



Community Grants Budget 2006/07

RECOMMENDATION

- 1 Council Cabinet approve and adopt the proposals of the Council Cabinet Member for Adult Services as the best course of action in the current circumstances as it will preserve the status quo for key partner organisations.
- 2 Should a points system be considered as a key component in decision making for future grant allocation, this should be made clear to organisations ahead of their applications being submitted.
- 3 To note that the Commission identified a number of concerns about this scheme, that in practice excludes new applicants from receiving awards, and may later conduct a review on the topic.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 With regard to recommendation 1, given the budgetary situation the proposals before Council Cabinet provide the greatest stability and minimise disruption to key partners of the City Council. The Commission arrived at this view after interviewing Ms Stone, Assistant Director – Community Policy, and Emma Bates, Community Development and Voluntary Sector Support Manager. They explained the process and the expanded on the other options considered. [Cllr Smalley dissented from the recommendation in so far as no allowance is being made for inflation in the proposals before Cabinet]
- 2.2 With regard to recommendation 2, the proposals for the award of grant have clearly been subject to a thorough process involving careful evaluation. This has involved a scoring process to ensure eligibility and fitness-for-purpose of applicant organisations is satisfied. It was explained that one option to decide recommended awards in this difficult budgetary situation was to apply a threshold to the scores. This method did not get used for 2006/07. In the interests of transparency and fairness, the Commission believe that should a points system be considered for use in future rounds, it is essential that potential applicants are made aware of that fact and provided with details of the system to be used.

- 2.3 With regard to recommendation 3, the paradox is that the CGB scheme has been better advertised than before, the eligibility criteria honed and a thorough evaluation of applicants been undertaken – yet all the funds are to go (with this Commission’s endorsement) to the same organisations as last year and nothing is available for new applicants. This may be disheartening for unsuccessful applicants; in aggregate many hours will have been spent putting together the applications and more hours still by Council officers processing and evaluating them.
- 2.4 The basic cause of 2.3 is an essentially fixed budget which can be predicted to be ‘taken up’ by key long term non-statutory partners of the Council. Tentative views aired by Commission members were that there may be merit in having streams to differentiate between long, medium and one-off/one year support. The Commission may later conduct a compact evidence-based review and, if so, would welcome the views of the Council Cabinet Member and other political group representatives.

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| For more information contact: | 01322 255596 e-mail rob.Davison@derby.gov.uk |
| Background papers: | As referred to in the main report |
| List of appendices: | Appendix 1 to this covering report – Implications |

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| IMPLICATIONS |
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Financial

1. As set out in the main report.

Legal

- 2 None directly arising.

Personnel

- 3 None directly arising.

Equalities impact

- 4 Grants to organisations like the Citizens Advice Bureau can benefit any one in the general population who takes up a service; grants to intermediary bodies like the Council for Voluntary Service and Race Equality Council aid capacity building and can be of particular assistance to new organisations – of particular value to Derby’s newer communities. Some of the grants to specific organisations can directly promote social inclusion.

Corporate Objectives, Values and Priorities

- 5 The Community Grants Budget promotes the Objectives of providing: healthy, safe and independent communities *and* a shared commitment to regenerating our communities.