

Report

Cabinet Member for Community & Resources

Part 1

Date: 18 January 2018

Subject Applications to Welsh Church Acts Fund 2017/18

Purpose To make decisions on applications for funding from the Welsh Church Act Funds

Author Head of Finance

Ward All

Summary There were 23 applications received for grants from the Welsh Church Acts Fund for 2017/18.

Proposal That the Cabinet Member:

- approves 17 applications, totalling £49,694 of grants, as shown in Appendix One
- agree moving to a bi-annual application process from 2018/19, as described in paras 5, to be reviewed after 2 years of operation
- reviews the application process and detailed criteria, in conjunction with the HoF, as described in paras 5

Action by HoF – organise payments in line with decision

Timetable Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Head of Law & Standards
- Head of HR & Transformation
- Ward members in wards affected

Signed

Background

1. Newport City Council receives an amount each year for distribution under the Welsh Church Acts fund to be distributed in accordance with the adopted criteria. For 2017/18 the amount available for Newport City Council to distribute is £50,539.94, inclusive of £139.94 carried over from 2016/17.

2. There is set criteria for the payment of this grant, ultimately decided by the Church authority, and this has been augmented with local criteria / interpretation guidance which Scrutiny committees have reviewed in the past. The Lead Member has been given a copy of those. The Head of Finance considers the applications initially with the Senior Finance Business Partner and the Corporate Admin Supervisor and makes recommendations for those which fall within the criteria.

3. Appendix 1 lists 23 applications for consideration, of which 17 meet the Welsh Church criteria. The total grants requested from the 17 applications amount to £82,823.99, and therefore it is not possible to pay 100% of the grants requested as it exceeds the funds available. It is therefore proposed to pay 60% of all application amounts and this will total £49,694.39 (£50,414.39 including £720 for U3A for a defibrillator previously approved), leaving a very small balance to carry forward into 2018/19. This follows the same pattern as all other previous years.

Going forward

4. Two issues have emerged following the review of applications this year:

1. Within the applications received for this financial year, were an increasing number of larger value applications for equipment for established groups or clubs, which we are recommending that the Cabinet member approves. These are received each year but are not normally significant and normally, only about 2-3 applications are received for this kind of thing but they have been growing over the last 2 years of so. These types of applications have been approved in the past and we have been consistent, this time, with our approval process to previous years. However, criteria set by the Welsh Church Fund imply that equipment should only be approved for new clubs or groups where equipment is needed for the setup of those groups.
2. A few Members have made representations on the annual process which means applicants could be waiting nearly 12 months before their applications are reviewed and any awards made. It was moved to an annual process some 4 years ago because in previous years, a twice yearly process meant that either (i) the annual funds available were split into two and applicants in each half year received different percentages of their bids, depending on the number and value of other applications received in that same half year or (ii) if a consistent percentage was applied, it inevitably led to funds not allocated and carried forward.

An annual process has meant that all successful applicants received a consistent percentage of their total bid and virtually all funds are allocated, bar a small amount for 'emergency' applications.

It is likely that the increasing number of applications for day to day running equipment and the need for quicker payment is linked to the cessation of the Members Neighbourhood Funds, about 3 years ago.

5. In order to deal with these issues, it is recommended that:

- The Head of Finance and his team confirms the interpretation of some parts of the criteria with the Welsh Church and reviews local interpretation/guidance in use at other Gwent Councils. This will be reported to the Cabinet Member and if any changes are required, recommendations could be reviewed by Scrutiny in the first instance.

The Head of Finance and his team will review the application process and the information required to support all applications and report back to the Cabinet Member. This should improve

the ability of officers and the Cabinet Member in the assessment of applications against the Church Fund criteria.

- There must be a balance between timeframes and equity to ensure consistency is applied. Therefore it is recommended to move the grant awards back to a twice a year process. The amount of funding available for each application process will need to be consistent, so the funding available will be split equally in half. The percentage funding given to each application will also have to be consistent to ensure equity and therefore we propose that all applications are funded at a maximum 50% if they meet the criteria and ensure (though it can't be guaranteed) that all applications that meet the criteria receive financial support. Funds not used will be carried forward. This will be reviewed after 2 years.

