

Public Document Pack

Date of meeting Tuesday, 17th September, 2013
Time 7.00 pm
Venue Committee Room 2, Civic Offices, Merrial Street,
Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire, ST5 2AG
Contact Louise Stevenson

Grants Assessment Panel

AGENDA

PART 1 – OPEN AGENDA

- 1 Apologies
- 2 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING** (Pages 1 - 2)
To agree as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2013.
- 3 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
To receive declarations of interest from Members on items included in this agenda
- 4 **Community Chest** (Pages 3 - 6)
- 5 **Small Grants** (Pages 7 - 30)
- 6 **Cultural Grants** (Pages 31 - 66)
- 7 **URGENT BUSINESS**
To consider any business which is urgent within the meaning of Section 100B (4) of the Local Government Act 1972

Members: Councillors Bannister, Mrs Burnett, Eagles, Mrs Heames, Mrs Johnson, Mrs Peers, Miss Walklate, Mrs Williams and Mrs Winfield (Chair)

Members of the Council: If you identify any personal training/development requirements from any of the items included in this agenda or through issues raised during the meeting, please bring them to the attention of the Democratic Services Officer at the close of the meeting.

Meeting Quorums :- 16+= 5 Members; 10-15=4 Members; 5-9=3 Members; 5 or less = 2 Members.

Officers will be in attendance prior to the meeting for informal discussions on agenda items.

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GRANTS ASSESSMENT PANEL

7.00 pm, Monday, 10 June 2013

Present:- Councillor Mrs Joan Winfield – in the Chair

Councillors Bannister, Eagles, Mrs Heames, Mrs Johnson, Mrs Peers and Miss Walklate

In attendance:- Robin Wiles (Partnerships Officer (Community Development)), Teresa Mason (Culture and Arts Manager), Nick Lamper (Senior Member Services Officer) and Jayne Briscoe (Democratic Services Officer)

1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies received.

2. COUNCILLOR DYLLIS CORNES

It was noted that Councillor Dyllis Cornes was no longer a member of the panel, and the panel expressed its gratitude to her for her commitment and contribution to its work in previous years.

3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 4 March 2013 be approved as a correct record.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5. COMMUNITY CHEST

Prior to consideration of this item the panel received a presentation from Robin Wiles, Partnership Officer (Community Development) on the funding for voluntary and community organisations. A copy of the presentation is available at <http://moderngov.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/documents/s7694/NBC%20Grants%20presentation%20GAP%20June%202013.pdf>

The Panel considered a report informing it of Community Chest applications processed for the financial years April 2012 to March 2013 and March 2013 to March 2014.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

6. SMALL GRANTS

The Panel received a report on a 2012/13 Small Grants Appeal on behalf of the 79th URC Scout Group. The appeal had been dismissed.

Grants Assessment Panel - 10/06/13

The Panel also considered three applications for a Small Grant.

Resolved:

- (1) That the following grants be approved:-

Organisation	£
Savanna	2,500
Newcastle Ladsandads	770

- (2) That the application made by North Staffs LinkLine be deferred pending a meeting with the organisation and further information relating to:-
- How the service is promoted
 - The type of advice offered
 - The geographical area of the clients
 - How the clients are referred to the service
 - Testimonials

7. CULTURAL GRANTS

Consideration was given to four applications for a Cultural Grant.

The application submitted by the Jude Theatre Company was considered as urgent business with the consent of the Chair under Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as the application had been received since the publication of the agenda and the event was to be held prior to the next meeting of the panel.

(Councillor Eagles left the meeting at 7:55 pm following consideration of the Moseley Railway Trust and prior to consideration of the remaining applications.)

Resolved:

- (1) That the following grants be approved:-

Organisation	£
Moseley Railway Trust	1500
Friends of Talke Library	500

- (2) That the applications from grant aid to Newcastle Town Centre Partnership and the Jude Theatre company be declined on this occasion.

8. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no other items of urgent business.

COUNCILLOR MRS JOAN WINFIELD
Chair

The meeting concluded at 8.30 pm.

COMMUNITY CHEST

Submitted by: Sara Shuker
Portfolio: Resources & Efficiency
Ward(s) affected: All Wards affected

Purpose of the Report

To inform Members of Community Chest applications processed at the time of writing this report for the period April 2013 to March 2014.

Recommendations

Panel note the applications received & processed to date.

Reasons

Grants Assessment Panel's remit is to receive reports on Community Chest, and, if appropriate, determine whether applications meet the Council's Corporate Priorities and merit an award.

1. Background

- 1.1 28 Applications have been received for the financial year 2013/14 from 12 Locally Based Bodies: -
- A total of £15,145.74 has been granted from £20,511.74 applied for
 - 19 received full grants applied for and 4 received partial grant, 1 received no grant, 1 application was withdrawn and 3 are awaiting appraisal.

2. Issues

- 2.1 No applications from Locally Based Bodies, requiring Panel decision, have been received for consideration by this meeting.

3. Proposal

- 3.1 Panel note the information on grants awarded to date in 2013/14.

4. Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 All applications approved cover a range of the Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities

5. Financial and Resource Implications

5.1 A breakdown of current budgets for the Locally Based Bodies 2013/14

6. Recommendations

6.1 Panel note the applications received & processed to date.

7. Background Papers

7.1 Applications made from April 2013 to March 2014

No.	REF.	PANEL?	Organisation/Project.	Deferred.	Date completed	Applied for.	Granted.	Full or part	Total spend	Budget	Left	amount that can be carried forward	lose	Report Form rec'd
Audley	1 ARPC 1314 01		Audley Allotments Association/Secure Fencing for Audley Allotments			£1,000.00								
									£0.00	£ 3,720.00	£ 3,720.00			
BB&W	2 BB&W 1314 01		Betley & District Village Hall/Steps from hall to stage		05.08.13	£500.00	£250.00	P						
									£ 250.00	£ 1,117.62	£ 867.62			
C&HC									£0.00	£ 1,081.28	£ 1,081.28			
Chesterton	3 CCF 1314 01 4 CCF 1314 02 5 CCF 1314 03 6 CCF 1314 04 7 CCF 1314 05		3rd Chesterton Guides/Girlguiding activities Sugarcraft/Sugarcraft Recreational Art and craft group/Recreational art and craft group Salvation Army Parent & Toddler Group/Parent&Toddler The Crown Red Street FC/The crown red street fc		05.08.13 05.08.13 05.08.13 05.08.13	£500.00 £540.00 £1,000.00 £1,000.00	£500.00 £540.00 £1,000.00 £1,000.00	F F F F						
							£846.00		£3,040.00	£ 5,580.00	£ 2,540.00			
Clayton	8 CCC 1314 01		Midsummer Mayhem/Midsummer Mayhem		08.07.13	£500.00	£500.00	F						
									£ 500.00	£ 2,005.60	£ 1,505.60			
Keele	9 KPC 1314 01		Parish Church of St John the Baptist Keele/Keele Pilgrim Fest		29.04.13	£150.00	£150.00	F						
									£150.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 1,850.00			
Kidsgrove	10 KTC 1314 01 11 KTC 1314 02 12 KTC 1314 03 13 KTC 1314 04 14 KTC 1314 05 15 KTC 1314 06 16 KTC 1314 07		Tom Lowe Amateur Boxing Club/Own Boxing ring Linley & Kidsgrove RUFC/Local fitness and recruitment project The Potteries Guinea Pig Rescue/Welfare and animal charity event St Thomas Church, Kidsgrove/The Wade Community Centre Kidsgrove Carnival Association/Summer Holiday Special Trinity Dance Troupe/2014 season Friends of Kidsgrove Station Gardens		24.06.13 05.06.13 04.07.13 04.07.13 12.08.13 01.07.13 12.08.13	£1,000.00 £875.00 £240.00 £1,000.00 £1,000.00 £1,000.00 £500.00	£1,000.00 £875.00 £240.00 £500.00 £1,000.00 £0.00 £500.00	F F F F F Z F						
									£4,115.00	£ 11,160.00	£ 7,045.00			
Loggerheads									£0.00	£ 1,920.00	£ 1,920.00			
Madeley	17 MPC 1314 01		Madeley Tidy Group/Investment planting Vicarage Lane Madeley		22.07.13	£335.74	£335.74	F						
									£335.74	£ 2,000.37	£ 1,664.63			
M&Aston	18 MAPC 1314 01		Aston and Willoughbridge W/Lightweight table			£100.00		F						
									£0.00	£ 1,025.00	£ 1,025.00			
Marsh Hall	19 MHCC 1314 01		14th Basford Scout Group/Purchase of equipment due to restart of the scout section		29.04.13	£755.00	£755.00	F						
									£755.00	£11,231.90	£ 10,476.90			
Ramsey Road	20 RRCC 1314 01 21 RRCC 1314 02		Castletown Grange/Get up and get on Knutton Community Centre/Help for heros		31.07.13 31.07.13	£900.00 £1,000.00	£900.00 £1,000.00	F F						
									£1,900.00	£ 5,121.10	£ 3,221.10			
Silverdale									£0.00	£ 2,220.00	£ 2,220.00			
Whitfield (formerly Harriet Higgins)	22 WCC 1314 01 23 WCC 1314 02 24 WCC 1314 03 25 WCC 1314 04		15th St Giles' & St. George's Scout Group/New Beginnings- CANCELLED Midsummer Mayhem/Midsummer Mayhem Staffordshire Knights Youth Marching Band/Purchase of Aluphone instrument Arch North Staffs/Morrison Till receipts DV awareness project			£880.00 £500.00 £1,000.00 £495.00	£0.00 £500.00 £1,000.00 £350.00	W F F P						
									£1,850.00	£ 5,649.56	£ 3,799.56			
Whitmore	26 WPC 1314 01		Whitmore Art Group/Exhibition of arts and crafts		13.05.13	£895.00	£250.00	P						
									£250.00	£ 1,031.28	£ 781.28			
Wye Rd	27 WRCC 1314 01 28 WRCC 1314 02		BowBuddies Newcastle-under-Lyme Friendship Centre		07.05.13 24.06.13	£1,000.00 £1,000.00	£1,000.00 £1,000.00	F F						
									£2,000.00	£ 5,940.76	£ 3,940.76			
						£20,511.74	£15,145.74		£ 15,145.74	£ 62,804.47	£ 47,658.73	£	-	£

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SMALL GRANTS

Submitted by: Robin Wiles, Partnerships Officer (Community Development)

Portfolio: Resources and Efficiency

Ward(s) affected: The applications for consideration potentially affect all Wards

Purpose of the Report

To consider applications submitted to the Small Grants scheme for the second quarter of 2013/14.

Recommendations

Panel consider the applications submitted with a view to determining whether a grant should be awarded, and if so, at what level.

Panel consider a new approach to Grants Appeals.

Reasons

Grants Assessment Panel's remit is to determine which of the grant applications meet the Council's Corporate Priorities and merit an award.

