

Report to the Grant Aid Review Task and Finish Panel



Report Reference: GAR-002-2014/15

Date of meeting: 2 March 2015

SCRUTINY



Subject: Review of Grant Aid Scheme for Voluntary and Community Organisations

Responsible Officer: Chris Overend (01992 564247).

Democratic Services: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470).

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

(1) That the information supplied in response to Members' requests at the first meeting be assessed with a view to identifying potential enhancements to the scheme.

Reason for decision:

As Members noted at the last meeting, the review is being carried out against the backdrop of a reduction of £11,517 in the Grant Aid Budget for 2015/16. This has reduced the overall budget to £83,453 in the next financial year, of which £43,453 is committed on three year agreements. In effect this leaves £40,000 for the consideration of applications for one-off major grants. Members will no doubt, therefore, wish to use the information presented to help identify the key areas towards which the more limited budget should be directed.

Report:

1. At the inaugural meeting on 14 January 2015, Members of the Panel began the process of review and identified three aspects of the Scheme they wished to have more information on as they felt these were the key areas through which potential enhancements could be pinpointed. The aspects concerned were as follows:

- the eligibility criteria for the current scheme;
- details of grants approved during the past five years; and
- a list of all current three-year Service Level Agreements.

2. The eligibility criteria are set out in the application form attached. In particular Members' attention is drawn to the 'Introduction', 'Who Can Apply?' and 'What You Can Apply For' sections. Also attached is a list of factors forming part of the assessment of a grant application. This list is supplied to applicant groups to help them in completing their submission by focussing on the main areas which might increase the likelihood of success.

3. Details of applications approved in the past five years, including the name of the group, the nature of the application and amount, are set out on the attached schedule. Members expressed the view that this information might help in identifying trends, and changes in those trends with regard to the type of application being approved.

4. A list of the groups with whom the District Council has three year service level agreements, including details of the current annual payments, is also attached. All the agreements run concurrently with the current three year period expiring on 31 March 2016. Additional information with regard to the criteria for a group to have a three year funding agreement is set out in the application form.

Resource implications:

Budget provision

The Grant Aid Budget for 2015/16 has been set at £83,453. There are also separate budgets in the Voluntary and Community Sector for VAEF (£39,120), the CAB (£113,380) and Welfare Transport (£16,000)

Personnel

The Communities, Policies and Grants Officer and Assistant are responsible for administering the scheme. They do so in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Community Services and with the involvement of officers from Community, Arts and Sports Development and Finance, where necessary and appropriate.

Land

N/A.

Appendices:

- EFDC Grant Aid Scheme for Voluntary & Community Groups – Funding Matrix – Criteria taken in to Account for Scorecard System.
- Grant Aid Brochure & Application Form
- Groups in Receipt of Three-Year Service Level Agreements
- Grant Aid Applications 2009-14