

AGENDA ITEM 7

Notes from the virtual Meeting of the **Grants Panel** held on **Monday 23rd August, 2021** at **5.30pm**

In attendance – Councillors Ms L Crawford, J Ellis, Mrs G Parker, B Smith and H Smith
Assistant to the Town Clerk

Apologies had been received from – Councillor A Hutton

1. PROPOSAL DOCUMENT

The Panel had received and reviewed a document, as provided by Councillors J Ellis and Mrs G Parker, with regard their proposals for changes to be made to the current Grant Application Form, Grant Policy, Grant Response Form and Grant Scoring Process (Appendix 1 and see Notes from the Meeting of the 20th July 2021).

During the ensuing discussion particular reference was made to;

- a) the proposed 2 groupings of Councillors, one to assess and rank applications received and the other to decide which projects should receive funding and how much money should be allocated. It was felt that this would create a 2-tier system and would leave decision-making to a very small group of Councillors;
- b) that annually Grant applications are received from a particular organisation (Citizen's Advice Bureau - CAB) which amounted to an appreciable proportion of the Council's annual grant budget;
- c) that historically this organisation had not fully met the Council's Grant Policy, so the Policy had been adapted to allow Grants to be made;
- d) in view of the above, and in view of the high regard there was for this organisation and its work undertaken for many residents of the town, whether it was possible to take CAB out of the usual process and put separate plans in place. Reference was also made to the extent of funding CAB received from other tiers of Government, as well as other bodies;
- e) that not all small organisations could afford to have Audited Accounts each year, and if this might preclude some worthwhile applicants from receiving a Grant if this stipulation was enforced;
- f) that historically not all applicants had submitted all required paperwork when applying for a Grant, which had taken Officer time to request.

2. GRANT APPLICATION FORM

In view of items 1(e) and 1(f) above, it was
RECOMMENDED THAT the current Grant Application Form be amended as follows;

- i) The initial wording to be changed to – ‘Please answer all questions and provide all requested paperwork – failure to do so may affect the success of your Application’;
- ii) At Q14 the words ‘or Inspected Accounts’ to be added after ‘Audited Accounts’ as this removes the necessity of only being able to submit Audited Accounts.

3. GRANT POLICY

It was RECOMMENDED THAT the current Grant Policy remain unchanged.

4. GRANT RESPONSE FORM

It was RECOMMENDED THAT the current Grant Response Form remain unchanged.

5. GRANT SCORING PROCESS

In view of items 1(a) – 1 (d) above it was RECOMMENDED THAT;

- i) the scoring of each application received would be based on the following 8 questions. Points would be awarded as follows – for a definite ‘yes’ 2 points, for a definite ‘no’ 0 points would be given, and for anything in between 1 point would be allocated. For an Application to be considered for a Grant it must have a positive outcome for ALL questions (i.e. no zero scores) and have a total score of at least 12;

Q1 – Is the application form fully and thoroughly completed, with all required evidence submitted i.e. Audited/Inspected Accounts? If a previous Grant has been received, was a Grant Response Form provided?

Q2 – Is this a new project for Tavistock from an organisation that has not received funding in the last 3 years?

If the project is new but the organisation has received funding in the last 3 years score 1. Repeat applications score 0.

Q3 – Has the need for spending been well explained and justified?

Is it absolutely clear how the money will be spent? Have estimates/quotes been provided, if relevant? Is there a clear understanding in the breakdown of costs?

Q4 – Is the application for project/one-off funding rather than for running costs?

If for one-off spend/project, will the money be spent within the financial year? Are there clear outcomes? Ongoing running costs score 0.

Q5 – Are there benefits to the wider community?

Will funding not only benefit the organisation and its members but also the public/community?

Q6 – Will funding or resources be brought to the project from elsewhere?

TTC should not be the only stream of funding and organisations must be able to demonstrate a level of self-help through fundraising, or gaining Grants or in-kind support from elsewhere

Q7 – Does the spending represent good value for money?

Will a Grant provide long term benefit to the organisation and public, beyond the year it is granted?

Q8 – Are there any negative implications for the town/community if the project is not funded?

Will not funding an organisation result in projects being cancelled/organisations not being able to provide a level of service?

- ii) the Citizen's Advice Bureau be taken out of the above process, and automatically be eligible for up to 20% of the overall Grant budget allocated to it, on the following basis;
 - an Application Form was still a requirement;
 - if the amount requested was less than 20% of the overall budget, then the full amount requested would be allocated;
 - if the amount requested was more than 20% of the overall budget, then 20% of the actual budget would be allocated, so it might be the organisation received less funding than requested.

- iii) members of the Grants Panel would individually evaluate each Application received, and would submit their scores to the Assistant to the Town Clerk to allow for collation and ranking of the scores received. Those Applications receiving less than 12 points or zero scores would be removed from the process. A further Grants Panel meeting would be scheduled to review remaining scores and determine funds to be allocated, for recommendation to Council.

- iv) the existing Grants Panel members would meet in the new year to evaluate the new process, and determine if any further amendments were required, prior to the 2022 Grant Application period;

- v) the membership of the Grant Panel to continue into the 2022 – 2023 Civic Year to allow continuity.

Meeting ended at 6.30pm.

Date of next Grants Panel Meeting – tbc