

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	Minute: 209
(Councillors)	Julia Merison	Minute: 209
	Bill Stephenson	Minute: 209

* Denotes Member present
 (1) Denotes category of Reserve Member
 † Denotes apologies received

208. Attendance by Reserve Members

RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Member:

Ordinary Member

Reserve Member

Councillor Golam Chowdhury

Councillor Manji Kara

209. Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED: That

- (a) the following personal interests were declared and that all Members remained in the room during the discussion and voting:

Item 7: Grant Funding 2010/11

Councillor Nana Asante -

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Afghan Association Paiwand• Age Concern Harrow• Angolan Civic Communities Alliance• Ashiana Charitable Trust• Asperger's Syndrome Access to Provision (ASAP)• Aspire• Association of Tamil School Hendon• Edgware Central African Youth Association• Colourful Events• Community Link Up• Flash Musicals• Girlguiding Middlesex North West• Harrow African Caribbean Association• Harrow Agenda 21 Environmental Forum• Harrow Association of Disabled People• Harrow Association of Somali Voluntary Organisations• Harrow Association of Voluntary Services (HAVS)• Harrow Bengalee Association• Harrow Bereavement Care• Harrow Citizens Advice Bureau• Harrow Healthy Living Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Harrow In Europe Committee• Harrow In Leaf• Harrow Inter Faith Council• Harrow Mencap Partnership• Harrow Mencap• Harrow Public Transport Users' Association• Harrow Refugee and Minorities Forum• Harrow Somali Women's Action Group• Harrow Tamil Association• Harrow Tamil School Association• Harrow Women's Centre• Home Start Harrow• Kids Can Achieve• London Kalibari• Middlesex Association for the Blind• Middlesex Tamil Academy• Mind in Harrow• Navalar Tamil School• Pakistan Society of Harrow• Pakistan Women's Association Harrow• Parkinson's Disease Society - Harrow• Sai School of Harrow• Sangat Advice Centre• Wish Centre
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Councillor Manji Kara -

- Ashiana Charitable Trust
- Bentley Priory Nature Reserve Management Committee
- Harrow Mencap
- Harrow Iranian Community Association

- Indian Association of Harrow
- Sangat Advice Centre
- St. Luke's Hospice (Harrow and Brent)
- Welldon Activity Group

Councillor Jean Lammiman -

- Harrow Association of Disabled People
- Harrow Association of Voluntary Services (HAVS)
- Harrow In Europe Committee
- Relate North West London
- Harrow Teenage Cancer Trust
- Harrow Young Musicians

Councillor Myra Michael -

- Age Concern Harrow
- Harrow In Europe Committee
- Home Start Harrow

Councillor Joyce Nickolay -

- Harrow Association of Voluntary Services (HAVS)
- Harrow In Europe Committee
- Bentley Priory Nature Reserve Management Committee
- Harrow Weald Common Conservators

Councillor Asad Omar -

- Harrow Inter-Faith Council

(b) Councillor Joyce Nickolay declared a prejudicial interest in Welldon Activity Group, in that her husband sat on the Management Board.

210. Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2010 be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

211. Public Questions

RESOLVED: That Committee Procedure Rule 16.3 (Part 4E of the Constitution) be suspended in order to receive three public questions from the following organisations, in relation to agenda item 7, Grant Funding 2010/11:

1.

Questioner: Mr Deven Pillay, on behalf of Harrow Mencap

Question: The amount requested £30,000 is less than the overall cost of the project and in fact less than the amount required for staff to deliver this unique service for the most profoundly disabled, disadvantaged and vulnerable children and their families in Harrow, so what activities does the budget not match?

Answer: Let me start by saying how much I appreciate the work Mencap do in Harrow and also how much value they add to the whole voluntary and community sector. Last year Mencap was awarded a grant of £8,080 to meet the cost of delivering an after-school club at Woodlands or Shaftesbury School. This year, Mencap has requested £30,000 towards to the cost of delivering this project at the 3 special schools in Harrow.

Unfortunately, the costings provided needed to be more precise and directly relate to the project.

It is hoped that if approved, the motion proposed at the beginning of this meeting will enable your organisation to continue to deliver this project.

Supplemental Question: Other organisations were awarded more funding with less marks?

Supplemental Answer: If an organisation is unhappy with the outcome of its application, the appeals process remains available to it.

2.

Questioner: Mr Dave Pearce, on behalf of Harrow Mencap, Age Concern and Middlesex Association of the Blind

Question: It is not clear which service and work they are referring to. These are three established long serving community organisations which have developed innovative services for the residents over scores of years.

Is it not fact that the established protocol is such that the lead organisation submitting the application is the accountable body in a partnership arrangement?

Answer: It was good to see an innovative proposal coming forward and I thank you for it and for your question. We most certainly and gratefully acknowledge that the organisations

that form this partnership individually have a track record of providing specialist services to the community. However the partnership itself is new so has no track record of providing the proposed service and is proposing to enter a new area to provide infrastructure and capacity building support service for the sector.

