



Minutes of the meeting of the **Grants and Concessions Panel** held in Committee Room 2, East Pallant House on Wednesday 12 July 2017 at 9.30 am

Members Present: Mrs E Lintill (Chairman), Mrs C Apel, Mrs P Dignum, Mr J F Elliott, Mr J W Elliott, Mrs P Plant and Mrs P Tull

Members not present: Mrs N Graves

In attendance by invitation:

Officers present: Mr M Bradshaw (Assistant Estates Surveyor), Mr D Cooper (Group Accountant), Mr T Day (Environmental Coordinator), Miss L Higenbottam (Democratic Services), Mr D Hyland (Community and Partnerships Support Manager), Mr P Jobson (Taxation Manager), Mrs V McKay (Valuation and Estates Manager), Mrs K Pellett (Economic Development Officer) and Miss C Williams (Community Liaison Officer)

The public are likely to be excluded from any discussion at which this report is considered on the grounds that it is likely that there would be a disclosure to the public of “exempt information” of the description specified in Paragraph 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

1 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Mrs Graves.

2 **Approval of the Minutes**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Grants and Concessions Panel meeting held on Thursday 16 March 2017 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

3 **Matters Arising from the Minutes**

There were no matters arising.

4 Declarations of Interest

In relation to agenda item seven although Mrs Plant did not declare an interest she explained that she had previously held a post at a Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB).

Mr JW Elliott declared a prejudicial interest in relation to agenda item 10a due to a personal association with the supplier and withdrew from the room during the discussion.

5 Outline of the Grants and Concessions Panel

Mr Hyland explained that the Grants and Concessions Policy (last updated in 2015) details the terms of the reference for the Panel and the types of funding available including concessionary rent relief, discretionary rate relief, and discretionary grants. The annual budget for discretionary grant applications inclusive of fast track applications was confirmed as £175,000.

Mr Hyland outlined the fast track process for discretionary grant applications of less than £1,000. On average each fast track decision is made within four weeks following email discussion between the Fast Track Panel (Mrs Lintill, Mrs Graves and Mrs Tull). As Cabinet Member for Community Services Mrs Lintill has delegated powers to make the final decision which is reported at the next available Panel meeting and recorded in the minutes.

Mr Hyland also explained the current three priority areas for funding which are reviewed annually:

- Economy – helping viable start-up businesses and existing independent businesses to implement projects that create jobs, help business to grow and benefit the local economy (maximum £2,500)
- Improving Living Places and Spaces - improvements to publicly owned space or built assets that enhance the wellbeing of local residents or the habitats of the districts wildlife
- Targeted Projects - where the primary benefit is to those in greatest need – with priority given to projects benefiting Think Family Neighbourhoods in Chichester East, Chichester South, Tangmere and Selsey North

Mr Hyland confirmed that when an organisation shows initial interest in applying for a discretionary grant they are encouraged to speak to a Funding Advisor who will discuss whether it is the most appropriate funding route and how to apply. Funding Advisors score the applications and provide a written assessment to the Panel for consideration at the next available meeting. The Panel will discuss whether the application delivers on the priority areas before the Cabinet Member for Community Services makes the final decision on whether each application should be approved.

6 Concessionary Rent Application - Urgent Decision

Arun and Chichester CAB

Mrs McKay explained that the Arun and Chichester CAB lease for Theatre Lane, Chichester expired on 31 March 2017 and as a result of a delay to CAB moving into East Pallant House (EPH) an urgent three month extension to the concessionary rent had been agreed by Mrs Lintill.

RESOLVED BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES:

That the urgent concessionary rent grant awarded to the Chichester and Arun CAB in March 2017 be noted.

7 Concessionary Rent Application

Although Mrs Plant did not declare an interest she explained that she had previously held a post at a CAB.

Arun and Chichester CAB

Mr Bradshaw explained that the Arun and Chichester CAB would be moving into EPH on 31 July 2017. He outlined the details of the rent agreement which would be subject to review in July 2019. Mrs McKay confirmed that once the site at Theatre Lane, Chichester had been vacated another occupant would be sought.

The Panel discussed the benefit of CAB being able to refer customers to council services in the same building.

Mrs Lintill informed members that the CAB opening ceremony would take place at 12pm on 31 July 2017.

