

## **REPORT FOR: Grant Advisory Panel**

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**Date of Meeting:** 2 December 2010

**Subject:** INFORMATION REPORT – Grant Appeals

**Responsible Officer:** Brendon Hills, Corporate Director  
Community and Environment

**Exempt:** No

**Enclosures:** None

### **Section 1 – Summary**

The report sets out the Council's action to address the appeals outstanding from the 2010-11 grants application programme.

**FOR INFORMATION**

## Section 2 – Report

2.1 During the 2010/11 grants application round, an unprecedented number of applications were received, compared to previous years. All grant applications were subject to a three-stage assessment process. Prior to recommendations being presented to GAP all grant applicants are sent a copy of the officer's summary report on their application. This provides grant applicants with an opportunity to view the report before it is presented to GAP and highlight any errors or omissions contained within it. This report is then presented to GAP as part of its consideration of grant recommendations.

2.2 All grant applicants were notified of the outcome of their application by letter that was sent out on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2010. The letter also informed them of their right to appeal on the following grounds:

*“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 only to information presented to GAP based on the original grant application submitted by the deadline of 30 October 2009. Information submitted after the initial application is not taken into account.

2.3 In the previous grants round eight organisations responded by the deadline of 19<sup>th</sup> April 2010 to appeal the decision made on their grant application:

- *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*

2.4 Grant appeals arising from the 2010-11 grants programme were considered by GAP at their meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> July 2010. Officer recommendations were that two of the eight appeals should be upheld as they conformed to the criteria applied to appeals. However, GAP members recommended that six of the eight appeals were upheld, although no recommendations as to the amounts to be awarded were made.

2.5 The GAP recommendations on appeals for 2010-11 remain outstanding and no formal decision has been taken regarding the outcome of each appeal.

- 2.6 In order to resolve the situation within the Councils' grants application guidelines and financial procedures the Council will appoint an independent adviser to review the grant appeals. The report of the independent adviser will be presented to the Executive to assist them in making final decisions on appeals.
- 2.7 The experience of the last grant appeals process demonstrates that there are a number of difficulties with the current appeals procedure. The process for dealing with grant appeals has been protracted and not offered a timely outcome for the appellant organisations.

An equalities impact assessment has been carried out on the appeals process and is available on application. The impact assessment does not identify any adverse impact on any of the protected equality groups.

### **Section 3 – Further Information**

- 3.1 As part of reviewing the grants application process, it is important to get feedback from voluntary and community organisations on how the Council should operate any potential appeals process in the future. Any proposals will need to be communicated to organisations ahead of the beginning of the financial year. This will improve the timeliness of the decision-making for grants that could assist voluntary organisations with their planning and delivery of activities. A further report on the options for the future of the grant funding process including appeals will be brought to GAP early in 2011.

### **Section 4 – Financial Implications**

- 4.1 The total budget available for grants in 2010/11 was £766,360 with a **one-off** 'top-up' of £189,000. The total value of all applications received amounted to over £2 million.
- 4.2 If the judgement of the Executive after hearing from the independent adviser is to uphold the appeals in excess of the amount available to fund appeals, this would need to be funded from elsewhere within the budget and actioned as a virement, in accordance with the financial regulations.
- 4.3 The costs for the appointment of an independent adviser will be met from within existing resources. It is estimated that the costs will be no more than £500 and will be met from administrative budgets. This will not affect the grants budget.

### **Section 5 – Corporate Priorities**

- 5.1 The proposals contained within this report support the Council's draft vision of 'Working Together: our Harrow, our community' and the draft priority: United communities: a Council that listens and leads.

Name: Jennifer Hydari



on behalf of the  
Chief Financial Officer

Date: 19 November 2010

## **Section 6 - Contact Details and Background Papers**

**Contact:** Kashmir Takhar, Head of Service – Community Development,  
020 8420 9331

### **Background Papers:**

Grants Advisory Panel report – 29<sup>th</sup> July 2010

<http://modern.gov:8080/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=60517&T=10>

Minutes of Grants Advisory Panel meeting - 29<sup>th</sup> July 2010

<http://modern.gov:8080/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=60517&T=1>