Financial Summary

The cost for this application is funded from the Welsh Church Acts Fund and has no financial implications to the council.

Risks

There are no material risks arising directly from this report.

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

Not applicable as funds are used for those bids that meet specific Welsh Church Act criteria.

Options Available and considered

The Cabinet Member may make awards to qualify groups/organisations as provided by the Criteria.

All the proposed grants are within the agreed policy. This report does not change any of the current policies.

Preferred Option and Why

To make the awards as detailed in the attached schedule.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

There are no direct financial consequences on Council budgets. The applications recommended for funding are within the agreed criteria / previous practice and funded from Welsh Church funds.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

The proposed action is in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Church Act Scheme and the Council's policy.

Comments of Head of People and Business Change

No staffing issues

Comments of Cabinet Member

The Cabinet Member has reviewed all the applications.

Comments from Non-Executive Members

Councillor Al-Nuaimi

1. It is rather remarkable to see so many relatively large value application, so it is not surprising that the funds are oversubscribed to the tune of 160% relative to the funds available. At first it seems scaling down the amount requested by the applicants to a uniform 60% to be fair and equitable. However

small application seeking less than £1000 will be hit much harder than those in the £5000 plus category.

(Can I suggest that those applications (less than £1000) are paid fully or scaled down at most by 20%)

2. Historically the Welsh Church funds were used mostly for the award of relatively modest value grants. Most applications used to be in the range £500 -£1500. Applications requesting many thousands of pounds were unheard of. It was surprising to see one last year requesting and being awarded £10,000.
3. Perhaps it's timely for the criteria and size of the awards to be reconsidered. It seems reasonable that the Welsh Church funds are used to help the maximum number of recipients and such can be achieved by putting limits on the cash values of the awards made. It also seems reasonable that where scaling down has to be applied, a progressive scale favouring smaller awards is used.
4. It's pleasing to see the report proposing a twice a year allocation instead of the once per year used for the current FY. While this represents an improvement, it seems possible that with the presumption in favour of the smaller value awards, that we can actually adopt a 4 monthly cycle, where the first 2 cycles are used for applications seeking a maximum of £2000, while the 3rd cycle is reserved for those application seeking higher awards (£2000- Maximum award limit agreed). Dedicating one of the 3 cycles to larger value applications could ensure Council can utilise all the funds remaining.

Response from Cabinet Member for Communities & Resources

Thank you for your comments. My response is as follows

1. This would mean taking a two tiered approach which would be inconsistent. All bids can be treated the same if the same percentage is applied, especially if the funds are oversubscribed.
2. Noted.
3. As indicated above all bids should be treated equally and consistently.
4. Moving to more than one cycle a year is problematic as it is impossible to predict the number and the size of the applications that will be received in a particular year. This means that there is an increased risk of allocating funds in the first cycle and potentially not having enough funds to cover future cycles. This is why we moved to one session so that we knew what we had to consider and all the funds could be allocated with confidence. However, this has meant a long lead in time and therefore moving to two decision points annually was a decision that sought to strike a balance between reducing the lead times and minimising the risk of either not being able to spend the annual budget, or running out of funds.

The percentage given always depends on the level of the bids received and the available funds and that percentage will therefore vary from year to year in order to spend the funds and maximise allocations given that the bids outweigh the funds available.

Councillor Ferris:

I'd like to add my support for the grant for the Newport Pantomime Society to enable them to complete the staging. We have little in the way of social amenities in the ward and this hard working and long running group deserves support.

Councillor Jason Hughes:

As someone who has been involved with agencies that have applied for the grant in previous years I would like to express my support for this proposal. An example I am able to give where it would be of specific help is in planning for centenary events later in the year such as this year's Great War commemorative events in November. Having the opportunity to have a response earlier in the year

would have given stronger guarantees to any charities applying for a grant earlier in their schedule which would have helped. I hope this response will be of assistance to the cabinet member in coming to their decision.