RESOLVED BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES IN CONSULTATION WITH THE GRANTS AND CONCESSIONS PANEL:

That the Arun and Chichester Citizen's Advice Bureau request for concessionary rent relief as detailed in section six of the report be approved.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

That the Arun and Chichester Citizen's Advice Bureau request for concessionary rent relief as detailed in section six of the report be refused.

8 Small Business Rent Support Scheme

Mr Bradshaw explained that three small business rent support scheme grants had been awarded to occupants at St James Industrial Estate since the last meeting. He confirmed they were standard agreements with some variation in price due to the different unit sizes.

**RESOLVED BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES IN
CONSULTATION WITH THE GRANTS AND CONCESSIONS PANEL:**

That the small business rent support scheme grants awarded to RJS Waste Management UK Limited, Quay Contracts Ltd and Mr Rodney Dixon be noted.

Mr Bradshaw and Mrs McKay left the meeting.

9 Discretionary Rate Relief - Retrospective Reporting

Mr Jobson explained that the business rates set in autumn 2016 had changed in April 2017 (excluding the thresholds for rural rate relief which remained the same). As a result on 1 April 2017 some rateable values rose above the threshold and an emergency request was made to replace the discount for a 12 month period.

Mr Jobson confirmed that the software required to calculate the rate relief had been delayed due to the Purdah period prior to the recent General Election. He provided an estimate on the number of customers likely to receive a rate reduction and explained that a small number of customers had received their reduction where it had been possible to work out manually.

Mr Jobson outlined government plans to fund a discretionary relief scheme over the next four years and detailed the funds the district would be likely to receive. He explained that information had been issued prior to the General Election which requires councils to create a new scheme. Mr Jobson confirmed that he aimed to seek Cabinet approval for a new scheme in September.

In response to Mrs Tull's question Mr Jobson clarified that rateable valuations are based on the profits of a business.

**RESOLVED BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES IN
CONSULTATION WITH THE GRANTS AND CONCESSIONS PANEL:**

That the retrospective discretionary rate relief awards made to Ainger Morgan Ltd, Jack and Jack Ltd, Muscari Inns Ltd and Mr M Long be noted.

10 Request for New Homes Bonus Application Variation - Overview Report

Members discussed the two requests for New Homes Bonus variation separately.

(a) Request for New Homes Bonus Variation 1

Mr JW Elliott declared a prejudicial interest in relation to this item due to a personal association with the supplier and withdrew from the room during the discussion.

Fishbourne Parish Council, New Homes Bonus

Mr Hyland explained that a request had been made from Fishbourne Parish Council to reallocate underspend from their 2014 New Homes Bonus grant to install three speed traffic monitoring cameras in any one of five locations.

RESOLVED BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES IN CONSULTATION WITH THE GRANTS AND CONCESSIONS PANEL:

That the request to vary the use of the funding awarded to Fishbourne Parish Council from the New Homes Bonus (Parish Allocations) 2014 be approved.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

That the request to vary the use of the funding awarded to Fishbourne Parish Council from the New Homes Bonus (Parish Allocations) 2014 be refused.

(b) Request for New Homes Bonus Variation 2

Mr JW Elliott returned.

Sidlesham Parish Council, New Homes Bonus

Mr Hyland explained that a request had been made from Sidlesham Parish Council to reallocate £650 of the underspend from their 2014 New Homes Bonus grant to carry out architectural work following a survey on the existing pavilion located at the memorial playing field.

RESOLVED BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES IN CONSULTATION WITH THE GRANTS AND CONCESSIONS PANEL:

That the request to vary £650 of the funding awarded to Sidlesham Parish Council from the New Homes Bonus (Parish Allocations) 2014 be approved.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

That the request to vary £650 of the funding awarded to Sidlesham Parish Council from the New Homes Bonus (Parish Allocations) 2014 be refused.

11 Request for Grant Application Variation

Brandy Hole Copse Green Gym

Mr Day outlined a request made from Brandy Hole Copse Green Gym to extend the grant award deadline from November 2017 to March 2018 for the grant awarded in October 2016. He explained that following a delay to match funding it would be impractical to carry out the work required during the current season.