1. Background

1.1 The Small Grants budget for 2013/14 is £22,000.00.

1.2 Voluntary & Community groups can apply for a grant of up to £2,500.00.

1.3 At the June 2013 Grants Assessment Panel meeting, two grants were awarded, totalling £3,270.00. This leaves £18,730.00 in the budget.

1.4 A Grants Appeals procedure was approved by Grants Assessment Panel at its meeting on 7th September 2010. The procedure has been used once, as reported to the last meeting of Grants Assessment Panel held on 10th June 2013, and therefore a review of that procedure may be considered appropriate.

2. Issues.

2.1 Applications. 7 applications, including 1 deferred from the previous meeting, are for consideration at this meeting, at a total of £14,483.00. For further information about applications for consideration for this meeting, please see Appendix Two.

2.2 Grants Appeals procedure. Following the use of the Appeals Procedure, it has been identified that there is a close correlation with the Council's Corporate Complaints, Compliments &

Comments Policy. It is therefore recommended that, in case of future appeals, appellants be directed to use this route to register their complaint – or their complement or comment.

3. Options Considered

3.1 For each application, GAP can award:

- Full grant.
- Partial Grant.
- No Grant.
- Defer a decision until the next Panel meeting, either to obtain further information, and/or to invite the applicant to attend the meeting dependant on whether there are any time constraints on projects seeking funding.

4. Proposal

4.1 The applications received are from eligible organisations, and contribute towards meeting the Council's Corporate Priorities and the priorities of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

4.2 Projects (not organisations) that receive a grant in two successive years are required to take a break for the following year before they are eligible to apply again.

4.3 Members consider each application on its merits, taking into account other possible funding options that applicant may be able to apply to.

4.4 Members consider replacing the Grants Appeals procedure with using the Corporate Complaints, Complements & Comments Policy for any grants appeals.

5. Reasons for Preferred Solution

5.1 There may be other sources of funding to which applicants can be directed should they be awarded no grant, or a partial grant.

5.2 The current Grants Appeals procedure requires the Panel Chair to deal with any appeal against a Panel decision; this could lead to a conflict of interests. Using the Corporate Complaints, Complements & Comments Policy instead would remove that, and be more independent of the Panel.

6. Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities

6.1 All the applications for consideration meet both Corporate Priorities and those of the Sustainable Community Strategy – please see the applications for further details.

7. Legal and Statutory Implications

7.1 Not applicable.

8. Equality Impact Assessment

8.1 All applications, if awarded, would be expected to have a positive impact on the communities that they benefit.

9. Financial and Resource Implications

9.1 The balance in the budget for the Small Grants scheme is £18,730.00.

9.2 Applications submitted for this GAP meeting total £14,483.00. If all applications were approved for a full grant, that would leave £4,247.00 in the budget.

9.3 Recommendations for grants to be awarded total £8,410.00 (plus £1,500.00 from the Cultural Grants budget). If these recommendations were approved, that would leave £6,073.00 in the Small Grants budget.

10. Major Risks

10.1 Not Applicable.

11. Key Decision Information

11.1 One application for consideration primarily affects the Ward of Audley & Bignall End; the other applications potentially affect all Wards.

12. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions

12.1 Not Applicable.

13. Recommendations

13.1 Members consider each application on its merits, taking into account other possible funding options that applicants may be able to access.

14. List of Appendices

14.1 Small Grant applications – details.

14.2 2013/14 Application Record.

14.3 Corporate Complaints, Complements or Comments Policy.

15. Background Papers

15.1 Copies of applications will be e-mailed to Panel members. Hard copies will not be made available to reduce printing costs, but can be viewed in advance - please contact Robin Wiles on 742493 or robin.wiles@newcastle-staffpartnership.org.uk.

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APPLICANT	REF	AWARD REQUEST	THE ORGANISATION AND ITS PROJECT	COST OF PROJECT	PREVIOUS AWARDS	OTHER FUNDING	RECOMMENDATION
North Staffs LinkLine.	SG 1314 03.	£2,500.00.	<p><u>Deferred from GAP meeting, 10th June 2013.</u></p> <p>North Staffs LinkLine is a Registered Charity, based in Clayton, that provides a free telephone befriending and support service for elderly and vulnerable residents across the Borough.</p> <p>They are seeking funding towards their annual running costs of £26,151.00.</p> <p>A decision on this application was deferred pending a meeting with the organisation and further information relating to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the service is promoted • The type of advice offered • The geographical area of the clients • How the clients are referred to the service • Testimonials <p>Two visits to & meetings with North Staffs LinkLine have taken place on 18th June 2013 & 13th August 2013.</p> <p>Additional information for Panel Members will be circulated prior to the meeting, including:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on meeting, 18th June 2013. • Testimony from a relative. • Testimony from Independent Living Officer, Aspire. • Testimony from Community Development Co-ordinator, Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent Partnership NHS Trust. • Flyer from a Kidsgrove project. • Equal Opportunities Policy. <p>www.nslinkline.org.uk</p>	£2,500.00.	None.	<p>Give it Sum, £11,250.00 – confirmed.</p> <p>Community Chest, £890.00 – confirmed.</p>	£2,500.00.

SMALL GRANTS – REPORT TO GRANTS ASSESSMENT PANEL Monday 16th September 2013.

APPLICANT	REF	AWARD REQUEST	THE ORGANISATION AND ITS PROJECT	COST OF PROJECT	PREVIOUS AWARDS	OTHER FUNDING	RECOMMENDATION
Audley Allotments Association.	SG 1314 04	£1,500.00.	Audley Allotments Association are seeking funding towards the cost of purchasing & installing security fencing around their Allotments. The Allotments suffered extensive vandalism in February 2013, and are seeking to erect security fencing on the advice of the Police.	£7,795.20	None.	<p>A total of <u>£6,500.00, all to be confirmed:-</u></p> <p>Audley Parish Council, £1,000.00.</p> <p>Community Chest, £1,000.00.</p> <p>Partners Assuring a Safer Staffordshire, £2,000.00.</p> <p>Aspire Housing, £1,000.00.</p> <p>Staffordshire County Council Local Community Fund, £1,000.00.</p> <p>Rotary Club of Audley, £500.00.</p>	£750.00.