Local issues

The comments provided by Ward Members on the proposed course of action in respect of their area have been included in the appendix.

Scrutiny Committees

N/A.

Equalities Impact Assessment and the Equalities Act 2010

N/A

Children and Families (Wales) Measure

N/A

Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

These grants are used to support a number of small community groups. These groups enable various areas of the City to function in a better way and to contribute to the above priorities for the Council.

Crime and Disorder Act 1998

These grants are used to support a number of small community groups. These groups enable various areas of the City to function in a better way and to contribute to the above priorities for the Council.

Consultation

Comments received from wider consultation, including comments from elected members, are detailed in each application report in the attached schedule.

Background Papers

None.

Dated: 18 January 2018

APPENDIX 1: 1 OCTOBER 2016 – 31 OCTOBER 2017

Ref No	Name and Address of Organisation	Ward	Details of Request	History	Comment	Recommendation
500106 Scanned Applications\2016.2017\Energize Media CIC.pdf Working with adults with learning disabilities and young people with mental health issues. Shaftesbury Comm Centre, Evans Street, Newport NP20 5LD	Energize Media CIC c/o Mr Simon Harvey, 511 Monnow Way, Bettws, Newport, NP20 7DW 01633 255459	Bettws	3xApple Mac PCs £3,147;Virtual DJ Pro software £263.99;Logic Pro X software;4x Mic stands; 2xheadphones; 2xstudio monitors; 1xDJ controller; Radio equipment, 2xmixer for iPad; delivery =£6,064 Total £6,064.14 Within criteria		Emailed Cllrs Cleverley; Delahaye & Whitehead Supported by Cllrs Delahaye, Cleverley	Approve £6,064.14 x 60% = £3,638.48 Criteria met 7.1/ 7.2 Social/Recreational
500107 Scanned Applications\2016.2017\9th North Newport Brownies.pdf	9 th North Newport Brownies c/o Liz Richards, 2 St Julians Avenue, Newport, South Wales NP19 7GJ	St Julians	Donation towards 2018 PGL weekend to Brecon =£1,000 total		Emailed Cllrs Townsend, Garland & Hutchings Supported by Cllr Townsend	Not Approved Outside Criteria - No.10 Annual Event
500108 Scanned Applications\2016.2017\500108 - Parents for Change and The Meet.pdf	Parents for Change and The Meet, c/o Lisa Collins, 4 Brecon Road, St Julians, Newport, NP19 7RW	All	Room Hire £11 per hour x 8 sessions, arts tutor £45 for 2 hours x 8 sessions Total = £448 Outside	None	n/a	Not Approved Outside criteria - No.10 Hire of rooms/fees

			criteria			
500109 Scanned Applications\2016.2017\500109 - Cambrian Educational Foundation Application form.pdf	Mrs P Brown, Clerk to the Trustees, Cambrian Educational Foundation for Deaf Children, "Montreus", 30 Lon Cedwyn, Sketty, Swansea, SA2 0TH	All	Computer equipment - £500	2010/11 - £500 2011/13 - £250 2014 - £600	n/a	Not Approved Outside criteria - No.4 and No.15 Based in Swansea
500110 Scanned Applications\2016.2017\500110 - St Mary's Court LOF	Ms S Fletcher, St Mary's Court League of Friends, 40 St Mary's Court, Baneswell, Newport. NP20 4DP	Stow Hill	1x New World Cooker Total = £399.99 Within criteria		Supported by Cllr M Al-Nuaimi	Approve £399 x 60% = £239.40 Criteria met - 7.1 Social/Recreational

<p>500111 Scanned Applications\2016.2017\500111 – Alway & Ringland Amateur Boxing Club</p> <p>Alway ABC Old Ambulance Hall Ladyhill Road Newport NP19 9NX</p>	<p>Tracy Byron 132 Partridge Way, Duffryn, Newport NP10 8WP</p>	<p>Alway Ringland</p>	<p>3x heavy duty leather punch bags; 3x speedball; 6x sparring gloves; 6x bag gloves; 10x skipping ropes; 2x maize bags; 1x coach leather paddles; 2x core bags 10kg; 1x gym timer; 1x medicine ball; 4x championship reverse boxing kit</p> <p>Total=£1,799.82 Within criteria</p>		<p>Supported by Cllrs Malcolm Linton, J Guy, R Truman, D Harvey</p>	<p>Approve</p> <p>£1,799.82 x 60% = £1,079.89</p> <p>Criteria met - 7.1 Social/Recreational</p>
<p>500112 Scanned Applications\2016.2017\500112 – U3A Shaftesbury St Methodist Church</p>	<p>Barbara Phillips, 15 St Julians Road, Newport, NP20 5HN</p>	<p>All</p>	<p>1 x defibrillator £720</p>			<p>Approved and paid</p>
<p>500113 Scanned Applications\2016.2017\500113 – Somerton Dance Masters MJB</p>	<p>Debra Clark 9 Poplar Road, Newport NP19 9AX</p>	<p>(Somerton)</p>	<p>1 x boombox - £489.97; 30 x tracksuits - £600 Total = 1,089.97 Within criteria</p> <p>Room hire – Total: £1,040 Outside criteria</p>	<p>3 payments 9/7/2013</p>	<p>Supported by Cllrs, J Guy, R Truman, D Harvey</p>	<p>Approve</p> <p>£1,089.97 x 60% = £653.98</p> <p>Criteria met 7.1 Social/Recreational</p>
<p>500114 Scanned Applications\2016.2017\500114 - St Martin in the Gaer Church.pdf</p>	<p>Rev'd Canon Jennifer Mole, 28 Joyce Close, Newport, NP20 3JD</p>	<p>Gaer</p>	<p>Phase 3 Decorating costs Total: £12,451.60</p>	<p>April 2011 £5,000</p>	<p>Supported by Mark Whitcutt and Deborah Wilcox</p>	<p>Approved</p> <p>£10,000 x 60% = £6,000.</p>

			Outside criteria – total: £2,451.60			Criteria met - No.4 Places of worship
500115 Scanned Applications\2016.2017\500115 - Newport Borough Brass Band.pdf	Richard Johnson 313 Cyncoed Road, Cardiff CF23 6PB	n/a	Annual competition costs Total: £1,080.			Not Approved Outside criteria – No. 10 Annual Event
500116 Scanned Applications\2016.2017\500116 – Mr J Pretorius 61 Thornbury Park Newport NP10 9DR	D McEwan – Rehabilitation Officer, Social Services	n/a	Recarpeting of home Total: £822.55 Within criteria	£325 2/11/2016		Approve £822.55 x 60% = £493.53 Criteria met - No.3 Poverty
500117 Scanned Applications\2016.2017\500117 - HCPT Hosanna House and Childrens Pilgrimage Trust	HCPT – Mr M Halford 142 Cefn Road, Newport. NP10 9EX	n/a	Trip to Lourdes 8 x £750 Total: £6,000 Within criteria	October 2015, 2016		Not Approved Outside criteria No.2 two previous claims
500118 Scanned Applications\2016.2017\500118 – Rogerstone Bowls Club	John P Walsh – Chairman. c/o 16 High Cross Close, Rogerstone. NP10 9DH	Rogerstone	Renovation of green ditches Total: £2,418 Within criteria	Dec 2015 £1500		Approve £2,418 x 60% = £1,450.80 Criteria met – 7.1 Social/Recreational
500119 Scanned Applications\2016.2017\500119 – Newport Pantomime Society	Gareth Jones, 70 Caerau Road, Newport. NP20 4HT	n/a	Completion of staging Total: £1,357.20	NCC Grant 2015-2016 £6000		Approve £1,357.20 x 60% = £814.32

