

Grants Board
7 March 2016

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the GRANTS BOARD held on Wednesday 9 March, 2016 at 7.30 pm in the Council Offices, The Campus, Welwyn Garden City, Herts, AL8 6AE

PRESENT: Councillors D Bennett (Chairman)

A Chesterman, L Chesterman, G Dowler and S Johnston

ALSO Councillors
PRESENT:

OFFICIALS
PRESENT:

1. SUBSTITUTION OF MEMBERS

Councillor A Chesterman substituted for Councillor J Fitzpatrick.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor J Fitzpatrick.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2015 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. NOTIFICATION OF URGENT BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED UNDER ITEM 8

The Chairman agreed to accept an update from the Head of Resources on the allocation of the Annual Grant fund and subsequent representations.

This item was considered urgent as Members needed to be aware of the outcome of the allocation process.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

Councillors L Chesterman and S Johnston declared an interest in items on the agenda relevant to them as County Councillors.

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Councillors A and L Chesterman informed the Committee that they knew two of the applicants for Community Grants, but this was purely through their work in the community and it did not constitute a declarable interest.

6. **COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATIONS - MARCH 2016**

Members were provided with answers to the questions that they had posed to Douglas Tilbe House concerning evaluations of the service, confidentiality, level of unrestricted reserves, fund-raising activities and whether funding was being sought from the County Council.

Members were content with the answers and confirmed release of funds on the basis of them.

Members received applications for Community Grants which totalled £8,696 and there was budget available of £9,952.

3rd Hatfield Air Scout Group

An application was received for an amount of £300 towards providing extra leaders for group members with additional needs and financial support for families on low income.

Members were supportive of this application which was a first from this group, for a relatively low amount of money and which supported young people, those with additional needs and those who might need financial support.

AGREED a Community Grant of £300.

Breaks Manor Youth

An application was received for £2,000 to be used as a contribution towards the refurbishment of a kitchen which would be used, in part, for a project to focus on healthy living including the preparation of meals, use of healthy ingredients and budgeting for young people.

Members considered this application carefully as there was some concern that this project should be funded by the County Council rather than Welwyn Hatfield. However, they felt that the project to encourage young people to cook and eat well was a positive initiative. They also recognised that the kitchen would be available for other community groups and would be designed to provide disability access.

Members requested that evidence be provided of the costs of the kitchen refurbishment.

AGREED a Community Grant of £2,000 subject to the evidence of the project costs being submitted.

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Friendship House

An application was received for the amount of £600 for the repair of a dishwasher.

Members noted that, whilst the amount seemed high for a repair, the dishwasher was an industrial model.

Members noted that the application was not for the full amount of the repair and that Friendship were able to fund the difference from their own funds.

AGREED a Community Grant of £600.

Hatfield Hyde Cricket Club

An application had been received for £1,296 which would be part funding for a new sight screen.

Members noted that this was first time application from this group and that there were several junior teams and over 75 senior players so providing a sporting facility for the community.

A suggestion was made that members of the club could be asked to contribute to buy this equipment, but it was felt that this would be a financial burden that many could not afford and could lead to members leaving.

AGREED a Community Grant of £1,296.00.

Home Start Welwyn Hatfield

An application had been received for £2,000 to help pay for training, rent, salaries, insurance and other office running costs.

Members expressed some concerns about this application for the following reasons:

1. Home Start Welwyn Hatfield would be joining with other Home Start groups in Hertfordshire and there was concern that any grant would not be used for Welwyn Hatfield residents.
2. There was some concern about the small number of residents being supported.
3. This work was predominantly a County Council responsibility.

Officers commented that, when deciding whether or not to support this application, Members should consider if the project was a Welwyn Hatfield priority.

However, despite these reservations, Members felt that as a caring authority, support should be given, with conditions attached.

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AGREED a Community Grant of £2,000 subject to the funds being ring-fenced for Welwyn Hatfield residents only and on the understanding that this would be a one-off grant to help Home Start Welwyn Hatfield through the transition from County Council funded to the new Hertfordshire wide group.

Parkrun

An application for £1,000 had been received as one off start-up funding to purchase equipment for a new parkrun in Hatfield.

Members were supportive of this application but expressed concern about the incomplete bank details. They asked officers to obtain full information before releasing any funds.