SMALL GRANTS – REPORT TO GRANTS ASSESSMENT PANEL Monday 16th September 2013.

APPLICANT	REF	AWARD REQUEST	THE ORGANISATION AND ITS PROJECT	COST OF PROJECT	PREVIOUS AWARDS	OTHER FUNDING	RECOMMENDATION
Landau Ltd.	SG 1314 05	£2,400.00.	<p>Landau is a Registered Charity that aims to provide supported employment & training opportunities for people with learning disabilities.</p> <p>They are seeking funds for 6 months rental cost of facilities for their Community Café based at Cornerstones Community Centre in Silverdale, a social enterprise that operates as a training café, providing opportunities for people with learning disabilities, who are referred by Social Workers, as well as volunteering opportunities for local people.</p> <p>http://www.landau.co.uk/our-services/cornerstone/</p>	£2,400.00.	No.	<p><u>For the project overall:-</u></p> <p>DWP Community Support Fund, £12,300.00 – confirmed.</p> <p>Staffordshire Adult & Community Learning, £10,087.85 - confirmed.</p> <p>Personal Budget Holders via Staffordshire Adult Social Care, paid monthly in arrears, £1,488.00 as at 14.8.13.</p>	£1,200.00.

SMALL GRANTS – REPORT TO GRANTS ASSESSMENT PANEL Monday 16th September 2013.

APPLICANT	REF	AWARD REQUEST	THE ORGANISATION AND ITS PROJECT	COST OF PROJECT	PREVIOUS AWARDS	OTHER FUNDING	RECOMMENDATION
Newcastle-under-Lyme Lions Club.	SG 1314 06	£800.00.	<p>Newcastle-under-Lyme Lions Club is part of an international network of charitable organisations that seek to raise funds and carry out charitable activities.</p> <p>“Message in a Bottle” is a scheme whereby elderly & vulnerable residents can leave information about themselves to assist services in case of an emergency in the home.</p> <p>A Small Grant was issued last year for the project, which has proved successful. They are seeking funds to cover the cost of meeting that extra demand.</p> <p>www.newcastlelions.co.uk</p>	“Unlimited”.	2012/13, £800.00.	N/A	£500.00.
Green Age (at Blore Heath Farm).	SG 1314 07	£2,323.00.	<p>Green Age is a Social Enterprise based at Blore Heath Farm near Loggerheads. They seek to provide day care activities for older people in the Borough based on the Care Farm approach.</p> <p>They are seeking funds for their “Crafternoons” project that will cover 8 weekly sessions with 10 participants in each session.</p> <p>They received a Small Grant in 2011/12, with a very positive Evaluation Report received.</p> <p>www.green-age.org.uk</p>	£2,323.00.	2011/12, £1,000.00.	Course fees, c£400.00	£1,000.00 + £500.00 from the Cultural Grants budget = £1,500.00.

SMALL GRANTS – REPORT TO GRANTS ASSESSMENT PANEL Monday 16th September 2013.

APPLICANT	REF	AWARD REQUEST	THE ORGANISATION AND ITS PROJECT	COST OF PROJECT	PREVIOUS AWARDS	OTHER FUNDING	RECOMMENDATION
Gifted Workshops CIC.	SG 1314 08	£2,500.00.	<p>Gifted Workshops are a Silverdale-based Social Enterprise that provides creative art & music workshops.</p> <p>They are seeking funds for their “Music Madness” project that will provide after-school workshops for disabled & disadvantaged young people, siblings and families.</p> <p>They received a Small Grant in 2012/13 for a similar project, and for which a very positive Evaluation Report was received.</p> <p>www.giftedworkshops.com</p>	£2,500.00.	2012/13, £1,950.00.	N/A	£1,000.00 + £1,000.00 from Cultural Grants budget = £2,000.00.
Peter Pan Nursery for Children with Special Needs.	SG 1314 09	£2,460.00.	<p>Peter Pan Nursery for Children with Special Needs is a Registered Charity that “provides a supportive environment where children with special needs are encouraged to reach their full potential and to provide pastoral support for their parents and carers”.</p> <p>They are seeking funds to provide sessions of specialist care for children with a range of special needs.</p> <p>www.thepeterpannursery.com</p>	£2,460.00 (£236,850 overall).	No.	<p>Children In Need, £96,000 over 3 years from 1.11.13.</p> <p>Barbra Ward Charitable Trust, £5,000.00 to be issued June 2014.</p>	£1,460.00.

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Classification: NULBC UNCLASSIFIED

**SMALL GRANTS – REPORT TO GRANTS ASSESSMENT PANEL Monday
16th September 2013 – Appendix 3.**



Corporate Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy 2008

**Revised May 2012
V.6**

1. Introduction

1.1 The Council recognises the right of its customers to complain and indeed welcomes complaints as a valuable form of feedback about its services. Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council is committed to using information gained from complaints to help drive forward improvements to services and to better meet the needs of customers

1.2 The procedure is intended to allow the Council to formally manage corporate complaints, comments and compliments through the Customer Relations Officer.

