



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

## MINORITY ETHNIC COMMUNITIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE 12 JANUARY 2006

Report of the Corporate Director, Regeneration and Community

### Equality Grants to voluntary groups review

#### RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 To comment on the review of the use of the Equalities Grants and the current criteria.
- 1.2 To comment on recommendation to revert to the original criteria for the Equalities Grant.

#### SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Council sets aside £3,500 each year to assist voluntary organisations to promote equality of opportunity.
- 2.2 Grants of up to £500 are currently available for initiatives aimed at promoting good race relations and equality of opportunity for minority ethnic communities, women, disabled people facing discrimination, lesbians and gay men, people facing age discrimination or because of living with HIV/AIDS. They can be used for equipment, a service or events. The full criteria for receiving grants are set out in appendix 2.
- 2.3 The grant was originally established in 1989/1990. It was originally introduced to help voluntary and community groups implement equality within their organisation and to help remove barriers. For instance, it could include providing a crèche so that a parent could attend a meeting, translation of leaflets, provision of minicomms, and so on. The grant was established for *all* groups, rather than groups set up with an explicit equality focus. However, take up of the grant recently has become more focused on equality groups, and smaller groups.
- 2.4 In relation to its current use, it is relevant to recognise changes that have happened in the funding landscape in Derby, over recent years. These changes include establishment of various other small pots of funding, including for example, Small Change, Area Panel funding, funds via Derbyshire Community Foundation. Such small pots of funding were not available when the Equalities Grant was established. These pots are for small amounts and are also able to be used by groups for removing barriers.

## 2.5 Examples of these smaller pots of funding are given below:

- **Small Change**

Grants of up to £3,000 available. Aims of the grant are: increasing skills and creativity; enhancing community spirit; celebrating diversity. The group must be based in, or benefit, any of the 12 Neighbourhood Renewal Areas. Examples of what it might fund include: providing childcare to allow parents to take part in community activities; holding cross-cultural events; setting up a homework club; etc. It will not fund running costs, activities promoting political or religious beliefs.

- **Area Panels**

Grants between £50 and £2,000 are available for voluntary and community Groups. Applications need to provide a service in response to the needs of residents within the area served by the area panel. They also need to meet at least one of the following criteria:

- improve access for local people to existing services
- provide a service in response to an issue raised at an area panel meeting
- contribute to environmental improvements which will benefit local residents
- enable residents to participate in their community.

- **Derbyshire Community Foundation - DCF - General Fund**

This fund supports awards of up to £1,000. Applications up to £500 are favoured due to limitations of the resource. The aim is to fund groups that are addressing the needs of their local community or of a specific group of people and can also show they are:

- supporting community life
- encouraging social inclusion.

- **Local Network Fund for Children and Young People/ Sport Relief – both administered by DCF**

These small grants are topic specific but also include elements relating to addressing inequalities within the topic area.

- **Social Services Small Grants**

This is a partnership grant from a joint budget funded by Derby Social Services, Greater and Central Derby Primary Care Trusts, it is administered through Derby CVS. Grants of up to £3,000 are available for:

- small, one-off, *non-revenue* items such as office equipment, training events, brochures or similar, or
- start-up costs from a new organisation with a health or social care focus.

2.6 The Equalities Grant should have a specific purpose that does not duplicate that of other funds. In its current use the criteria are fairly broad and there are other small pots of funding that to an extent overlap or can be used for the same purpose.

2.7 More specific criteria would help to maximise the usefulness of this grant in the city. The original criteria: *'to help voluntary and community groups implement equality within their organisation and to help remove barriers'*, provides a more specific focus for its use and would have a wider equalities impact in the city.

- 2.8 If the grant reverted to the original criteria, other factors would then need to be taken into consideration. Firstly, the grant would need to be publicised widely across the whole voluntary and community sector, in order to enable appropriate take-up. Secondly, the volume of applications would be likely to vastly outweigh the available total funding of £3,500. Therefore consideration would need to be given to this.
- 2.9 It is recommended that consideration is given to using the original criteria.
- 2.10 If this did go ahead, the possibility of creating a larger pot for groups to access by matching with other funds could be explored for the future.

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**Background papers:**

**List of appendices:**

Appendix 1 – Implications

Appendix 2 – Criteria for Receiving Grants

<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>
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**Financial**

1. The Equalities Grant budget currently stands at £3,500 a year.

**Legal**

2. The Council has an enforceable legal obligation, under the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000, to promote equal opportunities.

**Personnel**

3. None.

**Equalities impact**

- 4.1 These grants provide financial support to equality target groups who have priority in our equality policy.
- 4.2 The initiatives that the Equality Grant is currently used for is to promote good race relations and equality of opportunity for all groups within the organisation, within the community or for individuals using the services of projects.
- 4.3 The original criteria: *'to help voluntary and community groups implement equality within their organisation and to help remove barriers'*, would help to provide a more specific focus for its use and would have a wider equalities impact in the city.
- 4.4 The grant assists the Council's legal obligation, under the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000, to promote equal opportunities as well as our work on the Equality Standard for Local Government.

**Corporate objectives and priorities**

5. The use of this grant links directly to:
  - the Council's objective of healthy, safe and independent communities
  - the Council's priority of working in partnership to achieve socially cohesive communities.