It was noted that, as this was a new project, diversity information was not yet available, but provision of this could be made a condition of the release of any funds.

AGREED a Community Grant of £1,000 subject to bank details being supplied which are acceptable to the Board and to the submission of diversity information once the group was established.

Welwyn Hatfield Sea Cadets

An application was received for £1,500 for the purchase of new kayaks.

Members were supportive of this application which would contribute to the purchase of the kayaks for young people (10 – 18 years old) in the borough.

AGREED a Community Grant of £1,500.

RESOLVED that the following Community Grants be made:

3 rd Hatfield Air Scout Group	£ 300.00
Breaks Manor Youth	£2,000.00
Friendship House	£ 600.00
Hatfield Hyde Cricket Club	£1,296.00
Home Start Welwyn Hatfield	£2,000.00
Parkrun	£1,000.00
Welwyn Sea Cadets	£1,500.00
TOTAL	£8,696.00

7. QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE AWARDS 2016

Prior to discussing the applications for Queen's Diamond Jubilee Awards, Members were advised/reminded of the following:

1. One of the starter applications had been withdrawn

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2. Ellen Day had applied for both Exemplar and Improver awards but was ineligible for Exemplar as she did not meet the criteria
3. The four eligible applications for Exemplar awards were all in the sports category and only one award could be given in each category. It was within the right of the Board to transfer the unsuccessful applications to the Improver group, although this was not a requirement.

Applications had been received in the names of several students for Starter Awards for their work in robotics.

Members commented that the applications had not been made by the individuals, but that the school had prepared one application which had been photocopied for each applicant.

Each of these applicants had been involved in the project for two years and the Board felt that this made them ineligible to be considered as starters.

Applications for Improver Awards had also been received in the names of other students at the same school for the same project. These too used the same photocopied information which, (it was discovered on checking) with a couple of minor changes, were almost word for word the applications that had been submitted the previous year.

Members felt strongly that this did not meet the criteria for applications which should be made by individuals using their own words and explaining their particular needs and aspirations.

Subsequent to the meeting, Members were given the opportunity to reconsider the applications in light of the discovery that each was a photocopy of the previous year, with some small changes, when awards had been given despite the same system of the school completing the forms on behalf of individuals being used.

Members RESOLVED that the applications as detailed above should be REFUSED.

Members also asked for the website to emphasise that applicants must:

1. Match the criteria for the level of award.
2. Complete their own individual application form. Bulk non-individual applications would not be considered.
3. Complete the application form in full and not just mark it "refer to attached". Supplementary documents would be accepted in addition to the form, not in lieu of.

Afolabi Opeoluwa applied for an award for £300 to support him in his sport of Basketball. Amongst his personal achievement were Most Valuable Player 2015 for his team and Junior Colour Award 2015 for his school.

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Charlotte Cox applied for an award for £300 to support her in her sport of Netball. Amongst her personal achievements was Player of the Year Award.

Ellen Day applied for an award for £300 to support her in her sport of Football. Amongst her achievements were a Centre of Excellence place for five consecutive seasons and completing a junior football leaders course.. Ellen also volunteered at Pegasus Football Club helping to coach girls football.

Calvin de Villiers applied for an award for £300 to support his sport of athletics. Amongst his achievements were Gold and Silver medals in disability athletics in regional and national competitions.

Aaron Froget applied for an award for his involvement in Top Hat Stage School. Amongst his achievements was a performance at the Hertford Theatre in July. The award would be used to support the half scholarship that he had been awarded.

Members noted that the award would not fully support the shortfall in Aaron's scholarship and they asked officers to highlight this to his school who had provided his reference in the hope that other sources of funding might be found to help.

Sophie Julian applied for an award of £300 to support her in her sport of athletics. Amongst her achievements was qualifying for the National Indoor Games in Sheffield in 2016.

Lavigne Leung applied for an award of £300 to support her in her sport of Badminton. Her achievements include Bronze, Silver and Gold positions in competitions in 2015-2016. She is due to play an international tournament in Belgium this month.

Arabella Moen applied for an award of £300 to support her in her sport of Tennis. Amongst her achievements were winning two national tournaments and an invitation to GR1 Winter National Finals.

Callum Nicholson applied for an award of £300 to support his sport of athletics. Amongst his achievements were national rankings in 1500m and cross country.