1.3 The Council's Head of Customer and ICT Services champions this area of work for the Authority whilst the Customer Relations Officer is responsible for overseeing the implementation of corporate procedures for complaints resolution, and that the deadlines for responses detailed in this document are met.

1.4 This procedure defines the process for complaints, how the Customer Relations Officer is kept informed, the timeline for dealing with complaints and corporate ownership of the procedure.

1.5 The importance of a robust complaints procedure should be seen as an important mechanism by all Council staff to help drive through and deliver the Improvement Programme which underpins this Council's commitment to Putting People First and its priority of Achieving Excellence.

1.6 Details of the procedure will be made available and publicised on the Council's Intranet, the Internet, at the induction process for Members and staff, in the Employees' Handbook and through leaflets available at Council points of contact with the public.

1.7 The Council understands that many complaints will be dealt with informally at the time they are first raised to the satisfaction of the person complaining. If the customer is not satisfied, the procedure then gives an opportunity for the complaint to be fully investigated.

1.8 The procedure does not prejudice the customer's right to refer a complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman for further investigation if not satisfied with the resolution offered by the Council

2. Corporate Complaints

2.1 A complaint, for the purpose of this policy, is defined as:

“an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standards of service, actions or lack of action by the Council, their staff or contractors, affecting an individual customer or group of customers.”

2.2 It is important to remember that reporting a fault or a problem is not necessarily a complaint, but may be simply a request for service. An example of this would be reporting a faulty street light. (In most cases, the customer will accept that street lights occasionally develop faults and would only be dissatisfied if the light was not repaired after being reported, or if it had been faulty for a long time with no action.)

2.3 Complaints may be made orally or in writing, in person, by telephone, e-mail, fax or letter. Obstacles should not be put in the way of a potential complainant by insisting that the complaint be put in writing, or that a particular form be used.

2.4 Lack of action might include the Council failing to do something which it has been asked to do or the Council failing to do something which the customer thinks it should have done.

2.5 The Council must be given a reasonable opportunity to put things right before a customer's complaint is formally recorded under this procedure.

3. Aims of the procedure

3.1 The aims of the complaints procedure are to make sure that:-

- It is as simple and straightforward as possible for customers to make complaints about Council services.
- The customer feels that their complaint is being treated seriously, even if the resolution is not to their complete satisfaction.
- The customer is kept informed of the progress of their complaint.
- The Council responds to complaints within a reasonable time and in a courteous and professional manner.
- The customer is told how to take the complaint further if they are not satisfied with the resolution
- The Council learns from complaints and takes appropriate action to improve the quality of its services.

4. Scope of the procedure

4.1 The Complaints procedure will generally **include**:-

- Failure to provide a service at the level or standard expected by the Council
- The unhelpful attitude of a Council employee
- Neglect, or delay in answering a query or responding to a request for a service.
- Failure to follow the Council's agreed policies, rules or procedures, including the Council's recruitment procedure.
- Failure to consider all relevant information in coming to a decision.
- Malice, bias or unfair discrimination, in particular discrimination or harassment on the grounds of age, disability, gender, race or sexual orientation.

4.2 The Complaints procedure will generally **exclude**:-

- Complaints that amount to a disagreement with the Council about its decisions or policies rather than the way decisions have been made, for example, the level of Council Tax.
- A planning or development control matter where a right of objection exists, unless the complaint is about the way the matter has been administered.
- A Council decision using regulatory powers, for example, licences or certain environmental health functions, or when the decision is governed by other regulations such as benefit assessments or Council Tax recovery unless the complaint is about how the matter has been administered.
- A complaint that is, or could reasonably be expected to be, the subject of court or tribunal proceedings.
- Complaints that amount to a disagreement with, or refusal to accept, a rule of law which the Council is applying.
- Complaints about action taken in relation to dismissals, or decisions not to employ an applicant
- Requests for information or an explanation of a Council policy
- Complaints concerning matters of a democratic nature which are best addressed to your local councillor.

4.3 This procedure will:

- ensure that customer feedback (comments, compliments and formal complaints - 3Cs) are recorded, investigated and reported on in a consistent and timely manner.
- deliver customer satisfaction, improve performance through feedback, corrective and preventative action, and highlight examples of good practice.
- compliment existing corporate customer systems for logging and progressing customer service requests.
- ensure that ,wherever possible, services can take immediate action to resolve a customer's problem so that they do not have to raise a formal complaint to get the matter resolved.
- ensure that on the rare occasion that complainants (and/or anyone acting on their behalf) are identified as vexatious (habitual, persistent or aggressive) based on previous or current contact are managed appropriately.

4.4 This procedure is not for:

- addressing complaints about a Councillor; these are the responsibility of the Council's Standards Committee.
- addressing a complaint where a statutory right of appeal already exists such as planning decisions.

4.5 The Council is only able to progress formal complaints that are valid and follows the Local Government Ombudsman's standard for determining valid complaints. A statement of a point of view or personal opinion cannot be regarded as a valid complaint.

5. Time Limit on Investigations

5.1 The Council follows the same protocol as the Local Government Ombudsman relating to the time limit after which complaints will be investigated. Under the 12-month rule as described by the Local Government Ombudsman, the Council:

'will not normally entertain a complaint unless it is made to the Council or Councillor within 12 months of the day on which the complainant first became aware of the complaint.'

Depending upon the nature of the complaint and its impact, the Council may decide that this limitation is inappropriate. The Customer Relations Officer is available to give advice on the use of this limitation.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

The Head of Customer and ICT Services will:

- oversee and ensure the corporate complaints system complies with best practice, quality and efficiency standards
- ensure that where improvements are recommended they are implemented
- provide regular progress reports to Executive Management Team and Councillors

The Customer Relations Officer will:

- develop, co-ordinate and monitor the authority's complaints procedures to ensure that all members of the public who wish to complain receive a similar, high level of service
- re-direct to relevant departments any complaints received centrally
- collect and collate quarterly returns from departments
- report complaints performance to the Head of Customer and ICT Services
- train staff and advise on corporate complaints matters
- co-ordinate the authority's responses to complaints being investigated by the Local Government Ombudsman
- monitor complainants' satisfaction with how their complaints are dealt with.
- collect related equality monitoring data

7. Complaints procedure

Anyone who wishes to make a complaint may do so in person, by telephone, in writing (by letter, fax or e-mail.) or via the Council's website. Complaints need not be made to the actual service that is the subject of the complaint. Any member of staff will be able to accept a complaint in the first instance. A complainant can also request to speak to the officer or service concerned. Complaints of any type can also be made via a local Councillor.

Stage 1 Review & Response

7.1 The officer who takes the contact will either deal with the complaint on the spot or refer it to the appropriate department for action, and relate this information

to the complainant and inform the Customer Relations Officer in order for it to be logged.

7.2 The department will respond to the complainant in writing within **THREE** working days setting out their complaint to ensure that we have recorded the detail of your complaint correctly. If the complaint cannot be resolved straight away, such as in cases where further investigation is required, they may need to send a holding reply telling the customer when they can expect a full reply.

7.3 It is important at this stage that the complainant be reassured that their complaint will be treated as confidential, their identity will not be made public, they will not receive adverse treatment from the Council because of the complaint and the complaint is being taken seriously

7.4 If the complaint cannot be resolved within **TWENTY** working days of the original complaint, the complainant will be informed of the reasons in writing and the complainant will be offered the opportunity to progress to Stage 2. We will regard this as a formal complaint under the Complaints Procedure and the contact should be referred immediately to the Customer Relations Officer.

Stage 2 Independent Internal Appeal

7.5 The Customer Relations Officer will normally be the single point of contact used to deal with all Stage 2 customer complaints. The promotion of a single point of contact will prove beneficial for both customers and the Council as it will provide a coordinated approach to complaints handling.

7.6 The purpose of Stage 2 is to formally investigate the concern or complaint, consider the findings and make a decision about the outcome. Complaints will be escalated to Stage 2 where the response at Stage 1 is considered to be incomplete, unclear or unhelpful. An appeal will be considered within ten working days of our reply to Stage 1.

7.7 Should the Customer Relations Officer be in any way considered to be part of the complaint, we will appoint a senior officer not connected to the service you are complaining about to investigate the case. The officer will investigate any outstanding issues and produce a report on your case.

7.8 In requesting escalation, the customer should identify which elements of their complaint they feel have not been adequately addressed.

7.9 The Customer Relations Officer will:

- Formally record the complaint details
- Summarise the main issues to be resolved, and agree these with the customer
- Investigate the complaint
- Provide a detailed response to the customer setting out the findings and the reasons for the findings

7.10 The Customer Relations Officer will normally require the co-operation of staff from his/her own service and possibly other services to help investigate and resolve the complaint. Any requested information must be provided to the investigating officer within **FIVE** working days.

7.11 Stage 2 complaints may involve a meeting between the customer and the Customer Relations Officer. The complainant can also choose to discuss the matter with the Customer Relations Officer by email or telephone. The Customer Relations Officer will aim to respond fully to stage 2 complaints within **TWENTY** working days. If this is not possible, a response will be sent to inform the complainant of what is being done to deal with the complaint, and when you can expect the full reply.

8. Local Government Ombudsman investigation

8.1 Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council hopes to resolve most complaints internally, but if you are not satisfied with the Stage 2 response, or if we do not give you an answer within a reasonable time, you can ask the Local Government Ombudsman to investigate your complaint. In closing a Stage 2 appeal, the Council will make it clear to the customer that they may have a further right to independent appeal through the Local Government Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is independent and impartial and investigates complaints where the Council has failed to follow its own procedures. It does not investigate complaints just because the complainant disagrees with a Council decision. The Council's Head of Central Services is the Local Government Ombudsman link officer who monitors and coordinates responses to complaints that are under investigation by the Local Government Ombudsman.

8.2 The Ombudsman may ask you about what efforts, if any, you have made to resolve your concerns personally and locally with us and will encourage and assist you to make this effort.

8.3 Although you can approach the Ombudsman at any time (in writing, by email, telephone or text), it must be stressed that that before making a complaint at this level, you should have given the Council a proper chance to deal with it.

If residents wish to contact the Local Government Ombudsman, they can write to:-
The Local Government Ombudsman,
The Oaks No 2,
Westwood Way,
Westwood Business Park,
Coventry
CV4 8JB

Alternatively, they can telephone 024 7682 0000; fax 024 7682 0001 or e-mail: enquiries@lgo.org.uk.

The Local Government Ombudsman also has an LGO Advice Team on 0300 061 0614 or 0845 602 1983 and the web site address is www.lgo.org.uk

9. Unreasonable Complaints and Unreasonable Complainant Behaviour

9.1 This element of the policy covers both unreasonable complainant behaviour (which may include one or two isolated incidents) and unreasonably persistent behaviour (usually an accumulation of incidents or behaviour over a longer period). Unreasonable and unreasonably persistent complainants are those complainants who, because of the nature or frequency of their contacts with an organisation, hinder the organisation's consideration of their complaints or other people's complaints.

9.2 The Local Government Ombudsman has highlighted the following examples of unreasonable actions and behaviours which can be time consuming to manage and can interfere with proper consideration of the complaint.

