

## Extract from draft Cabinet minutes from 15 June 2012

### Revenue grants policy and procedure

Cabinet considered the head of corporate strategy's report that sought approval of a new revenue grant policy and procedure and approval of a £10,000 virement from contingency to fund the grants.

Cabinet recalled that in 2011/12 the council awarded £99,135 in community grants to 50 separate voluntary organisations. These grants were for a mixture of capital projects, ongoing revenue costs, and one-off events. Over £10,000 was awarded to seven organisations to help fund festivals in the district.

As part of the budget setting for 2012/13, the council removed the community grants budget from the revenue budget and replaced it with a capital community grant scheme. Cabinet approved the policy for the capital community grant scheme on 1 June 2012. As part of its budget setting for 2012/13, the Council had also approved partnership grants of over £270,000 to 22 voluntary sector organisations to support their ongoing running costs. However, since the removal of the community grant scheme, the council had received several requests for funding towards festivals in the district and there was no means of funding these. Therefore, Cabinet considered adopting a revenue grants scheme to determine these funding requests.

Councillor Richard Webber was invited to ask his questions on the proposed revenue grants scheme. Firstly, he congratulated the Cabinet on transferring the majority of the grants funds to a capital scheme as this reflected the history of grants applications. He was also pleased that Cabinet was also considering a revenue grants scheme to support festivals and events. He believed that supporting festivals and events would bring greater community than supporting several smaller individual groups. However, Councillor Webber asked whether such grants would be limited to £1,000. He noted that the report recommended delegating the award of revenue grants to the head of service in consultation with the relevant cabinet member. He asked Cabinet to consider whether this would take choice away from area committees.

Cabinet considered that the revenue grants scheme would help festivals and events to happen that might not otherwise do so, bringing economic benefits to the district. Supporting festivals and events, rather than individual groups, would bring more to the community. Cabinet was pleased that Councillor Webber agreed with this.

Cabinet agreed a virement of £10,000 from contingency to fund these grants. Cabinet considered £10,000 was sufficient to meet the likely requests based on previous experience. However, Cabinet would consider transferring additional funds if required. Funding this from contingency would avoid a delay in implementing the scheme. Council would need to consider long-term funding sources in its budget-setting process.

Cabinet considered that it would be too limiting to restrict grants to £1,000. Instead, Cabinet amended the criteria to read 'awards will *normally* be no more than £1,000.'

Cabinet also considered that applications should be determined under delegated authority rather than by area committees as this would allow quicker decisions. Cabinet considered the relevant cabinet member who should be consulted on the applications should be the

cabinet member for finance, but also considered that other cabinet members or local members could be consulted also, depending on the application.

**RESOLVED:** To

- (a) approve a new revenue grant policy and procedure as detailed in appendix 1 of the head of corporate strategy's report, the criteria being amended to read 'Awards will *normally* be no more than £1,000.'
- (b) approve a virement of £10,000 from contingency to the revenue grant budget to fund grants that meet the criteria as detailed in the new revenue grant policy and procedure; and
- (c) authorise the head of corporate strategy in consultation with the cabinet member for finance to determine applications that meet the criteria as detailed in the new revenue grant policy and procedure.