed on a reserve list so that when funds become available they could be considered for funding. However as there are insufficient funds to meet the cost of the appeals process, the panel is requested to consider and recommend to the Portfolio Holder one of the following options:

- Those that achieved the highest score during the assessment process be allocated funding first and those with lower scores be placed on the reserve list. (See appendix 1 for details.) This would mean that as Harrow Healthy Living Centre scored the highest scores during the assessment process, out of those that were successful on appeal, they would be awarded funding first. It is also suggested that they receive their first instalment as soon as possible and their second payment in October, if there are sufficient funds in the reserve fund.
- Each successful appellant receive half of their grant now, which would amount to £17,395, and the remainder when further funds become available.
- Funding is not allocated but is put in a reserve fund and both groups are placed on a reserve list, so that when sufficient funds become available, funding can be allocated.

3.2 Legal

3.2.1 The Council has power to distribute grants to voluntary and community organisations.

3.3 Performance Issues

3.3.1 The provision of grants to voluntary and community sector organisations has the potential to contribute to National Indicator (NI) number 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. Results from the first national Third Sector Survey indicate that Harrow's performance against this indicator is 10.4%. Harrow will be aiming to improve performance by a statistically significant amount, now agreed as an increase of 4.4%.

3.3.2 The provision of grant funding to voluntary and community sector organisations has the potential to contribute to NI 1 ' % of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area'. The Place Survey shows that the current performance against this indicator for 2009/10 was 78% and the target performance for 2010/11 is 79.8%. Applicants have indicated in their application that their activities will address this NI.

3.3.3 The provision of grant funding to voluntary and community sector organisations has the potential to contribute to NI 6 ' Participation in regular volunteering'. The Place Survey shows that the current performance against this indicator for 2009/10 was 25.80% and the target performance for 2010/11 is 27.7%. Applicants have indicated in their application that their activities will address this NI.

3.4 Environmental Impact

3.4.1 There are no environmental impact issues arising out of this report.

3.5 Risk Implications

3.5.1 The potential risk associated with any decision is that if any of the appellant organisations are approved for funding, they may not deliver services as described in their grant applications. This risk is mitigated through a process of annual grant monitoring that also aims to support groups to improve their capacity to deliver.

3.6 Equalities implications

3.6.1 If appeals are upheld, some of the funding will provide support to organisations serving black and minority ethnic communities, children and young people, women, people with disabilities, elderly and carers. If appeals are rejected it may have an effect on these organisations but will not have an adverse affect on any particular community because Harrow's diverse communities are served through the grants programme, as a whole.

3.7 Community safety

3.7.1 Some of the organisations recommended for funding contribute to community safety through the provision of community safety activities such as diversionary activities for young people.

3.8 Corporate Priorities

3.8.1 The distribution of grants enables the voluntary and community sector to support the Council in meeting the following corporate priorities:

Improve support for vulnerable people

Many of the organisations recommended for funding will deliver services to vulnerable people, such as older people, people with physical, mental or terminal illnesses, children who are at risk of exclusion, etc.

Build stronger communities

Many of the organisations recommended for funding will deliver services that enhance community cohesion.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Kanta Hirani	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the* Chief Financial Officer
Date: 18 June 2010		
Name: George Curran	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the* Monitoring Officer
Date: 18 June 2010		

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers:

Compiled by – Audrey Salmon, Interim Service Manager – Community Resources and Projects

Contact Details and Background Papers –
Melvyn Leach, Service Manager – Community Resources
Parveen Vasdev, Principal Grants Officer, Community Development

Background Papers:

Appendix 1: Recommendations for appeal

Appendix 2: Appeals and background information: -

Schedule a: Healthy Living Centre

Schedule b: Home Group

Schedule c: Harrow Mencap/MAB/Age Concern Consortium

Schedule d: Alan Senitt Memorial Trust

Schedule e: Girl guiding Middlesex North West

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Appendix 3: Whittlesea Life Skills Association's letter

Appendix 4: Email from National Autistic Society Harrow Branch

Appendix 1

Grant appeal recommendations

Grants Budget Available (2010/11): £18,608

ORGANISATION	Assessment Score	Grant appeal Recommendations	Grant requested 2010/11	Officers' recommendation	Grants approved by Cabinet 2010/11
Appeals upheld					
Harrow Healthy Living Centre	16 (70%)	£20,790	£29,700	Nil	Nil
Home Group	15 (70%)	£14,000	£20,000	Nil	Nil
Total to consider following appeals					
		£34,790			
Appeals not upheld					
Harrow Mencap/MAB/Age Concern Consortium		Nil	£50,000	Nil	Nil
Alan Senitt Memorial Trust		Nil	£10,000	Nil	Nil
Girlguiding Middlesex North West		Nil	£7,000	Nil	Nil
Aspire		Nil	£30,000 (over 3 years)	Nil	Nil
Association of Senior Muslim Citizens		Nil	£8,000	Nil	Received 'one-off' top-up of £2,040 for 2010/11 only (based on 2009/10 grant)
Harrow Mencap		Nil	£30,000	Nil	Received 'one-off' top-up of £8,080 for 2010/11 only (based on 2009/10 grant)

APPEALS AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

EACH REPORT CONTAINS:

**Officers' summary grant appeal report;
Letters of Appeals;
Copies of Original Officer Reports presented to GAP on 3rd March 2010;
and Copies of Original Grant Applications.**

Schedule a: Harrow Healthy Living Centre

Schedule b: Home Group

Schedule c: Harrow Mencap/MAB/Age Concern Consortium Trust

Schedule d: Alan Senitt Memorial

Schedule e: Girlguiding Middlesex North West

Schedule f: Aspire

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