

# **GRANTS COMMITTEE**

## **MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD**

3 March 2006

### **Present:**

Councillor Peter Jackson (In the Chair)  
The Mayor, Stuart Drummond

Also present: In accordance Council Procedure Rule 4.2, Councillor  
Ray Waller as substitute for Councillor Robbie Payne.

Officers: John Mennear, Acting Assistant Director (Cultural Services)  
Susan Rybak, Grants Officer  
Tracy Liveras, Young People and Play Coordinator  
Danielle Swainston, Early Years Manager  
David Cosgrove, Principal Democratic Services Officer

### **28. Apologies for Absence**

Councillor Robbie Payne.

### **29. Declarations of interest by members**

The Mayor declared a private and prejudicial interest in Minute No. 31;  
specifically the grant proposal for Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth  
Centre, and took no part in the discussion or decision thereon.

### **30. Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2006.**

Confirmed.

### **31. Community Pool 2006/07** (*Director of Adult and Community Services*)

#### **Type of decision**

Non-key.

#### **Purpose of report**

This report set out details of applications to the Community Pool and sought  
approval for levels of grant award for 2006/2007.

### **Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee**

The Community Pool budget for the 2006/2007 financial year has been maintained at £392,600. Additional funding is available as a result of the balance of the grant awarded to Central Residents Association in the 2005/2006 financial year and the unspent contingency of the 2005/2006 Community Pool being accrued into the 2006/2007 Community Pool budget. It was also highlighted at the meeting that an additional £20,000 had been allocated to the Community Pool at the meeting of Council held on 16 February 2006.

The Community Pool budget for 2006/2007 had been set at £392,600 within this budget it was usual practice to dedicate allocations for specific areas of support. The Directed Lettings allocation has been reduced from £4,500 to £4,000 based on demand in the 2004/2005 financial year. Additional funding was also available for distribution as the result of the accrual of the balance of an unspent grant awarded to Central Residents Association in 2005/2006 and the accrual of the balance of the 2005/2006 Community Pool budget which was approved by the Grants Committee on 10th January, 2006. Allowing for these accruals, the allocation for directed lettings, and the additional Council allocation, the balance of the budget available for consideration at this meeting was £439,762.53.

The Acting Assistant Director reported that the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee was to examine the funding of voluntary sector groups in the town. There was a major problem with other external funding schemes ceasing and thereby placing significant pressure on quite a number of voluntary groups. In light of this it was proposed that the contingency in the 2006/07 budget should be much larger than in previous years as it was expected that following the Scrutiny investigation and the problems of falling external funding, further grants may need to be made in order to maintain some 'essential' groups. The budget proposed a contingency of £76,441.78 to which the additional £20,000 allocated by Council was to be added.

Detailed in a schedule within the report (Appendix 5) were the grants proposed for 2006/07. This table also set out the grants paid in 2005/06 and the actual amounts requested by the various groups. The report also went on to highlight the grant applications that had been refused and the detailed reasons for them.

Members discussed issues relating to the details of several of the grant applications, seeking further details from the Acting Assistant Director on those groups and the details of their applications. Issues concerning members included the withdrawal of external funding, the application for grant aid to support 100% of the salaries of full time posts, the tapering of grant funding, and the potential for supporting several groups in one area providing similar functions/activities. The Chairman, Councillor Jackson, commented that the contingency was relatively high this year due, primarily, to the loss of several external sourcing funds for the voluntary sector. However, once the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee's investigation had been completed, the

Chair indicated that he would wish to see further grant award proposals brought to the Committee to bring the contingency fund down to its usual 5% level.

**Decision**

1. That the budget allocated for directed lettings (£4,000) be approved.
2. That the Grant aid to those organisations detailed in Appendix 5 to the report be approved for 2006/07.
3. That the rejection of applications from the four groups detailed in paragraph 3.15 of the report be approved.
4. That any allocation of grant aid to groups known to be experiencing financial difficulties, to be released in monthly instalments in order to safeguard the Council's investment.
5. That retention of the balance of the Community Pool, as a contingency to be dispersed following completion of the audit exercise by Scrutiny Coordinating Committee as detailed in report, be approved.

**32. Play Opportunities Pool Awards 2006/07** (*Director of Children's Services*)

**Type of decision**

Non-key.

**Purpose of report**

The report advised Members of applications to the Play Opportunities Pool 2006/2007 and sought approval for the grant awards recommended. The report also informed Members of an under-spend of the grant awarded to Hartlepool Families First in the current financial year and requested accrual of the remaining grant into the 2006/2007 Play Opportunities Pool budget.

**Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee**

Grant aid totalling £18,000 annually is available to community groups and voluntary organisations to enable them to provide play opportunities throughout the year, thereby complimenting the Authority's play provision. The provision of play grants also enables groups to provide play to meet local needs, especially in areas of disadvantage to assist local people on limited incomes.

Grant Awards are used as a contribution towards the cost of a play opportunity, with the Authority's funding acting as a magnet to attract match funding. In total, six applications have been assessed with requests from the Grants Pool towards staff, volunteers, transport, equipment etc. Grant aid of £18,000.00, in total was available for the year 2006/2007. It was reported that following the approval of the council budget for 2006/07, the pool would be

increased by a further 3% (£540) and this sum would be added to the main pool.

Details of the groups requesting funding were set out in the report together with an outline of what schemes the groups were proposing that the grant would be utilised for.

### **Decision**

1. That the grant awards below totalling £14,083.07 be approved: -

**Hartlepool Special Needs Support Group** - A contribution of £3,200.00 is approved towards the cost of transport, paid sessional staff and volunteers and art/craft resources.

**CHILD Deaf Youth Project** - A contribution of £325.68 is approved towards the costs of the summer playscheme including staff, volunteers' expenses, transport and administration. A contribution of £818.72 is approved towards costs for the Youth provision for staff, transportation, administration and volunteers' expenses. In total a grant of £1144.40 is therefore recommended to support the delivery of both projects.

**Hartlepool Families First** - A grant of £2,268.67 is approved to contribute towards a proportion of salary and administration costs for work covered in areas of the town, not covered by Sure Start North or New Deal for Communities, for 4 hours per week.

**Manor Residents' Association** - A contribution of £2,500.00 being the balance on the cost of the schemes is approved towards transport costs and accommodation with regards to the residential event as detailed within the overall costing of the project.

**West View Project** - A contribution of £4,588.00 from the Play opportunities Pool is approved towards staff costs and transportation.

**Hartlepool Women's Aid** - A contribution of £500.00 is approved towards the cost of craft materials, play equipment and transport.

2. Approval be given to the accrual of £2,571.50, being the under-spend of grant funding to Hartlepool Families First in 2005/2006.
3. That the increase in the pool by 3% (£540) following the approval of the Council budget for 2006/07 be noted.

**J A BROWN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

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