We have a number of organisations that collectively bid and deliver services as consortium and have a clear point of accountability. As the application was submitted and signed by two of the organisations in the partnership there was no single point of accountability for this project, which would be a requirement for the grant agreement.

We are reviewing the needs of the voluntary and community sector through the third sector strategy and would welcome your engagement in this process.

3.

Questioner: Mr Terry Revill, on behalf of Flash Musicals

Question: As you are aware that £25,000 of the £30,000 applied for is to enable Flash Musicals to pay Harrow Council Estates rent, will the Grants Advisory Panel be asking Estates to reduce rent by the same proportion?

Answer: I am very grateful to Mr Revill for his question as it gives me an opportunity to clarify the position and to remind him of the answer the Leader of the Council gave in Cabinet in November last year.

Like the Leader, I would like to express my appreciation for the work of the Flash Musical Youth Theatre, which I know is very much appreciated by the community. As the Leader explained to you in November, the Youth Theatre at Methuen Crescent, Edgware, for which the Trustees have signed a lease, is owned by the Housing Revenue Account. Statute therefore compels the Council to charge market rent for the asset and £25,000 is the lowest which can reasonably be charged. The rent cannot be reduced but I believe the premises are hired out, which will help you to offset the rent.

A grant of £18,000 is proposed, which is equivalent to 72% of the rent. This is considered entirely reasonable in the circumstances. We hope Flash Musicals will have a successful year in 2010-11.

212. Petitions

In accordance with Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 14 (Part 4E of the Constitution), the Panel received a petition submitted on behalf of the Alan Senitt Memorial Trust with one signature. The terms of the petition were as follows:

“If we had been contacted with the assessment results as shown we would have been able to provide the further information required to enable a proper assessment to take place.

1. **The applicant has not identified the need for the service. There is limited information about Shared Futures project and the evaluation of the pilot project.** The service is needed so as to give young people the skills and the confidence to take active leadership roles within their own and the wider community, to learn the value of volunteering, to learn about working with people of different races and religions for the benefit of greater community cohesion. Shared Futures is a government-backed project for schools-linking for the benefit of greater community cohesion. Part of the evaluation of the pilot project is and was available but we are still awaiting the final report from the independent evaluation;
2. **The applicant has demonstrated how it will address the funding priorities and expected outcomes.** If this statement is correct I am unsure what else we need to do on this point;
3. **It is not clear if the project will be delivering in the same schools next year. Only one school listed is in Harrow.** The project is continuing in the same 4 schools this year but it is hoped to extend out to 2 more schools next year. It is taking place with Nower Hill High as that was the school that Alan, and his siblings, attended. We do not request full funding for the project because the course crosses several boroughs;
4. **The applicant has not stated how they will target young people from different backgrounds. Categories are based on current participants.** It is clear that people of different races and religions are targeted as we are working with schools of different faiths;
5. **The applicant has not stated who and how many young people will benefit from the project. The information provided is based on current participants, not on who will benefit in the future.** As one of the purposes of the project is to link schools of different faiths this will always be the case. The number of participants will increase in each year where we add the project to more schools timetables;
6. **They have not stated how much they are requesting.** Again there is nothing else to say on this point other than to say we were aware that we did not apply for full funding of the project and we were aware

that we may only be considered for part of the funds we had applied for;

7. **The budget provided is not clear and realistic - further breakdown required.** Further breakdown was not requested. The budget is clearly set out;
8. **Not clear if funding requested will be used to cover revenue costs, as further breakdown not provided.** Again no further breakdown was requested. Funds granted would be used to meet the costs of the programme as outlined in the budget.

The service we provide is not provided by any other organisation as part of the school timetable for Year 10 pupils, or elsewhere in mixed faith groups.”

RESOLVED: That the petition be received and noted.

213. Deputations

RESOLVED: That Committee Procedure Rule 15.7 (Part 4E of the Constitution) be suspended in order to receive deputations from the following organisations, in relation to agenda item 7, Grant Funding 2010/11:

A representative from the Sangat Advice Centre advised that:

- he would now initiate an appeal, having been made aware of the process.

A representative from the Harrow Healthy Living Centre contended that:

- the scoring system should be consistently applied and form the basis for the Grant funding process;
- to her knowledge Harrow Healthy Living Centre provided a unique service to young people in Wealdstone.

In response to a question from a Member of the Panel regarding the outcome the organisation expected, the representative stated that:

- she anticipated that the grant request would be enthusiastically received due to the lack of provisions available to young people in Wealdstone;
- she anticipated that 80% of the grant amount requested would be provided.

A representative from Harrow Mencap reported that:

- the key criteria used by officers for assessing and scoring applicants should be published and be integral to the application forms;
- any weighting applied to certain criteria should be made explicit at the start of the assessment process;
- any determining factors for recommendation of funding should be central to the assessment criteria, published and applied consistently to all grant applications.

In response to a question from a Member, regarding the Grants process, the representative stated that:

- although additional funds had been made available, the transparency and equitability of the current applications process had not been addressed;
- the process should be made fairer for new organisations applying for funding.

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.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 8.52 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR JEAN LAMMIMAN
Chairman