RESOLVED BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES IN CONSULTATION WITH THE PANEL:

That the request to extend the grant award deadline for the Brandy Hole Copse Green Gym from November 2017 to March 2018 be approved.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

That the request to extend the grant award deadline for the Brandy Hole Copse Green Gym from November 2017 to March 2018 be refused.

12 Grant Update

Miss Williams reminded the Panel that in the financial year 2015/16 Funtington Parish Council Community Centre had been awarded £25,000 for the creation of a new community hall. She explained that the applicant had recently made contact to confirm that it had not been possible to progress this ambitious project and therefore the funding allocation will not be called on. The Panel were made aware that a new application may be received at some time in the future to support improvement of the existing building in East Ashling.

RESOLVED BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES IN CONSULTATION WITH THE GRANTS AND CONCESSIONS PANEL:

That the £25,000 grant award allocated to Funtington Parish Council in 2015/16 be ring fenced for future allocation by the Grants and Concessions Panel.

13 Draft Grants and Concessions Annual Report 2016/17

Mr Hyland explained that the Panel had been asked to consider the draft annual report and provide feedback prior to further discussion at the October meeting. He confirmed that any recommendations to change the priorities would require Cabinet agreement in November.

Miss Williams explained that it had been possible to analyse changes to the number of economic bids following the 2015 review as the economic priority heading had remained the same, however other priority areas could not be analysed in the same way due to the introduction of new priorities. To support discussion about the impact of the changes made following the review, a summary was provided (for the Panels benefit and not for publication with the report) of key figures analysed proportionate to the 30% reduction in the total funding available.

Following a suggestion from the Panel to research the types of organisations approaching council local committees for grant funding Miss Williams agreed to report back to the October meeting.

The Panel discussed ways to advertise discretionary grants to relevant organisations. It was agreed that an article in Initiatives Magazine outlining how a grant had been successfully used would reach a district wide audience. The Panel also agreed it would be worth considering ways to reach community groups directly.

The Panel agreed to send any comments on the draft report to Mrs Lintill, Miss Williams or Mr Hyland. Mrs Plant requested a pie chart detailing the larger discretionary grants.

In response to Mrs Lintill's suggestion of a Grants and Concessions Tour Mr Hyland agreed that officers will look at options to enable the Panel to see what is achieved by organisations receiving funding.

Mrs Lintill noted the variety of groups and organisations helped by different types of grant funding.

The Panel thanked officers for their hard work.

14 **Grant Applications Financial Summary**

Mr Cooper drew attention to the value of the applications to be considered at the meeting. He explained that since the last meeting fast track applications totalling £3,850 had been allocated from 2016/17 budget and fast track applications totalling £2,478 had been allocated from the 2017/18 budget. A sum of £172,522 remained for this financial year.

The Panel noted all the fast track delegated grant applications decided since the last meeting:

RESOLVED BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES IN CONSULTATION WITH THE GRANTS AND CONCESSIONS FAST TRACK PANEL:

Applicant: Phoenix Snak Shak Ltd

Priority: Targeted Projects

Purpose: Payment towards sending the Youth Worker to a conference addressing mental health problems in young people

Sum Requested: £250

Sum Approved: £250

Reasons: It is important that those working with young people with mental health problems have appropriate opportunities to develop their understanding

Grant Conditions: N/A

**RESOLVED BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES IN
CONSULTATION WITH THE GRANTS AND CONCESSIONS FAST TRACK PANEL:**

Applicant: The Chilgrove Gin Company

Priority: Economy

Purpose: Website rebuild

Sum Requested: £1,000

Sum Approved: £1,000

Reasons: Supporting business growth which is likely to lead to the creation of new jobs

Grant Conditions: N/A

**RESOLVED BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES IN
CONSULTATION WITH THE GRANTS AND CONCESSIONS FAST TRACK PANEL:**

Applicant: Ovation Music

Priority: Targeted Projects

Purpose: Music workshops for vulnerable young people

Sum Requested: £600

Sum Approved: £600

Reasons: The workshops will benefit vulnerable young people including those who live in Think Family Neighbourhoods

Grant Conditions: N/A

**RESOLVED BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES IN
CONSULTATION WITH THE GRANTS AND CONCESSIONS FAST TRACK PANEL:**

