



Minutes of the meeting of the **Grants and Concessions Panel** held in Virtually on Wednesday 19 January 2022 at 9.30 am

Members Present: Mr R Briscoe (Chairman), Mrs C Apel, Mr J Elliott, Mrs N Graves, Mrs S Lishman and Mr G McAra

Members not present: Mr G Evans and Mr D Rodgers

In attendance by invitation:

Officers present: Mrs E Bishop (Community Information Officer), Mr D Cooper (Group Accountant), Mr T Day (Environmental Coordinator), Mr D Hyland (Community and Partnerships Support Manager), Mr D Irvine (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.

70 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Evans and Mr Rodgers.

71 **Approval of the Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2021 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

72 **Matters Arising from the Minutes**

Minute 53 – New Homes Bonus (Parish Allocations) Policy Scheme Application from Chichester City Council: Cabinet approved the Panel’s recommendation to revised agreement offered to Chichester City Council at its meeting on 2 November 2021 and the agreement has been entered into.

Minute 54 – Annual Report of the Chichester District Council Grants and Concessions Panel for the Financial Year 2020/21: Mr Hyland confirmed that the amendments agreed at the previous meeting had been made. The Panel agreed

that due to the document's length it did not need to come back to this Panel and could be published.

Minute 55 – New Homes Bonus (Parish Allocations) Policy: This report had not yet been considered by cabinet as there was a potential overlap with the recommendations contained in the Future Services Framework.

Annual Grants Tour:

It was agreed that due to the current Covid 19 pandemic restrictions in place the grants tour would be postponed for the time being and a new date sought when appropriate.

73 Declarations of Interest

There were no declaration of interests.

74 Grant Applications Financial Summary

The Panel considered the report. Mr Cooper drew attention to the value of applications to be considered at the meeting and reminded the Panel that the budget allocation was a maximum of £175,000 for the financial year 2021/22 with £106,528 available.

Mr Cooper drew the Panel's attention to the grant applications which were nearing their cut-off point. Following a discussion the Panel members agreed;

- That a 12 month extension from 19 January 2022 be granted to Funtington and District Village Hall for their unspent sum of £10,000.
- That a 6 month extension be granted to Age UK West Sussex, Brighton and Hove for their unspent sum of £10,000.
- That a 12 month extension be granted to West Sussex Mind for their unspent sum of £8,000.

75 Grant Application - Economy Inward Investment

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

Applicant: Banca Restaurants Limited

Declarations of Interest: None

Purpose: Funding towards conversion of an old disused Barclays bank into a quality Italian restaurant/delicatessen for the Selsey and Chichester area

Sum Requested: £15,000

Sum Approved: £15,000

Reasons: The project will boost the local economy by creating jobs for local people and using local produce.

Grant Conditions: Subject to a Funding Agreement

Alternative options considered and rejected: The Panel considers whether or not to support every application so will always consider not granting an application.

76 **Grant Application - Targeted Projects 1**

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

Applicant: Chichester Pride

Declarations of Interest: None

Purpose: Funding towards the first Pride celebration – Chichester Pride 2022

Sum Requested: £7,500

Sum Approved: £7,500

Reasons: The project will support the local LGBTQ+ community, improve visibility and create a safe inclusive, supportive and positive event locally

Grant Conditions: Subject to a Funding Agreement

Alternative options considered and rejected: The Panel considers whether or not to support every application so will always consider not granting an application.

77 **Grant Application - Targeted Projects 2**

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

Applicant: Dementia Support

Declarations of Interest: None

Purpose: Funding towards the Dementia Support Wayfinders Service

Sum Requested: £7,500

Sum Approved: £7,500

Reasons: One-off contribution towards the expansion of the Wayfinders service responding to an increase in demand related to the pandemic

Grant Conditions: Subject to a Funding Agreement

Alternative options considered and rejected: The Panel considers whether or not to support every application so will always consider not granting an application.

78 **Grant Application - Targeted Projects 3**

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

Applicant: Lifecentre

Declarations of Interest: None

Purpose: Funding towards Transitions counselling sessions for young people from the Chichester District

Sum Requested: £5,000

Sum Approved: £5,000

Reasons: To provide support and assistance to vulnerable individuals

Grant Conditions: Subject to a Funding Agreement

Alternative options considered and rejected: The Panel considers whether or not to support every application so will always consider not granting an application.

79 **Grant Application - Targeted Projects 4**

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

Applicant: Selsey Community Forum

Declarations of Interest: None

Purpose: Funding towards addressing loneliness in older age groups in Selsey

Sum Requested: £5,000

Sum Approved: £5,000

Reasons: To contribute towards a service that will provide help and support for older lonely people

Grant Conditions: Subject to a Funding Agreement

Alternative options considered and rejected: The Panel considers whether or not to support every application so will always consider not granting an application.

80 **Changes to Priorities and Principles of Grant Funding**

The Panel considered the draft Cabinet report.

Mr Hyland referred to the discussion that had taken place at the last meeting concerning the priorities and principles of grant funding, which was reviewed each year and any proposed changes recommended to Cabinet on 1 March 2022 for approval.

The priorities broadly continued to operate well and no changes were proposed. An additional principle to the penultimate paragraph is proposed following the declaration of a Climate Emergency in July 2019 as principle 6 "How have you designed the project to minimise its climate impact?".

The Vision groups in the District were recipients of grants from a separate funding pot that is administered outside of the Grants and Concessions Panel. This funding is not regularly accessed by the Groups and for consistency would be more transparent for decision making and access to financial support coming from one channel. The Future Services Framework has suggested that these Groups should in future apply for funding from the Discretionary Grants Pot. If agreed this may result in more applications being received by the Panel, from the next financial year. In anticipation of this officers have considered if any changes should be made to the priorities and principles to accommodate these groups. They have concluded that they are all eligible Groups and that based on previous bids, and future applications would come in under Priority 2 - Improving Places and Spaces. As a result there is no need for additional changes to the priorities or principles.

Mr Hyland confirmed that no additional funding would be made available to the Discretionary Grants Pot if the changes were agreed.

A member raised concern that a decision not to provide additional funding would adversely affect the smaller community groups and organisations success as there would be less funding available.

The Chairman reported that whilst £50,000 had been allocated across all the Groups a large amount had not been applied for this financial year. This was also the case in previous years.

Mr Hyland said that although the funding available would not be increased it could be viewed it was good for the organisations to have some competition, as broadly in previous years there has been enough funding available for all the applications before the Panel. He agreed with the importance of supporting the smaller groups and organisations however the Council did not advertise that this was the preference. Historically smaller groups have been able to make strong bids, but the Panel should be open to considering other organisations that met the priorities.

Whilst members were in support of the inclusion of additional Principle 6, they wondered if applicants would have difficulties providing evidence that they have taken steps to minimise climate impact. The Chairman said that the funding advisers had assured him that they will take in to account the circumstances of each application.

Mr Hyland advised there would occasionally be difficult conversations to be had with some applicants about their environmental impacts and how well they were doing to address them. Officers had met to develop guidance to underpin the verbal advice given and make it available on the Council's website. The Panel agreed that officers could finalise the guidance and it confirmed did not need to be brought to the Panel for approval.

The Panel agreed to delegate to officers the necessary amendments to applications forms and guidance to applicants.

Mr Hyland advised that at the next Panel meeting members would be given the opportunity receive training and to rehearse Principle 6 before taking it into consideration from the start of the next final year.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET

That Cabinet approve the Council's Priorities and Principles of Grant Funding shown in appendix 1, with effect from 1 April 2022

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

That the Panel delegates to officers the necessary amendments to applications forms and guidance to applicants.

Mr Hyland referred to email correspondence he had been having with the Panel concerning proposals to make a fund of up to £10,000 available to parish councils in celebration of HM The Queen's Platinum Jubilee this year. The scheme proposed would lean towards more lasting commemorations, such as street furniture or planting schemes rather than funding for one off costs, such as a hog roast or musical band.

The Panel supported the provision of a fund of up to £10,000, with £8,000 to be funded from the NHB scheme underspend and an allocation of £2,000 from the Discretionary Grants pot. The Panel agreed to delegate the proposed processes for receiving and determining applications to officers.

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

1. That the Panel approves the provision of small grants to Parish Councils to support community celebrations of HM The Queen's Platinum Jubilee;
2. That funding to a maximum of £10,000 be allocated from the remaining funds in the New Homes Bonus budget for 2021/2022 and the Discretionary Grants pot 2021/2022. Grants should be to a maximum of £250; and
3. That the proposed scheme including officer delegations for processes for receiving and determining applications be approved.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

That the Panel refuse to approve the provision of a small grant for Parish Councils to support community celebrations of HM The Queens Platinum Jubilee.

82 Recurring Funding Agreements with the Voluntary Sector

Miss Williams presented the report to the Panel.

The report was finalised after the agenda had been published as she had postponed her review meetings with some of the organisations because they were dealing with the implications of Covid 19 pandemic Plan B measures.

Miss Williams explained that separate to the grants pot, the Panel is asked to monitor the performance of four key voluntary sector organisations. These Agreements are funded from the base budget and delegated to the Director of Housing and Community Services.

Three of the four organisations were reaching the end of their contract period in March. Due to the Panel having previously seen reports on Arun and Chichester Citizens Advice and Voluntary Action and Chichester, as the grants values required Full Council approval a light touch summary had been included in the report this time. The report concerning the local Shopmobility service provided more detail on the service and proposals for future funding.

The Panel discussed officer reports on each of the four organisations and made the following recommendations:

Arun and Chichester Citizens Advice (ACCA):

RECOMMENDED TO THE DIRECTOR OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES:

1. That the performance of ACCA under their joint contract during 2021/22 be noted.
2. That an extension of the current funding be granted for three months to allow appropriate time for the procurement process.

Voluntary Action Arun and Chichester (VAAC):

The Panel were keen to ensure that the organisation had strong geographic coverage across the District, this should be reflected within the new funding agreement.

RECOMMENDED TO THE DIRECTOR OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES:

That the performance of VAAC in discharging their Funding Agreement targets for 2021/22 be noted.

Stonepillow (St Richard of Chichester Christian Care Association Ltd):

RECOMMENDED TO THE DIRECTOR OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES:

That the performance of Stonepillow in discharging their Funding Agreement targets for 2021/22 be noted.

Shopmobility (Chichester) – a service provided by Community First Wessex (CF):

In discussions about geographic reach of the service, Miss Williams confirmed that Shopmobility had investigated providing the service in other parts of the District. However, previously a review of Midhurst identified restricted pavements and shop access presented challenges to the scooter and wheelchair users, this can be revisited. Shopmobility had also held discussions with the Selsey about a satellite service but it was not felt to be appropriate at that time. The Panel were keen for officers to encourage Shopmobility to revisit the possible options for maximising take-up of their service as retail and tourism sectors look at pandemic recovery opportunities.

RECOMMENDED TO THE DIRECTOR OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES:

1. That the performance of CF in discharging their Funding Agreement targets for 2021/22 be noted.
2. That an extension of the current funding contract be granted for twelve months under the same conditions.

83 **Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Panel will take place on 30 March 2022 at 9.30am on Zoom.

The meeting ended at 11.20 am

CHAIRMAN

Date: