

Grants Board
5 November 2018

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the GRANTS Board held on Monday 5 November 2018 at 6.30pm in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, The Campus, Welwyn Garden City, Herts, AL8 6AE

PRESENT: Councillors S.Markiewicz (Chairman)

H.Bower, A.Chesterman (substituting for J.Fitzpatrick),
L.Chesterman, S.Elam, S.Glick, R.Lass

OFFICIALS Head of Community and Housing Strategy (S.Chambers)

PRESENT: Community Partnerships Support Officer (L.Jackson)
Governance Services Officer (H.Johnson)

6. SUBSTITUTION OF MEMBERS

The following substitution of Panel Members had been made in accordance with Council Procedure Rules 19-22:-

Councillor A.Chesterman for Councillor J.Fitzpatrick.

7. APOLOGY

An apology for absence was received from Councillor J.Fitzpatrick.

8. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 31 July 2018 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

9. COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATIONS (ANNUAL GRANTS)

The report of the Corporate Director (Housing and Communities) set out six applications from voluntary groups (outlined in Appendix A).

The total amount available for the Grants Board to allocate for the financial year 2019/20 was £174,270. However, it was agreed in 2017/18 as part of the budget setting that for a three year period, the Citizens Advice Bureau would have a ring fenced budget of £95,000.

Therefore the overall budget associated to Annual Grants for the financial year 2019/20 would be £79,270, subject to agreement from the Council's Cabinet during the budget setting process.

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The Grants Board considered the Annual Community Grant applications and allocated the funding in accordance with the Council's Corporate Priorities which are "Our Community, Our Environment, Our Housing, Our Economy and Engage with our communities and provide value for money".

The Board noted that Resolve had withdrawn their application as they were receiving funding from the Council via a separate process.

Welwyn Hatfield Community and Voluntary Service (CVS)

An application had been received for the amount of £9,500 towards the operation of the Community Car Scheme for elderly and/or unwell citizens as well as supporting individuals to find voluntary opportunities and support community sector organisations with advice.

Members commented that it was an invaluable scheme as the service between the QEII Hospital in Welwyn Garden City and Lister in Stevenage was no longer provided.

AGREED a grant of £9,500.

Hatfield and District Age Concern (Friendship House)

An application had been received for the amount of £15,000 towards the Centre's operating, maintenance and overhead costs, especially staff salaries, food provisions and utility costs.

Members commented that it was a worthy scheme which helped the elderly in the community and particularly alleviated loneliness.

AGREED a grant of £15,000.

The Recover Team Ltd

An application had been received for the amount of £13,892 towards setting up recover "roadshows" at partner organisations and training sessions which would include a series of half-day workshops for a month with participants receiving one to one support.

Members of the Board expressed concern that the furniture sold on the trading side of the charity was often highly priced: If the furniture was more affordable it would benefit sales as well as providing a service to a wider section of the community.

Members agreed with the principle aims of the project in helping those to recover from addiction and the "upcycling" of furniture reduced waste to landfill.

AGREED a grant of £13,892.

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University of Hertfordshire

An application had been received for the amount of £15,000 towards the de Havilland Community Garden for landscaping, fencing, raised beds, seating as well as outdoor furniture.

Members commented that as an educational establishment other funding streams were available. On balance other applications had greater merits and provided more value to a greater number of residents. With limited funds available to support community projects, the Board felt unable to support the application.

REFUSED the application.

Welwyn Hatfield Women's Refuge & Support Services

An application had been received for the amount of £33,960 towards staff costs, premises hire, clinical training and supervision and office costs.

Members commented that it was a crucial project as the number of refuge beds across the country had been reduced. It would also aid in preventing homelessness. It was noted that the outreach service would predominately help those that resided in the borough and due to the nature of refuge accommodation, the service helped residents outside of the borough if requested.

Officers confirmed that the Council had a responsibility to those who asked for help and were at risk, under homeless legislation. However the funding of additional support was the role of social care and the responsibility of Hertfordshire County Council. It was noted that male victims of domestic violence would be supported by the Council in terms of housing provision only.

AGREED a grant of £33,960.

RESOLVED:

That the Annual Community Grants be paid as follows:

Organisation	Amount Sought	Amount Granted
CAB		£95,000.00
CVS	£9,500.00	£9,500.00
Friendship House	£15,000.00	£15,000.00
Recover	£13,892.00	£13,892.00
University of Hertfordshire	£15,000.00	£0.00
Welwyn Hatfield	£33,960.00	£33,960.00

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Women's Refuge		
Annual Grant Budget 2019/20		£174,270.00
Remaining budget		£6,918.00

The Head of Community and Housing Strategy advised the Board that the remaining money of £6918.00 could be:

- Rolled forward to the 2019/20 Annual Grant (with approval).
- Added to the Small Community Grant Fund.
- Used for a second round of Annual Community Grants in January 2019.

It was agreed that Members would decide how best to deal with the remaining balance and liaise with the Chairman before the next meeting.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Scoring Matrix

A discussion about the Scoring Matrix, used for the first time by the Board to aid in the decision making process with Annual Grants, then followed.

The Scoring Matrix had worked well in improving the quality of the applications however the matrix was weighted towards process and not enough weight had been given to the quality of outcomes being delivered. As such the Board asked Officers to revisit the Scoring Matrix, with a view to providing more weight to the merit and impact of projects on the community.

Grant Application Forms

The Board requested Officers to update the application forms so that the quality of the projects being delivered to the Community could be understood more keenly by Members. Some Members suggested that the following questions could be added to the application forms to help the Board with the decision making process:

- "Please give two reasons as to why the Council ought to spend taxpayer's money on the project"
- "How does your project fill a gap in service provision in the Community?"

Meeting ended 7.45pm
HJ