

Crawley Borough Council

Minutes of Grants Appeals Panel

31 March 2009 commencing at 6 00pm

Present:

Councillor L A M Burke (Chair)
Councillors B M Brockwell, A G Brown, A L I Burke, J I Denman; and
D J Shreeves

Councillor A J E Quirk (Chair of the Grants Working Group, in an advisory and non-voting capacity)

Councillor G K Seekings was not able to attend the meeting.

Officers:-

Craig Downs Voluntary Sector Support Officer, Nigel Sheehan Head of Community Services; and Glyn Hydes Democratic Services Officer

An apology for absence had been received from Lindsay Adams, Community Services Manager

It was noted that Councillor A J E Quirk, the Chair of the Grants Working Group, had been invited to attend the meeting in an advisory and non voting capacity. That arrangement had been agreed when this Panel had been established in order to comply with the Council's constitution, which required that in no case would an appeal be determined by anyone involved in making the original decision, whilst providing for some input from the Grants Working Group.

1. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 27 March 2008 were approved as a correct record.

2. Members' Disclosures of Interest

None

3. Exclusion of the Public

RESOLVED

That in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act by virtue of the paragraph specified against the item.

4. APPLICATION FOR GRANT AID – APPEAL FROM AGE CONCERN, WEST SUSSEX (Exempt – paragraph 3 – financial and business affairs)

The Panel noted the 'Community Grants 2009/2010 (to 2010/2011) Funding Policy and Criteria' and Notes on the Grant Aid Appeals Procedure' as issued to the organisations with a provisional award (Enclosure B), details of the appeal from Age Concern, West Sussex (Enclosure C – circulated separately to the agenda), the draft minutes of the meeting of the Grants Working Group held on 2 March (Enclosure D); and the exempt report considered at the meeting of the Cabinet held on 25 March 2009 entitled 'Report of Grants Working Group – Voluntary Sector Support' (Enclosure E).

The Panel considered the details referring to the appeal from Age Concern, West Sussex that had been received in respect of their application for Grant Aid during the 2009/2010 grants process, in accordance with the Council's laid down policies and procedures for determining grants.

The Panel was requested to consider the information set out in the report before it and to either confirm or amend the original decision of the Grants Working Group made on 2 March. The Grants Working Group had considered 22 requests for funding. The recommended maximum awards and the decisions of the Grants Working Group for 2009/2010 – 2010/2011 funding were summarised in Appendix 1 to Enclosure E attached to the agenda. There were 13 one year and 4 two year funding agreements.

A budget sum of £650,480 had been allocated for grant aid in 2009/2010. The total provision for new awards recommended by the Grants Working Group for 2009/2010 was £242,636 plus existing commitments for 9 funding agreements of £397,544 had resulted in a total of £640,180. The balance of £10,300 was available as contingency for appeals and the small grants scheme. The total recommended by the Grants Working Group for 2010/2011 as year 2 funding for four awards was £55,998. Copies of the appraisal summary sheets, original application and appeal information from Age Concern, West Sussex appealing against their award had been previously circulated to Panel Members.

Age Concern, West Sussex had originally requested funding for year 1 of £50,000 and for year 2 of £51,500. The Grants Working Group at its meeting held on 2 March had supported the officer recommendations that funding for 2009/2010 be awarded up to £34,187, and for year 2 up to £35,213 (including 3% uplift). The Voluntary Sector Support Officer reported at the meeting, that after the determination of the applications, the Grants Working Group had decided to reduce the uplift for all the applications granted from 3% to one and a half % (to more accurately reflect the current annual rate of inflation) and to increase the amount of contingency money that was available for small grants. That meant that, it was proposed that Age Concern be granted £33,698 for year 1 and £34,195 for year 2. Members noted that Age Concern, West Sussex would like reconsideration to be given to the annual uplift being above the 1.5% that had been recommended by the Grants Working Group, and if possible sought additional development funding (not recommended by officers or the Grants Working Group).

The Voluntary Sector Support Officer summarised the application at the meeting, and referred Members to the letter lodging the appeal dated 19 March (attached as Enclosure C). Members noted that it was a 2 year application and that the beneficiaries would include Community Clubs, and the provision of Information and Advice in Crawley.

The Panel further considered the matter and confirmed the previous recommendations of the Grants Working Group. Members supported the vision to extend services and considered that to be best supported by more diverse funding. Age Concern was working with the multi-agency Partnership for Older People Projects (POPP) – known as the Crawley Neighbourhood Network – to help develop services in response to local needs.

RESOLVED

That grants be awarded to Age Concern, West Sussex for the amounts previously recommended by the Grants Working Group and subsequently approved at the meeting of the Cabinet held on 25 March 2009 – i.e. year 1 for £33,698, and for year 2 £34,195.

5. Closure of Meeting

With the business of the Panel concluded, the Chair closed the meeting at 6:25pm.

L A M BURKE
Chair