

Harrow & Wealdstone
**Shop
mobility**

**37 St George's Centre
St Anne's Road
Harrow
HA1 1HS**

Registered Charity no 1044173

Friday, 15 April 2011

The Director of Legal and Governance Services
Harrow Council
Room 127, Civic Centre
Harrow
HA1 2UH

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are requesting a Call-In on the recent Cabinet decision to refuse our grant application for £22,000 funding from the Council for the year 2011/12. The main reasons for this are as follows:

1. Inadequate consultation with stakeholders prior to the decision.
2. That the matter should be referred back to the decision-maker for reconsideration.
3. The action is not proportionate to the desired outcome.
4. A potential human rights challenge

We believe that, apart from rudimentary guidance in how to complete the application forms, there has been scant consultation with us about this process. There has most certainly been very little assessment of the impact the withdrawal of our grant funding will have on Shopmobility as an organisation and also to the disabled residents of Harrow. The funding of this grant is mainly used to cover the one paid member of staff on a part-time basis. Without this grant, this post will no longer be funded and the future of our service as it stands is at serious risk.

Shopmobility not only provides mobility and opportunities for disabled residents to get out, who otherwise would not do so, but it also provides wheelchairs on short-term loans for holidays and periods after a stay in hospital – a vital 'stop gap' which has been acknowledged by both the NHS and your own Social Services department, who seem unable to cope with demand. By closing us down (which the loss of funding could bring about) does this mean that your Social Services department will, in future, be able to provide this service to residents having either long-term or short-term disabilities?

Shopmobility operates on a relative shoestring and delivers so much. The positive impact it is able to have on disabled residents' lives should not be underestimated. This is why we believe that that the negative impact the removal of grant funding will have on our organisation is totally disproportionate, considering the relatively small sum involved.

We cannot believe that the benefit derived by many hundreds of disabled and isolated Harrow residents, for whom the services of Shopmobility are an indispensable 'lifeline', is to be thrown away so cheaply.

At Shopmobility, we fully support the Council's vision "Working together, Our Harrow our Community". We also understand that the Council has the following Corporate priorities:

- Supporting and protecting people who are most in need
- United and involved communities: a Council that listens and leads

These are our priorities too and we feel that, by properly understanding the work that Shopmobility does and the benefit we bring to so many in our community, you will realise that we deliver on these priorities for a very small outlay in terms of grant subsidy.

Another of your priorities is also "Access for All" and, by depriving the disabled residents of our facility, you are taking away that access which gives them day-to-day independence. Do you not feel that their human rights are being violated?

We consider that we have met the criteria as laid out in the document 'Voluntary and Community Grants 2011/2012 – Information to Grant Applicants'.

How do we explain to our users why we can no longer offer our service to them? In order to do that, we must have a clear understanding as to how this analysis was carried out. .

We would therefore urge you to reconsider our application and uphold our appeal for grant funding.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,



Gaye Branch
Chairman