

Report

Chair of Cabinet



Part 1

Date: 23 January 2020

Subject Applications to Welsh Church Acts Fund 2019/20

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

Author Head of Finance

Ward All

Summary There were 13 applications received for grants from the Welsh Church Acts Fund up until September 2019 of which 7 meet the criteria for use of the fund.

Proposal (1) To consider and approve updated detailed criteria for considering applications, noting that they deal with the more detailed 'practical' issues when considering applications and not the core eligibility of what expenditure / projects the funds can be used for.

(2) Approve 7 applications as shown in Appendix One, for the first round tranche of applications in 2019/20 and agree a grant award of 80% of eligible expenditure.

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

Newport City Council receives an amount each year under the Welsh Church Acts fund to be distributed in accordance with its adopted criteria. For 2019/20, the amount available for Newport City Council to distribute is £72,935, which includes £17,304 carried over from 2018/19, plus £2,776 which was awarded in 2018/19 but which was then no longer required.

Following feedback that a once per year consideration of applications created unhelpful delays in awarding funds, these are now considered twice per year. The available funds have been split with £42,512 being awarded for this first tranche and £30,423 for the second half of the year, based on the first tranche being a longer period, from 30 October 2018 to 30 October 2019.

All eligible applications are awarded funds and if they exceed available funds in any period, a consistent percentage of funds applied for is awarded to each application to keep the total within available funds. Any unused funds that may exist are carried forward for future applications.

The list of applications in the period to 30th September 2019 and whether they have been successful or not is included in appendix 1.

Revision to existing criteria

There is set criteria provided by the Welsh Church Fund (appendix 2) and councils are able to set further 'practical', local parameters in order to apply the fund consistently in line with the core Welsh Church Fund criteria and also meet local issues/priorities within the overall core criteria. The current local criteria were revised in 2010, and a review has now been undertaken in order to update them, reflecting on the nature of applications we receive at this time.

Enquires have been made to other local authorities regarding their own criteria and approval processes. From the information that was gathered, two of the local authorities' criteria were broadly in line with our own, which approves grants to a wide range of groups and individuals. There is one authority however, where awards are now only made to support individuals experiencing hardship. In order to achieve as wide a benefit as possible from this fund, it is proposed that all elements of the Welsh Church Fund criteria are maintained here in Newport.

Any applications which are submitted are first judged against the criteria which is based upon the Welsh Church Fund Act 1914 (appendix 2). Newport City Council have operated under these guidelines for a number of years, although some additional local parameters were introduced in 2010. These confirmed the following:

- The limit to the grant funding given to individuals and group.
- The grant will not be provided in the form of a loan
- Grants will only be considered where either that individual is a resident of Newport or the group or organisation benefits the residents of Newport.
- Grants will not be provided to support the day to day running costs.

Since this last revision in 2010, the type of applications have changed and the local guidelines no longer provide the clarity required to assess these. There is no revision to the criteria based on the Welsh church Act 1914, and there will still therefore be the requirement that each application will meet the charitable purposes as defined within those criteria in the first instance. However, the local criteria have been tightened and updated where applicable (appendix 3). The main changes proposed now are as follows:

- The list of acceptable applicants has now been clearly defined
- Whilst the fund will still not support individuals, groups and organisations day to day running costs, what constitutes as 'day to day running costs' have now been defined. The guidelines make it clear that the fund will not support applications where it is likely to create an ongoing dependency on the fund for future financial assistance
- Any grants for equipment will only be considered if it is for the setup of any new group, otherwise it will be classed as day-to-day running costs.

- Grants will not be provided to same organisation in successive years, unless the application is for a church and it is for a different and distinct purpose than the previous grant awarded and there is no alternative funding available
- There is a presumption against making grants to individuals for personal development matters
- It clearly states that evidence of costs incurred is required to be submitted to the council six months after payment of the grant.

The Cabinet member is asked to approve the revisions to the criteria as per appendix 3.

Applications 30 October to 30 September

These are shown in Appendix 1 and of the thirteen received and listed, seven meet the criteria and are recommended to be awarded funds. The total sums requested from these seven amount to £53,141 and therefore it is recommended that 80% of the applied for funds can be awarded.

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

In terms of the local criteria:

The updates here do not change the core Church Act criteria and therefore allow funds to be distributed to a wide range of potential applicants and groups. They tighten definitions and provide more clarity to some issues which current applications give rise to on occasions. In that respect, the updates to the local criteria are relatively minor.

However, another option which is available would be to consider revising the criteria to a much narrower range, and focus on a specific charitable purpose. As stated above, this is a decision that one authority has made to use the Welsh Church funds specifically for the relief of poverty and to support individuals experiencing hardship. This is an option that can be explored further. However, moving to this option would mean that the Welsh Church fund will only benefit a small range of individuals. It could also potentially mean that there will not be the required number of applications to fully utilise Newport's allocation each year.

In terms of the applications received to September 2019:

They have been assessed by the HoF, with colleagues and the seven successful applications are deemed to be within the eligibility criteria.

Preferred Option and Why

To approve the revised criteria and keep the current wide range of core eligibility criteria to which funds can be applied to. This will keep the current wide base of individuals and groups and organisations that can apply for financial support

To make the awards as detailed in the attached appendix 1.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

There are no direct financial consequences on Council budgets. The applications recommended for funding are within the agreed criteria 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.

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: 15 January 2020

APPENDIX 1: 30 OCTOBER 2018 – 30 SEPTEMBER 2019

SUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS

Ref No	Name and Address of Organisation	Details of Request	Comment	Recommendation
..\Feb - March 2019\Scanned Applications\Scanned Application 00150 - St Johns the Baptist.pdf	St John the Baptist Church, Penhow NP26 3AD	Total £16,326	Improve Access – Replace paving Received an Award in 2016 - £6000 (Advancement of religion)	£10,000 maximum grant to be considered Approved - this relates towards the restoration and the maintenance of any public place of worship or burial ground
Scanned Applications\Scanned Application 0000319-20 Newport Cycle Speedway Club.pdf	Newport Cycle Speedway Club Newport Sports Village Newport NP19 4RA	£1,660 total – Re gravel track	Based in Newport – benefit whole of Newport (Sports & Recreation)	£1,660 Approved – of benefit to all residents of Newport. Grant is towards re-graveling the track and not contributing towards the day to day running costs
Scanned Applications\Scanned Application 0000419-20 St Peter's Church Llandevaud.pdf	St Peters Church Llandevaud Court Llandevaud Newport NP18 2AD	£9,605 total £8,315 Roof repairs £1,290 Entrance repairs	Award received 2013 for new path (Advancement of Religion)	£9,605 Approved - this relates towards the restoration and the maintenance of any public place of worship or burial ground
Scanned Applications\Scanned Application 0000519-20 Llanwern Village Hall.pdf	Llanwern Village Hall Station Road Llanwern Newport	£9,228 total kitchen refurb	Hall used by local and wider Community for Social groups, toddlers groups, regular “fun” days with proceeds donated to charity (e.g McMillian & Dementia Cake sakes Award received 2015 £4,348 (Social and Recreational	£9,228 Approved – of benefit to all residents of Newport. Grant is towards refurbishing the kitchen and not contributing towards the day to day running costs

Scanned Applications\Scanned Application 0000719-20 Alcan Indoor Bowls.pdf	Alcan Indoor Bowls Club Tregwilym Road Rogerstone Newport	£7,440 total Install disabled toilet	Based in the Drill Hall – currently over 60 members – currently no disabled facility (Social & Recreational)	£7,440 Approved – allows to offer the services to a wider range of residents
Scanned Applications\Scanned Application 0000919-20 Stow Park Church.pdf	Stow Park Church Brynhyfryd Road Newport NP20 4FX	£10,750 total Essential repairs	Awards received prior to 2015 amounting £750. (Advancement of Religion)	£10,000 (maximum grant awarded) Approved - this relates towards the restoration and the maintenance of any public place of worship or burial ground
Scanned Applications\Scanned Application 0001019-20 Aces Basketball Club.pdf	c/o 40 Shakespeare Crescent Gaer Newport NP20 3JY	£7,153 total £5,208 Equipment £30 Advertisement £180 Training £1,000 Transport £735 Venue Hire	Increase basketball provision for local women (Sports & Recreational)	£5,208 £5,208 only Approved – Grant to support equipment will only be approved if an established group / or organisation is developing or expanding in order to reach a wider number of Newport Residents Running costs are not supported

UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS

Ref No	Name and Address of Organisation	Details of Request	Comment	Recommendation
..\Feb - March 2019\Scanned Applications\Scanned Application 00148 - Maindee Unlimited.pdf	Maindee Unlimited, Maindee Library, 79 Chepstow Road, Newport NP19 8BY	Total £1,967 - equipment	Large Community presence, used for training, workshops, volunteer library. IT equipment to improve services for users with early dementia or limited vision Received an Award in 2016/17 - £4373	Not Approved Grant not approved as it is for equipment, and the group is not developing or expanding in order to reach a wider number of Newport residents