Applicant: Petworth Community Garden CIC

Priority: Targeted Projects

Purpose: Contribution towards the purchase of a gazebo for market stalls to enable regular attendance at fetes, markets and community events to support the organisations self-generated income

Sum Requested: £1,000

Sum Approved: £1,000

Reasons: To ensure future sustainability of an organisation that supports vulnerable people in the local community

Grant Conditions: N/A

**RESOLVED BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES IN
CONSULTATION WITH THE GRANTS AND CONCESSIONS FAST TRACK PANEL:**

Applicant: The Apuldram Centre

Priority: Economy

Purpose: Website redevelopment and relaunch

Sum Requested: £1,000

Sum Approved: £1,000

Reasons: To improve the current website which is very outdated and not on an accessible format or social media friendly and ultimately supporting business growth

Grant Conditions: N/A

**RESOLVED BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES IN
CONSULTATION WITH THE GRANTS AND CONCESSIONS FAST TRACK PANEL:**

Applicant: Harrison Renwick Ltd

Priority: Economy

Purpose: New website with interactive elements

Sum Requested: £1,000

Sum Approved: £1,000

Reasons: Supporting modernisation to enable business growth

Grant Conditions: N/A

**RESOLVED BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES IN
CONSULTATION WITH THE GRANTS AND CONCESSIONS FAST TRACK PANEL:**

Applicant: MADhurst (Midhurst Music, Art and Drama Community Group)

Priority: Improving Living Places and Spaces

Purpose: Purchase of equipment to support the programme for this year

Sum Requested: £547

Sum Approved: £547

Reasons: A small one off contribution towards a popular community event

Grant Conditions: N/A

**RESOLVED BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES IN
CONSULTATION WITH THE GRANTS AND CONCESSIONS FAST TRACK PANEL:**

Applicant: Chichester BID Ltd

Priority: Economy

Purpose: Office systems upgrade as part of an office refurbishment

Sum Requested: £931

Sum Approved: £931

Reasons: Helping a company upgrade its office IT and equipment to be able to support city businesses and focus on increasing footfall

Grant Conditions: N/A

15 Grant Application - Economy

Mrs Pellett introduced the application.

**RESOLVED BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES IN
CONSULTATION WITH THE GRANTS AND CONCESSIONS PANEL:**

Applicant: Trefoil Farm Ltd, Lodsworth

Declarations of Interest: N/A

Priority: Economy

Purpose: Contribution towards costs to expand a start-up market garden business which will provide training and education opportunities for the community

Sum Requested: £2,482.16

Sum Approved: £2,483 (figure rounded up)

Reasons: Helping growth of a start-up business which will provide opportunities for community involvement

Grant Conditions: Subject to confirmation that funding is used for the material costs outlined in the grant application summary

Alternative options considered and rejected: The Panel consider whether or not to support every application so will always consider granting an application to the full amount requested or refusing an application

16 **Grant Application - Improving Living Places and Spaces**

Mr Day introduced the application.

RESOLVED BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES IN CONSULTATION WITH THE GRANTS AND CONCESSIONS PANEL:

Applicant: Botany Bay Conservancy Community Interest Group, Lavington Park

Declarations of Interest: N/A

Priority: Improving Living Places and Spaces

Purpose: Restoration costs including the creation of a shelter and replacement of a footbridge to create an outdoor learning classroom at Botany Bay, Lavington Park

Sum Requested: £5,000

Sum Approved: £5,000

Reasons: The improvements will provide additional learning opportunities, greater environmental awareness and encourage participants to keep active through outdoor learning

Grant Conditions: Subject to wider promotion (including primary and secondary schools) and a report after one year detailing which schools and community groups have used the site and how they benefited from the experience

Alternative options considered and rejected: The Panel consider whether or not to support every application so will always consider granting an application to the full amount requested or refusing an application

17 **Next Meeting**

The Panel noted the next two meeting dates:

- Grants and Concessions Panel for New Homes Bonus Applications – Wednesday 27 September at 9.30am
- Grants and Concessions Panel – Wednesday 18 October at 9.30am

The meeting ended at 11.38 am

CHAIRMAN

Date: