

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Finance, Policy and Resources
DATE	4 December 2014
ACTING DIRECTOR	Ewan Sutherland
TITLE OF REPORT	Small Financial Assistance Grants 2014/15
REPORT NUMBER	CG/14/162
CHECKLIST RECEIVED	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to present applications for financial assistance which have recently been received allowing Elected Members to make a decision on providing funding from the financial assistance budget and to provide information on an event for which funding was previously awarded.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Committee:-

- i) consider the applications received and agree to award grant funding based on the following recommendations:-
 - Torry Development Trust – a maximum of £1,500; and
 - Gerrard Street Baptist Church – a maximum of £500.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The awarding and approval of grants and financial assistance is a significant element of council business and as such millions of pounds are paid to external organisations each year. Appropriate and suitable means of approval following the principles of 'Following the Public Pound' require to be maintained in order to ensure Best Value.

There is a sum of £45,000 included in the 2014/15 Council's Revenue Budget for small financial assistance grants.

If the above recommendations were approved the amount remaining would be £33,280.

There are no implications for approved PBB options arising from this report.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

The award of grants and financial assistance provide benefits to the City of Aberdeen and its citizens.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

- 5.1 At the meeting of 6 May 2014 the Committee approved a revised set of assessment criteria for the awarding of small financial assistance grants.

These were as follows:

Small Financial Assistance Grants – Assessment Criteria	
a)	Applications must be for a clear and specific purpose and include relevant background and financial information.
b)	Applications must <u>not</u> be for a purpose already being funded from another Council budget.
c)	Applications which fall within the assessment criteria of another established Council funding budget will be referred to that process.
d)	Applications must <u>not</u> be for a purpose which secured funding from this budget in the previous 12 months.
e)	Applications will only be considered whilst budget remains available.
f)	The award of funding will be limited to a maximum of £2,500.

Small Financial Assistance Grants – Conditions of Award	
a)	Following the committee, the applicant will be informed in writing of the committee decision including the amount awarded, the means of payment and the purpose for which the award was made.
b)	In exceptional circumstances where an award of funding in excess of £2,500 is approved, it will be on the basis that the arrangements in relation to the Local Code of Guidance on Funding External Organisations and Following the Public Pound will require to be put in place.

5.2 Applications:-

5.2.1 Torry Development Trust – Further information at Appendix A

An application has been received from the Torry Development Trust for advice and comments on any funding awards from the council or elsewhere to assist with start up and project development costs.

Two projects are specified – six Christmas lights on Victoria Road at a cost of £250 each (£1,500 in total) and printing of a heritage book written and produced by the Torry Heritage Group at an estimated cost of £2,200.

In line with the assessment criteria above, alternative potential funding sources have been identified under which the heritage book project

could be considered and therefore it is recommended that the Trust make an application in the first instance to these sources.

It is considered appropriate for the Christmas lights project to be considered under the small financial assistance grants assessment criteria and as it meets the criteria it is recommended that a maximum of £1,500 of funding be awarded.

5.2.2 Gerrard Street Baptist Church – Further information at Appendix B

An application has been received from Gerrard Street Baptist Church to cover Christmas tree lights and installation at a cost of £1,554. They have already been advised by the Community Council that they can apply for a grant of up to £500 towards this cost.

It is considered appropriate for this project to be considered under the small financial assistance grants assessment criteria. As it meets the criteria, it is recommended that a maximum of £500 of funding be awarded to match the grant that could be applied for from the Community Council.

6. IMPACT

The Council will, within financial constraints, seek to support individuals, groups and organisations within the City. All applicants will be given equal consideration within the criteria for the award of grants and donations from Council budgets.

This report is likely to be of interest to the public as it demonstrates the use of public funds.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

There is a risk that funding provided will not be used for the purpose for which it was awarded.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Sandra Buthlay, Senior Accountant
sbuthlay@aberdeencity.gov.uk
(52) 2565

APPENDIX A

(Received by e-mail from David Fryer, Director, Torry Development Trust on 11th November 2014)

As you recall, the TDT is a legally constituted development trust set up in June this year to promote projects and partnerships to secure community benefits for Torry. I would welcome your advice and comments on any funding awards that you are aware of at the City Council, or elsewhere to assist with start up and project development costs.

We are two immediate projects in hand. The first is to secure Christmas lighting in Victoria Road (working budget is £250.00 per light and a target of six is being actively pursued) and the second is for a heritage book written and produced by the Torry Heritage Group, for which funding to cover printing costs is in the order of £2200.00.

I look forward to your reply

APPENDIX B

(Received by e-mail from Alison Spearman, Community Worker, Gerrard Street Baptist Church on 27th November 2014)

Recently the Church in Gerrard Street has been planning and undertaking some events to brighten up the area round Greig Court and Hutcheon Court in Gerrard Street. As a church we would love this area to become one of the best places to live in Aberdeen.

Recently with support from the Council we were able to plant up some troughs at the front of the flats looking on to Gerrard Street and removed graffiti and painted some of the benches. In addition we planted a raised bed area next to the Catherine Street Community Centre.

For Christmas we have been working with the Council to get a Christmas tree to brighten up Gerrard Street. The Council have helped us source a large 25 foot tree which will be installed beside the recycle area on Gerrard Street next week. Originally we thought the Council were going to be able to provide us with lights and help with installing them but unfortunately this has fallen through. I have contacted an external supplier recommended by the Council who have quoted us £1554 for the cost of the lights and the installation, removal and necessary electrical connections. As you can imagine at such short notice this is a challenging amount to raise. We have been advised by the Community Council that we can apply for a grant of up to £500 for lights but this obviously still leaves quite a significant shortfall.

Any support or advice you might be able to give us would be much appreciated. I have attached for your information a copy of our Christmas leaflet which refers to the Christmas Fair and BBQ that we have been planning to coincide with the Christmas Tree light switch on and BBQ.