			(Grants for the Community) & (Social & Recreational)	
..\Feb - March 2019\Scanned Applications\Scanned Application 00149 - Music in Hospitals Care Cymru.pdf	Music in Hospitals and Care Cymru, RWCMD, North Road, Cardiff CF10 3ER	Total £7,200 24 x Concerts (£300 each inc. admin costs)	Applied in 17/18 – refused does not benefit Newport wider community (Social & Recreational)	Out of scope Not approved as this does not benefit the wider community in Newport.
Scanned Applications\Scanned Application 0000119-20 Clybiau Plant.pdf	Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids Club Bridge House Station Road Cardiff CF14 5UW	£3,860 total £2,160 1 st Aid Training £290 Staff Recruitment £670 Staff Supervisions /Appraisals £740 Recruitment workshop	Based in Cardiff – Support clubs in Newport (Sports & Recreation)	Not Approved Application is to allow the organisation to provide a first aid course. This is classed as being ‘day to day’ running costs. Groups and organisations need to self-sufficient and not create a dependency on the fund.
Scanned Applications\Scanned Application 0000219-20 St Martins Church.pdf	St Martins Church Chapel Terrace Magor NP26 3ET	£1,000 total Second hand organ	See email – would like early payment (Advancement of Religion)	Not Approved Not approved as this application is for equipment inside the church, not for the maintenance or restoration of the ‘fabric’ of the building of a public place of worship
Scanned Applications\Scanned Application 0000619-20 Hartridge RFC.pdf	Hartridge RFC c/o The Open Hearth Hub Hendre Farm Drive Newport NP19 7BS	£9,497.50 total	Hire of pitches and changing facilities during refurbishment... predominately Ringland community where there is high deprivation... (Relief in Need) (Social & Recreational)	Not Approved Criteria specifically states that room hire is a ‘day to day’ running cost which is not supported

Scanned Applications\Scanned Application 0000819-20 Faryad Ali.pdf	Faryad Ali 19 Harrow Road Newport NP19 0BU	£400 total Laptop purchase	Partially sighted gentleman. (People who are blind...)	Not Approved This does not fit into any criteria, the purpose of a laptop would not reduce the hardship or distress of the individual.
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APPENDIX 2

WELSH CHURCH ACTS FUND

The Charitable purposes for which the Fund may be applied

The Advancement of Education

Educational

1. The provision of benefits which are not readily available from other sources for persons of any age in one or more of the following ways –
 - (i) The award of scholarships, bursaries, loans or maintenance allowances to enable or to assist study at any school, university or other place of learning, approved by the Council, which may if the Council think fit include allowances to dependants;
 - (ii) The provision of financial assistance, outfits, clothing, tools, instruments, other equipment, or books or loans to enable pupils or students on leaving school, university or any other educational establishment to prepare for, or to assist their entry into a profession, trade or calling;
 - (iii) The award of scholarships or maintenance allowances or loans to enable beneficiaries to travel abroad to pursue their education;
 - (iv) The provision, or assistance towards the provision of facilities of any kind not normally provided by a local education authority, or a grant maintained school, for recreation, social and physical training at a school, university or other educational establishment;
 - (v) The provision of financial assistance to enable pupils and students to study music or other arts;
 - (vi) The provision of financial assistance to enable beneficiaries to undertake apprenticeships.

Libraries, museums, art galleries etc

2. The advancement of knowledge and appreciation of the arts and literature of Wales and, in particular, in furtherance of those purposes but without prejudice to the generality thereof –
 - (i) the establishment, maintenance, replenishment or aiding of charitable institutions, libraries, museums, art galleries; or art, scientific or industrial exhibitions (including exhibitions relating to industrial archaeology); whether national or local, for the principal use and benefit of the Welsh people;
 - (ii) the assistance of charitable societies for study and research in subjects connected with Welsh history, topography, literature and life;
 - (iii) the provision of lectures, exhibitions and equipment;
 - (iv) the acquisition, preservation and publication of records and documents;
 - (v) the provision of suitable premises (by erection, purchase, lease or hiring for occasional use) for any of the purposes authorised by this paragraph.

The Relief of Poverty

Relief in need

3. The relief either generally or individually of persons who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress by the making of grants of money or the provision of, or payment for, items, services or facilities calculated to reduce the need, hardship or distress of such persons.

The Advancement of Religion

Places of worship and burial grounds

4. The contribution towards the restoration and maintenance of any place of public worship or any burial ground.

Other Purposes Beneficial to the Community

Relief in sickness

5. The relief in cases of need of persons who are sick, convalescent, disabled, handicapped or infirm by the provision of, or payment for, items, services or facilities which are calculated to alleviate the suffering or assist the recovery of such persons, but which are not readily available to them from other sources.

Elderly persons

6. The provision or assisting in the provision of accommodation for elderly persons who by reason of the infirmities and disabilities of age have need of such reception, care and attention. The provision of funds to organisations promoting the welfare of elderly persons.