- Refusing to specify the grounds of a complaint, despite offers of assistance.
- Refusing to co-operate with the complaints investigation process.
- Refusing to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of a complaints procedure.
- Insisting on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the adopted complaints procedure or with good practice.
- Making unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issues, and seeking to have them replaced.
- Changing the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds.
- Denying or changing statements made at an earlier stage.
- Introducing trivial or irrelevant new information at a late stage.
- Raising numerous, detailed but unimportant questions; insisting that they are answered.
- Covertly recording meetings and conversations.
- Submitting falsified documents from themselves or others.
- Adopting a 'scatter gun' approach: pursuing parallel complaints on the same issue with a variety of other organisations.
- Making excessive demands on the time and resources of staff with lengthy telephone calls, emails to numerous council staff, or detailed letters every few days, and expecting immediate responses.
- Submitting repeat complaints with minor additions/variations that the complainant insists make these 'new' complaints.
- Refusing to accept the decision; repeatedly arguing points with no new evidence.

These, and similar actions, which detract from the Council's ability to properly consider a complaint, will be deemed by Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council as unreasonable actions and behaviours and will be considered 'trigger' actions or behaviours which may cause the elements of this policy as set out in section 9.4 below to be invoked.

9.3 Before any of these actions are invoked the complaint will be advised of this policy and warned that restrictive actions may need to be applied if their behaviour continues. If a decision is taken to apply restricted access, the Council will write to the complainant to explain:

- why the decision has been taken.
- what it means for his or her contacts with the organisation.
- how long any restrictions will last.
- what the complainant can do to have the decision reviewed.

Any review requested by the complainant of the Council's actions or proposed actions under section 9 of this policy will be undertaken by the Head of Customer and ICT Services. The complainant will be informed of the outcome of that review.

9.4 Where an Executive Director, Head of Service or the Customer Relations Officer identifies unreasonable actions and behaviours, the Customer & ICT Business Manager will review the volume of work being generated, the behaviour of the complainant, their expectations of the Council, and the nature of complaints made and responses received. Where the Customer & ICT Business Manager considers that the complainant is acting or behaving unreasonably as indicated in section 9.2 above, one or more of the following procedures may be adopted to bring the matter to a swift conclusion without further distractions:

- Placing limits on the number and duration of contacts with staff per week or month.
- Offering a restricted time slot for any necessary calls.
- Limiting the complainant to one medium of contact (telephone, letter, email etc).
- Requiring the complainant to communicate only with one named member of staff.
- Requiring any personal contacts to take place in the presence of a witness, and in a suitable location.
- Refusing to register and process further complaints about the same matter.
- Advising the complainant, after a decision on the complaint has been made, that future correspondence will be read and placed on the file but not acknowledged, unless it contains material new information.
- Inviting the complainant to meet the Customer & ICT Business Manager or other senior officer to discuss the complaint/correspondence nature and/or volume and its impact with a view to agreeing a more manageable approach to addressing the complainant's concerns.

Decisions made and actions taken will be proportionate to the nature and frequency of the complainant's current contacts. Decisions will take the complainant's behaviour and individual circumstances fully into account. The Council's policies on equal opportunities, health and safety, and all other relevant policies will also be taken into account. In particular, the Customer & ICT Business Manager will ensure help is offered to find a suitable independent advocate, if the complainant has different needs.

9.5 Where the Council's consideration of the complaint is concluded, the Council may end all communication with the complainant on the issue and, where appropriate, refer the complainant to the Local Government Ombudsman. Before this action is taken the Head of Customer and ICT Services will review the handling of the complaint to ensure:

- the complaint has been investigated properly;

- any decision reached on it is the right one;
- communications with the complainant have been adequate;
- the complainant is not now providing any significant new information that might affect the organisation's view on the complaint.

9.6 In exceptional circumstances, where the Council considers there may be nothing to gain from following through all stages of its complaints procedure, the Local Government Ombudsman may be asked by the Council to consider the matter before its own complaints procedure has been exhausted. The complainant will be notified of this request.

9.7 The Customer & ICT Business Manager will ensure a coordinated response is made where any cross-departmental issues are involved and ensure a single, coordinated response to the complainant.

9.8 The Customer & ICT Business Manager will keep adequate records to show when decisions are taken in pursuance of section 9 of this policy. The Customer & ICT Business Manager will also ensure any further communications from the complainant are checked to identify any significant new information. When complaints about new issues are made, these will be treated on their individual merits. Any restrictions previously applied may or may not be considered to be still appropriate or necessary. The Customer & ICT Business Manager will keep the application of any restrictions under review. These restrictions will be lifted and relationships returned to normal unless there are good grounds to extend the restrictions. Where appropriate, the complainant will be advised when restrictions will be reviewed and advised of the outcome of any review and the reasons for any decision.

9.9 Should the Customer & ICT Business Manager be the subject of the complaint, another senior officer, not connected to the service, will be appointed by the Head of Customer and ICT Services to undertake the responsibilities of the Customer & ICT Business Manager in applying this Policy.

10. Customer Comments and Suggestions

10.1 Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council positively welcomes comments and suggestions from its customers. These can play an important part in improving service delivery. It is therefore important that those comments and suggestions received by the Council can be monitored and retained by the organisation. The Customer Relations Officer will co-ordinate all comments and suggestions on behalf of the Authority

Comments and suggestions might include:-

- Comments on the services provided i.e. NOT a complaint.
- Comments on how a service could be improved.
- Suggestions for new or changed services.
- Comments on procedures or service levels.

10.2 The Council will not respond to comments and suggestions unless we have your contact details and need to clarify something with you.

