

**MINUTES OF THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR GRANTS COMMITTEE
6 SEPTEMBER 2005**

Councillors *Reith (Chair), *Canver, *Hillman, *Meehan and Wynne.

* Members present

Also present: Councillor Hoban

MINUTE NO.	SUBJECT/DECISION	ACTION BY
VSGC.1	<p>APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>An apology for absence was submitted by Councillor Wynne.</p>	
VSGC.2	<p>MINUTES</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2004 be approved and signed.</p>	HMS
VSGC.3	<p>COUNCIL COMMUNITY BUILDINGS PORTFOLIO - (Joint Report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Strategy) and the Director of Finance - Agenda Item 6):</p> <p>We noted that the report proposed changes to the Council's policy for concessionary rents and Grant Aid for Rent, formerly known as Circular funded rent. The report also proposed arrangements for enhanced enforcement of lease terms as well as the establishment of a formal system for the review of the future use of community buildings when their leases were due to expire or when a building was vacated prior to lease expiry.</p> <p>It was also proposed that a joint working group from Property Services and the Corporate Voluntary Sector Team be tasked to consider alternative models for the management of community buildings and that a further report on the options available be issued to our Committee once the proposed group completed its deliberations.</p> <p>While the introduction of standard leases was supported, concern was expressed about the impact that the universal application of market rents would have on smaller groups such as bowls clubs which used Council premises and the view was expressed that the issues of grant aid and leases of Council premises should be separated out. In this respect we were informed that the proposed changes to concessionary rents and grant aid for rent were recommended only in respect of those premises listed in the report which were in the Council's community buildings portfolio. If required a further report could be requested on rent policy in relation to other Council premises and facilities.</p> <p>Further clarification was sought about the proposed introduction of break clauses into leases and the possible impact this might have on groups seeking to attract external funding including from the Big Lottery and also of how the first two bullet points in recommendation 2.5 would be measured. We were informed that break clauses could be linked to events such as a change in a</p>	

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group's articles of association rather than to a specific time and this should satisfy potential funding agencies. Means of measuring whether buildings were being used to their maximum potential/intensity and whether the building was made available for use by a wide section of the community could be addressed in the new model standard lease which could come back to our Committee for approval.

RESOLVED:

1. That grant aid for rent only be considered for organisations based on the grant aid assessment process and thereafter be subject to the normal periodic assessment process (usually 3 years) and that where a particular organisation was in receipt of rent grant this should be taken into account when the amount of total grant support to be given to the organisation was determined. ACE(S)/HP
2. That the application of rent grant be available, insofar as it referred to the Council's buildings, only to those groups which occupied premises within the Council's Community Buildings Portfolio. ACE(S)/HP
3. That, in future, all community groups which occupied the Council's community buildings be subject to an annual check by the Corporate Voluntary Sector Team, in partnership with Property Services to ensure they were complying with the covenants in their leases relating to charitable governance issues such as adherence to their Articles of Association and Property Services should continue to monitor compliance with all other lease terms including ensuring that all the necessary licences and inspections were in place. ACE(S)/HP
4. That the monitoring arrangements in 3 above be applied to all organisations occupying Council premises, whether or not they were in receipt of grant aid but that it be noted that current staffing levels could not support this recommendation without additional resources. ACE(S)/HP
5. That should it be determined that an organisation was in breach of the lease that Property Services take all necessary and appropriate action. HP
6. That in future a 'model' lease be put in place that would be the basis for negotiation for all new leaseholders and that it also be used for present leaseholders who wished to negotiate a change of terms to their existing lease arrangements, the model lease to incorporate more rigorous restrictions on the tenant in particular to ensure that – ACE(S)/HP
 - The building was used to their maximum potential/intensity;
 - The building was made available for use by a wide section of the community;
 - The organisation was subjected to monitoring arrangements in line with their constitution;
 - The responsibility for undertaking repairs on the building was consistently applied.

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	<p>7. That a formal system be established which enabled the future of all Community Buildings to be reviewed when their leases were approaching expiry.</p> <p>8. That requests for extensions to existing leases be subject to the process outlined in 7.5.2 of the interleaved report and that in order to agree an extension organisations be requested to surrender the old lease for the new model lease for the longer period.</p> <p>9. That when a community building was re-let to a voluntary organisation for community use then paragraph 5 of Appendix 7 to the interleaved report be applied.</p> <p>10. That as a building becomes vacant a review on the future options be considered in the first instance by the Assets Project Board followed, where appropriate, by a report to our Committee.</p> <p>11. That a joint working group from Property Services and the Corporate Voluntary Sector Team be tasked to consider alternative models for the management of community buildings and that a further report on the options available be submitted to Members once the proposed working group had completed its deliberations.</p> <p>12. That the extent of additional financial support given to groups within the Borough through the application of the discretionary element of collection of Non National Domestic Rate be noted.</p> <p>13. That a further report be submitted on rent policy in respect of other Council premises and facilities which were used by community or voluntary groups and not covered by this report.</p> <p>14. That the standard model lease proposed in the report be submitted to our Committee for approval such model to provide clarification of how break clauses would operate as well as suggested measurements for whether buildings were being used to their maximum potential/intensity and whether the building was made available for use by a wide section of the community.</p>	<p>ACE(S)/HP</p> <p>ACE(S)/HP</p> <p>ACE(S)/HP</p> <p>ACE(S)/HP</p> <p>ACE(S)/HP</p> <p>ACE(S)/HP</p> <p>ACE(S)/HP</p> <p>ACE(S)/HP</p>
<p>VSGC4.</p>	<p>HARINGEY COUNCIL'S RESERVES POLICY FOR COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS (Report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Strategy - Agenda Item 7):</p> <p>We noted that the Borough benefited from having a strong and efficient voluntary sector which provided good quality services and was able to advocate effectively on behalf of local residents. We also noted that the Council had a responsibility to obtain value for money when providing grant aid and that there was a need to ensure that the grants provided were well targeted and made a real difference to the stability and efficiency of voluntary organisations.</p> <p>We were informed that the aim of the proposed policy was twofold, firstly to ensure that organisations whose level of reserves were such that they had no need of additional monies from the Council were not funded and,</p>	

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	<p>secondly, to assist in the identification of organisations whose reserves were so low that their financial stability was at risk. Having been informed that most large funding bodies like the Association of London Government operated reserves policies as part of their grant giving function and that such a policy was recommended good practice, we asked that officers assist organisations to put in place a reserves policy in line with this good practice.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the Reserves Policy as set out at Appendix 1 to the interleaved report be applied to all organisations in receipt of Council grant aid. 2. That the Council's Reserves Policy become incorporated into the Terms and Conditions of Revenue Grant Aid. 	<p>ACE(S)</p> <p>ACE(S)</p> <p>ACE(S)</p>
<p>VSGC5.</p>	<p>FUNDING TO INFRASTRUCTURE AND CLIENT SPECIFIC VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS (Report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Strategy) - Agenda Item 10):</p> <p>We noted that Haringey benefited from having a strong, diverse and efficient voluntary sector and that Council funding could make a significant contribution but needed to be properly targeted to have maximum effect. The nature of our Borough was that new communities and new needs, giving rise to new organisations were a necessary part of a healthy and representative voluntary sector.</p> <p>We needed to know that the organisations we were funding were strong, financially viable and representative. Voluntary organisations had the right to be assessed against clear principles, criteria and procedures. It would always be the case that some groups were successful in their funding bid and others were not but the key issue was that the process was a fair one which was understood by the voluntary sector and had the confidence of the community in general.</p> <p>We were informed that the report covered proposals for core funding of voluntary organisations and also recommended that funding for 'commissioned services' was set aside, pending completion of negotiations to transfer this to the relevant service departments.</p> <p>We also noted that Appendices 7 - 11 to the interleaved report were the subject of a motion to exclude the press and public from the meeting as they contained exempt information relating to terms proposed or to be proposed by or to the authority in the course of negotiations for a contract for the acquisition or disposal of property or the supply of goods and services.</p> <p>Concern having been expressed about the tapering arrangements recommended in respect of the Cypriot Elders Group, we were informed that any extension to the tapering period outlined would result in further delays to the funding of new organisations not previously funded in order for the necessary funding to be freed. It was also confirmed that organisations to whom funding had not been awarded would be informed why their</p>	

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	<p>applications had not been successful.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That, subject to any changes resulting from an extension to the tapering arrangement of the funding to the Cypriot Elders Group, approval be granted to the funding recommendations as set out in Appendix 8 to the interleaved report. 2. That no funding be awarded to organisations that were not able to prove themselves 'fit for purpose' and financial viable as this posed an unacceptable risk to public funds. 3. That funding for commissioned services be set aside from this review while the necessary negotiations for the transfer of this funding was undertaken with the relevant services. 4. That, subject to budgetary and procurement constraints, the funding transferred from the Corporate Grants Budget to Directorates for voluntary sector commissioning be 'ring-fenced' for 3 years by the Directorates for voluntary and community sector commissioning. 5. That funding be awarded for up to 3.25 years to bring the end of the new funding arrangement in line with the financial year 2008/09. 6. That, subject to further consultation with the Cypriot Elders Group about the length of the notice period, approval be granted to the application of the tapering arrangement to the 2 organisations in respect of whom it was agreed that grant funding should not be renewed. 7. That, following the closure of Haringey Community Accountancy Project (HCAP), approval be granted to the funding previously provided to HCAP being awarded to HAVCO for the development of a new community accountancy project. 8. That funding be awarded to the Asian Centre until 31st March 2007 under the conditions as set out in paragraph 7f of Appendix 7 of the interleaved report. 	<p>ACE(S)</p> <p>ACE(S)</p> <p>ACE(S)</p> <p>ACE(S)</p> <p>ACE(S)</p> <p>ACE(S)</p> <p>ACE(S)</p> <p>ACE(S)</p>
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LORNA REITH
Chair