Social and recreational

7.
 - (i) The provision of, or assisting in the provision of, facilities for recreation or other leisure time occupation being facilities which are available to the members of the public at large and which are provided in the interests of social welfare with a view to improving the conditions of life of the persons for whom they are intended and, in particular, in furtherance of those purposes but without prejudice to the generality thereof, the provision of, or assisting in the provision of, playing fields, other sporting facilities, parks, open spaces and centres or halls for meetings, lectures or classes;
 - (ii) Sub-paragraph (1) is intended, in particular, to be concerned with the provision of, or assisting in the provision of, facilities etc to persons in need by reason of their youth, old age, infirmity or disablement, poverty or social and economic circumstances.

Aesthetic, architectural, historical and scientific matters

8. The advancement of the education and public benefit of the Welsh people by promoting their interest in aesthetic, architectural, historical or scientific matters relating to Wales and in particular in furtherance of those matters but without prejudice to the generality thereof –
 - (i) the acquisition and preservation of –
 - (a) land of special interest in relation to science and natural history;
 - (b) land, buildings or objects of beauty or of historic or architectural interest.
 - (ii) the acquisition, preservation and publication of records and documents of historic interest.

Medical and social research, treatment, etc

9. The preservation and protection of the physical and mental health of society and, in particular, in furtherance of those purposes but without prejudice to the generality thereof –
 - (i) the advancement of education in the theory and practice of medicine;
 - (ii) the promotion of medical and social research and schemes for the prevention and treatment of disease and publishing the results of such research;
 - (iii) the provision of nursery and convalescent homes and hostels.

Probation etc

10. Making grants in cases of need for the assistance of –
 - (i) persons placed on probation, or children and young persons from community homes or any other Institution of a substantially similar nature established under statutory authority;
 - (ii) the families of any such persons, children or young persons;
 - (iii) discharged prisoners,

People who are Blind or Visually Impaired

11. Provision for the welfare of persons who are blind or visually impaired, including the provision of charitable homes and holiday homes.

Emergencies or disasters

12. The contribution towards the alleviation of the effects of emergencies or disasters involving destruction of or danger to life, and property and directly assisting persons in need as a result of such emergencies and disasters.

Other charitable organisations

13. Contributions towards charitable organisations, the purposes of which are consistent with the provisions of this Scheme or the Welsh Church Acts 1914 to 1945.

APPENDIX 3

Newport City Council – List of Criteria for Welsh Church Fund Act.

When deciding applications to the Welsh Church Acts Fund, the application, in the first instance must fall within the Charitable purposes identified in the Welsh Church Fund Act (Appendix 2)

List of Additional Criteria set by Newport City Council

1. Financial limits on grants will be imposed at £1,000 for individuals and £10,000 for groups and organisations
2. Grants will only be considered to groups, organisations and charities which can demonstrate that they are of benefit to the residents of Newport. This can include national organisations which have a base in Newport serving Newport residents. The groups and organisations that will benefit from grant allocations are;
 - i. Churches and Religious Groups
 - ii. Church Parishes
 - iii. Community Groups and Charities
 - iv. Sports and Recreation Clubs
 - v. Environment group
 - vi. Individuals that have an identified and proven need of financial assistance
 - vii. Other deemed charitable causes by the Cabinet member and the Section 151 officer.
 - viii. The fund will not support general Adult Groups for recreational activities
 - ix. The fund will not allocate funds to Community and Town Councils
 - x. There will be no allocations to Private business and other public bodies
3. Grants will not be provided to support the day to day running costs of groups and organisations, especially where these are likely to create an ongoing dependency on the fund for future financial assistance. Group and organisations should be self-sufficient and will have access to other funding. Day to day running costs include, but not limited to:
 - I. Hire of vehicles
 - II. Room hire
 - III. Equipment
 - IV. Rent of a premises
 - V. Travelling expenses
 - VI. Annual trips
 - VII. Outing / Trips
 - VIII. Salaries
4. Grants for equipment will be considered if it is for the setup of a new group or organisation that will benefit the people of Newport. Or if that an established group / organisation is developing or expanding in order to reach a wider number of Newport residents.
5. Grants will not be made to the same organisation in successive years, unless it is a church application and applications will only be considered if it is for a different and distinct purpose.
6. Grants to individuals will only be considered where they are a resident of the City of Newport and can clearly demonstrate there is an identified and proven need of financial assistance, and there is no alternative source of funding available for the intended purpose.
7. There will be a presumption against making grants to individuals for education, health, sporting, artistic or other personal development matters
8. Grants will not be provided in the form of a loan

Notes

9. The Welsh Church fund will pay future awards by BACS payment and for organisations and groups the payment will only be made to a company bank account.
10. All evidence is required to be submitted to the council six months after the grant has been paid.