

GRANTS COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

6 March 2008

The meeting commenced at 3.30 pm in Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor Robbie Payne (In the Chair)

Councillors: The Mayor

Officers: John Mennear, Assistant Director, Adult and Community Services
Susan Ryback, Grants Officer
Pat Wormald, Senior Clerical Officer – Adult and Community Services

Also Present

Tony Row sell, Hartlepool Music Studio

26. Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor Victor Tumilty

27. Declarations of interest by members

The Mayor, Stuart Drummond and Councillor Robbie Payne declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in minute number 29 relating to an application from Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth Centre as Members of Belle Vue Management Committee and suggested that this application be referred to Cabinet for decision.

28. Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held on 6 February

Received

29. Community Pool 2008/2009 *(Director of Adult and Community Services)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

The report sought approval for the level of grant awards to community groups and voluntary organisations from the Community Pool for 2007/2008

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

The Community Pool budget for the 2008/2009 financial year had been set at £470,822. The balance of the 2007/2008 Community Pool was £124,045 which, when added to the 2008/2008 budget, would give a total of £594,867 available for distribution within 2008/09.

In the 2007/2008 financial year, one award from the Community Pool was approved on a tapering basis. As it was agreed, in principle, and as funding was available, the second year tapered awards to Owton Manor Neighbourhood Watch and Residents Association of £6,128 was being reserved from the total budget available. In the 2007/2008 financial year, a three year funding package was approved in principle for Shopmobility. As funding was available for 2008/2009 this award, amounting to £22,575 was being reserved from the total budget available. After deduction of the Direct Lettings allocation and funding for the tapered awards as well as the award for Shopmobility this would leave a balance for distribution at this meeting of £562,664.

One application from the Adventure Youth Sea Training Trust (AYSTT) did not meet the application criteria and was not recommended for funding at this time. Details of this application and the reasons for rejection were provided as outlined in the report. It was suggested that the Adventure Youth Sea Training Trust contact Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency to request support with putting in place the policies and procedures highlighted in the report.

Members were referred to Appendix 2 of the report which provided a list of all the applications to the Community Pool for 2008/09 and details of the recommendations relating to those applications. Five applications had been received from groups who had not been previously supported with grant aid from the Community Pool. However, it was recommended that the decision relating to three of these applications, Hartlepool Hospice, Making a Difference and Hartlepool Credit Union Forum be deferred to the next meeting of the Grants Committee pending receipt of additional information. Officers suggested that the decision relating to applications received from Manor Residents Association and Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth Centre should also be deferred to the next meeting pending receipt of further information.

In relation to tapered awards 2005/2006 to 2007/2008, Members were advised that due to pressures faced by the voluntary sector and as a result of the reduction in funding from other sources, two groups, Headland Future and Manor Residents Association had submitted bids for funding for 2008/2009 with a specific request for the Grants Committee to relax the criteria to consider their applications in light of the current situation to enable them to lever in other sources of funding to sustain their current service provision.

In conclusion, the Assistant Director of Community Services advised that a total of 25 applications had been made by community groups and voluntary organisations, as detailed in Appendix 2. The value of the applications totalling £697,034 far exceeded the budget available of £594,867, a summary of which was detailed in the report. It was recommended that £405,363.00 be allocated at round 1, with the remaining balance of £189,504.00 to be committed at a later date.

As a result of the Mayor's and Councillor Payne's declarations of interest, it was agreed that the application relating to Belle Vue Sports and Youth Centre be referred to Cabinet for decision.

Members raised a number of queries in relation to individual applications, particularly in relation to those applications recommended for deferral, to which the Assistant Director of Community Services provided clarification. Following discussion in relation to the Credit Union application, it was suggested that financial advice and assistance be provided by the Council's Finance team in relation to the provision of outstanding information in order to progress the application and that a meeting be convened as a matter of urgency. It was also suggested that this application be considered by Cabinet together with the Belle Vue application.

In relation to the application from AY STT, whilst Members agreed that this application should not be funded at this time, it was suggested that advice and assistance be provided in relation to implementing the relevant policies and procedures which were not currently in place, as highlighted in the report.

Members debated the implications of relaxing the criteria for the two applications received from Headland Future and Manor Residents Association whilst acknowledging the difficulties faced by community groups in securing funding.

Decision

- (i) That the budget allocated for direct lettings (£3,500), be approved.
- (ii) That Grant aid to those organisations recommended for approval in Appendix 2 be approved, with the exception of the following

applications submitted by:-

- (a) Hartlepool Hospice, Making a Difference, Manor Residents Association be deferred to a future meeting of the Grants Committee, pending receipt of satisfactory additional information.
- (b) Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth Centre and Hartlepool Credit Union be referred to Cabinet for consideration upon receipt of satisfactory additional information with a recommendation that the application from the Hartlepool Credit Union be approved.
- (ii) That financial advice and support be provided by the Council's Finance Team to the Hartlepool Credit Union Forum in relation to the provision of outstanding information in order to progress their application.
- (iv) Any allocation of grant aid to groups known to be experiencing financial difficulties to be released in monthly/quarterly instalments, as appropriate, in order to safeguard the Council's investment and minimise risk.
- (v) That the application submitted on behalf of Adventure Youth Sea Training Trust (AYSTT) be rejected as detailed in paragraph 4.1 of the report.
- (vi) The balance of the Community Pool £189,504 be considered for allocation against bids at future meetings within the financial year.

J A BROWN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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