Sophie Segum applied for an award of £300 to support her sport of athletics. Amongst her achievements were a 1st place in the Hertfordshire County Championship.

RESOLVED that Queen's Diamond Jubilee Awards of £300 be awarded to the above-named applicants.

There were four applications for an Exemplar Award, all of which were for the Sports category.

The applicants were:

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Ellie-Mae Bandy	Athletics
Robin Bedford	Basketball
Jonathan St Hilaire	Basketball
Hannah Williams	Athletics

Ellie-Mae Bandy's achievements included selection for English Schools Competiton where she reached the final, ranking 2nd for 400m in the East of England, winning Sprints Performance Award for her club, winning Sportsman of the Year Award twice. Ellie-Mae has also been nominated for Welwyn Hatfield Volunteer of the Year Award.

Robin Bedford's achievements include captaining the County and East Regional teams, School Premier U16 National Champion and England U16 Squad.

Jonathan St Hilaire's achievements include competing in the National Schools Championship, playing for Herts County U17 and East Regional U17. Playing in the U16s National League and taking part in England Pathway at U15, U16 and U17.

Hannah Williams' achievements include being a finalist at the World Youth competition in Columbia, being a finalist in the Commonwealth Youth competition in Samoa, being ranked 4th in the UK 400m U18 all time list and 3rd in the UKSG 200m and 2nd at English Schools 200m.

Members carefully considered each of the four applications which they agreed met the criteria for an Exemplar award.

All four of the applicants had achieved highly in their sport and it was a difficult decision to make, but Members felt that Hannah Williams' record was particularly impressive and they AGREED that she would receive an Exemplar Award of £500.

The website for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Awards states the following:

A panel of members will consider the applications. Please note applicants for an Exemplar Award should also apply for an Improver Award if appropriate, the Grants Board will not automatically place unsuccessful Exemplar applicants into the Improver Category.

On this occasion, Members of the Grants Board felt that the applications from Ellie-Mae Bandy, Robin Bedford and Jonathan St Hilaire showed that their achievements were of a high standard and they felt that it would be unreasonable not to place them into the Improver Category, although not obliged to do so.

It was therefore AGREED that Ellie-Mae Bandy, Robin Bedford and Jonathan Hilaire should receive an Improver Award of £300 each.

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RESOLVED:

1. That there would be no Starter Awards given
 2. That Improver Awards of £300 each would be paid to the following:
 - a. Afolabi Opeoluwa
 - b. Charlotte Cox
 - c. Ellen Day
 - d. Calvin de Villiers
 - e. Aaron Froget
 - f. Sophie Julian
 - g. Lavigne Leung
 - h. Arabella Moen
 - i. Callum Nicholson
 - j. Sophie Segun
 - k. Ellie-Mae Bandy
 - l. Robin Bedford
 - m. Jonathan St Hilaire
 3. That an Exemplar Award of £500 would be paid to Hannah Williams
8. SUCH OTHER BUSINESS AS, IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIRMAN, IS OF SUFFICIENT URGENCY TO WARRANT IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION:

Members received an update from the Head of Resources which informed them that representations had been made by organisations that had applied for Annual Grants and had received a reduction in the grant awarded.

In respect of Age UK, meetings had been held with the County Council who had stepped in to cover some of the shortfall as Adult Social Care is one of their responsibilities.

Requests had been made by Citizens Advice Bureau and Community and Voluntary Service for long term agreements which officers did not think it unreasonable to consider.

Members commented that for some time the organisations that applied for Annual Grants had been the same ones each year, to the point where it was almost expected that their applications would be agreed "as of right". However, they recognised that some of the recipients of bigger amounts of money might feel the effects of withdrawal of funds more acutely than others and they could see the benefit of having some sort of agreement which would provide a grant for a two or three year period, as long as the funding was made available from budget.

There would hopefully still be funds available for other annual grant applications that were received.

Members agreed that a working group should be formed to consider this more fully and to make recommendations on which organisations whose work

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complemented that of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council, should be offered a longer term agreement and which should submit an annual application in the usual way.

RESOLVED to form a working group early in the next municipal year to consider this topic.

9. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC
10. COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATIONS - MARCH 2016
11. QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE AWARDS 2016

Meeting ended at 8.25pm

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