10.3 Comments and suggestions received directly to departments must be forwarded to the Customer Relations Officer within **FIVE** working days and must include all the relevant information required to action the item

10.4 All comments and suggestions will be included in the reports provided by the Head of Customer & ICT Services to Executive Management Team and Members

11. Compliments

11.1 Compliments from customer can play an important part in staff morale and in evidence of customer satisfaction. It is therefore important that all compliments received by the Council can be monitored and retained by the organisation. The Customer Relations Officer will co-ordinate all comments and suggestions on behalf of the Authority

Compliments might include:-

- Compliments on service provision.
- Compliments on overall standards.
- Compliments about staff.
- Compliments on the environment.
- Compliments on policy and procedure.

11.2 Compliments received directly by departments must be forwarded to the Customer Relations Officer within **FIVE** working days and must include all the relevant information required to action the item.

11.3 All compliments will be included in the reports given to the Head of Customer and ICT Services and to Executive Management Team and Members

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CULTURAL GRANTS

Submitted by: Executive Director – Operational Services

Portfolio: Culture and Active Communities

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

To consider the attached applications for Cultural Grants.

Recommendations

To approve the recommendation as indicated in the report.

Reasons

To support local art and community groups to develop cultural activities and events for the community.

1. **Background**

1.1 The Council has always maintained its support to local organisations by providing a fund, which is allocated to cultural activities. This allows groups or organisations to apply for grants up to £1500 in any one year.

2. **Issues**

2.1 The list as shown in Appendix 1 identifies the Groups applying for funding this round.

3. **Outcomes Linked to Corporate Priorities**

The organisations cater for the following Council Corporate Priorities:

- No. 1 – Creating a Cleaner, Greener and Safer Borough
- No. 2. - Creating a Borough of Opportunity
- No. 3. - Creating a Healthy and Active Community

4. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

There are no statutory or legal implications.

5. **Financial and Resource Implications**

The amount allocated for 2013/14 is £14032.50. If all the grants are approved to the sum of £4400, this will leave a balance of £7632.50.

6. **Major Risks**

Events may be unable to take place if funding is not available.

7. **Recommendations**

To approve the recommendations as indicated in the attached Appendix 1.

8. **List of**

Appendix 1 – list of organisations seeking grant aid

Appendix 2 – Spreadsheet of awards and balance 2013-2014

TM/13/14

APPLICANT	REF	AWARD REQUEST	THE ORGANISATION AND ITS PROJECT	COST OF PROJECT	PREVIOUS AWARDS	OTHER FUNDING	RECOMMENDATION
Staffordshire Knights Youth Marching Band	05/09/2013	£1500	<p>Staffordshire Knights Youth Band are a marching band, based at the Orme Centre that provide musical education and exercise to the local community. They perform at a number of local and national events. They are an inclusive band which provides tuition and equipment for its members. They are seeking funding to purchase an ex-demonstration marimba to replace their existing one which is now beyond repair. It is a static instrument that can be played by wheelchair users and over its lifetime it will be used by many young people of the Borough.</p> <p>www.staffordshireknights.org.uk</p>	£2400	<p>£1000 in 2011-12</p> <p>£1000 In 2009-10</p>	<p>Fundraising - £650 confirmed</p> <p>Fundraising ongoing - £250</p> <p>They state that if they do not receive the full grant they will continue fund raising but it will take them longer</p>	£500
Newcastle Town Centre Partnership	06/09/2013	£1500	<p>The partnership exists in order to bring vibrancy back to the town of Newcastle-under-Lyme, and to bring communities together within it. A community event to engage local people in multicultural activities, allow children to take part and perform dances and music they learn specifically for the event, increase awareness of other cultures, and bring the local community together.</p> <p>They seek funding for the Bottle Cap Film Festival planned for Nov 2013. The festival, which will be sustained through other funding after year one, will assume an 'indie' image. The two main events will be a winning film makers presentation evening at the old Mellards' warehouse. The second a daytime event to encourage people to get involved with film making, trying equipment, meeting film makers. This event will target young people from the borough's most deprived areas.</p> <p>Artists, local film makers, Newcastle College and the Universities will be involved in the project which aims to develop and broaden audiences to film, and participation in, film making.</p> <p>www.visitcastle.co.uk</p>	£3000	<p>£800 in 2012/13</p> <p>Community Chest</p>	<p>£1000</p> <p>Town Centre Partnership support – confirmed</p> <p>£875 private sponsorship - unconfirmed</p>	£1500

APPLICANT

REF

AWARD
REQUES
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THE ORGANISATION AND ITS PROJECT

COST OF
PROJECT

PREVIOUS
AWARDS

OTHER
FUNDING

RECOMMEND-
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Arts Keele

07/09/2013

£1400

Arts Keele run a concert programme between October and March promoting a range of music concerts. Aware of the need to develop new and non traditional audiences they have devised a programme of audience development activities. The **Creative Composition Project** breaks with the traditional method of short taster sessions for a large amount of participants and focuses on 30 young people from two local schools (Newcastle Community High and Clayton Hall). The project will use archive material from Keele and will involve professionals working with the young people to creatively compose music through non-traditional and creative ways and perform them both live and recorded. The funding will be used to pay professionals from 'Sound Collective' and 'Re:Source Me' to deliver 20 school sessions with 3 professionals, attend a Indo Jazz performance and stage two live performances, one of which will for part of the Keele Concert Programme.

www.keele.ac.uk/artskeele

£7000

£1400
12/13

£1400
10/11

Keele Fund
£2,800 (con)

Arts Council
£2,300 (uncon)

Strasser £500
(con)

£1400

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