1 Queens Hill Newport NP20 5LD			Within criteria			Criteria 7.1 Social/Recreational
500120 Scanned Applications2016.2017\500120 – Shaftesbury Youf Gang Shaftesbury Comm Centre Evans Street Newport NP20 5LD	PC SO 22 Richard Davies, Bettws Police Station, Bettws Newport	Shaftesbury	Club kit Total £800 Within criteria Trips and activities, room hire Total: £4,040 Outside criteria		Cllr Cockeram supports request for kit but not trips	Approve £800.00 x 60% = £480.00 Fits criteria 7.1 Social/Recreational
500121 Scanned Applications2016.2017\500121 – St Michaels ABC Unit 34 Albany Trading Est Newport NP20 5NQ	Mr L Evans, 29 Anthony Drive, Caerleon Newport. NP18 3DT. Mr M Brogan, 104 Malpas Rd, Newport NP20 5PL	Shaftesbury	Project support IT equipment Total: £3,035.85 Within criteria	£936 2014	Supported by Cllr Cockeram	Approve £3,035.85 x 60%= £1,821.51 Criteria met - 7.1 Social/Recreational
500122 Scanned Applications2016.2017\500122 – Tabernacle United Reformed Church	Roger George, Woodstock, Llanvaches, Caldicott	n/a	Replace heating systems and upgrade pipework Total: £9,262.01 Within criteria	£500 Over 10 years ago		Approve £9,262.01 x 60%= £5,557.21 Criteria met - No.4 Places of worship
500123 Scanned Applications2016.2017\500123 – Kings Church	Hayley Corley, Kings Church, 71 Lower Dock St. NP20 1EH	n/a	Replace minibus Total: £10,000 Within criteria	£3,000 Nov 2013		Approve £10,000 x 60%= £6,000 Criteria met- No.3 Poverty

500124 Scanned Applications\2016.2017\500124 – Newport BME Youth Forum Group Newport Incubation Centre 35 Commercial Road Newport NP20 2PB	Andre Laida, 11 Potter Street, Newport. NP20 2DB	n/a	PA System, laptops, camera, screen,projector Total within criteria: £2,364 Venue hire, tutor fees, refreshments. Total=£360 outside criteria	£2,500 in 2015		Approve £2,364 x 60% = £1,418.40 Criteria met - 7.1 Social/Recreational
500125 Scanned Applications\2016.2017\500125 - St Julians Baptist Church.pdf	Mrs LA Strickland, 3 Croydon Close, Newport NP19 7JA	Beechwood	Replacement of church hall: Total=£10,000 Within criteria	£200 2015		£10,000 x 60% = £6,000 Criteria met No.4 Places of worship
500126 Scanned Applications\2016.2017\500126 – Faith Christian Centre	Michael Taylor, Wern Industrial Estate, Rogerstone, NP10 9FQ	Rogerstone	Digital mixer, lighting and creative media equipment Total = £10,170.36 Outside criteria – Total: £170.36		Supported by Cllr C Evans	Approve £10,000 x 60% = £6,000 Criteria met 7.1/7.2 Social/Recreational
500127 Scanned Applications\2016.2017\500127 - Menter Iaith Casnewydd.pdf	Catrin Devonald, Llawr D, Prifysgol de Cymru, Usk Way, Newport NP20 2BP	n/a	Beat box equipment, other instruments, rap sessions, room hire, marketing, staff and admin. Total - £3411.45 Within criteria Total = £686.00 Outside criteria		n/a	Approve £3,411.45 x 60%= £2,046.87 Criteria met 7.1 Social/Recreational

500128 Scanned Applications\2016.2017\500128 - Malpas Road Evangelical Church.pdf	David Orphan – trustee, 9 Badgers Meadow, Ponthir NP18 1HG	Shaftesbury	Replace church roof Total= £10,000 Within criteria		Supported by Cllr Cockeram	Approve £10,000 x 60%= £6,000.00 Fits criteria No.4 Places of worship
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Funds carried forward from 2016/17 - £139.94

Total funds to allocate - £50,539.94

TOTAL SPEND (at 60%)

Within criteria - £49,694.39 (£50,414.39 inc UA3 which has already been approved)

Total outside criteria - £8,747.96