

POLICY AND RESOURCES

CABINET BOARD

27th MARCH 2014

FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF
FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES
– H. J. JENKINS**

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Part 1 - Doc. Code: PRB-270314-REP-FS

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1. MISCELLANEOUS GRANTS APPLICATIONS

Existing Policy Statement

- 1.1 a) Each application will be considered on its merits.
- b) The Committee will only approve applications for financial assistance from voluntary or charitable organisations which are manifestly committed to voluntary endeavours of a local nature. This will not preclude the consideration of applications where the disposal of funds is outside the area but still provides significant benefits for the people from the Neath Port Talbot area.
- c) No applications will be considered from religious bodies except relating to church halls and other premises where there is significant community use of the property for non-religious activities.
- d) No applications will be considered from other public funded bodies such as community councils, hospital trusts, etc. or where the benefit may be in lieu of their contributions such as appeals for hospital equipment.
- e) Applications from individuals may be considered where both the person and the community derive a benefit.
- f) No grants will be made to any individual or organisation whose prime purpose is to distribute their funds to other charitable bodies.

Budget for 2014/15

- 1.2 The following grants are included and have been approved within this budget:-

| | Budget 2014/15 £ |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Citizen Advice Bureau | 82,680 |
| Neath Port Talbot Council for Voluntary Service | 45,494 |
| Racial Equality Council | 15,900 |
| Maintenance of Mechanics Institute (in lieu of grant aid to Antiquarians & Archives) | 14,037 |
| West Glamorgan Association for the Blind | 2,100 |
| One-off grants | 949 |
| Total | <u>161,160</u> |

Grant Applications

Bowling Green Sites

1.3 As part of the Forward Financial Plan it was agreed that Bowling Clubs throughout the County Borough area be given the opportunity of running and maintaining the various Bowling Greens. This requires each Club to enter into a lease agreement with the Council. The annual rent amounts to £200 to be reviewed every 5 years. It is proposed that a grant be awarded to fully cover the rent for this initial 5 year period, which will be reviewed every 5 years in line with the lease agreement. Listed below are the Bowling Green sites for which a lease agreement is being pursued and for which a grant is being sought:

- Parc Y Werin, New Road, Gwaun Cae Gurwen
- Recreation Ground, Gwilym Road, Cwmllynfell
- Parc Y Darren, Woodmans Terrace, Ystalyfera
- King George V Memorial Park, Pontardawe
- Sports Ground, Dyfed Road, Neath
- Mount Pleasant Recreation Ground, Hillside, Neath
- Sports Ground, Neath Road, Briton Ferry
- Briton Ferry Welfare Ground, Briton Ferry
- Baglan Park, Baglan
- Parc Siencyn, Powell Salem Road, Cwmafan
- Ynyscorrwg Park, Park Street, Glynccorwg
- Recreation Ground, Park Lane, Blaengwynfi
- Tudor Park, Croeserw
- Recreation Ground, Neath Road, Bryn
- Vivian Park, Sandfields, Port Talbot
- Talbot Park, Talbot Road, Port Talbot

Libraries

1.4 As Members are aware discussions are taking place with Community Groups in relation to them providing Library Services. Some of the premises are owned by the Council and, in order for those Communities to take over the operation and running of the Library buildings, a lease agreement is required and again, the Community Groups are seeking grant aid to cover the annual rental costs. At present the Council is in discussion with such Groups at Briton Ferry, Cymmer, Resolven and Taibach. The annual rental charge will vary for each premises and Members are requested to consider to agree the principle that a grant be awarded to cover the rent. If members agree this principle then delegated authority is required to award such a grant and this be given to the Director of Finance & Corporate Services in conjunction with the Leader, Cabinet Member and Scrutiny Chair. Similar to the grant award

for Bowling Green sites, the award will be limited to a 5 year review in line with the lease agreement.

Port Talbot Food Bank

1.5 An application has been received for financial support to establish a Food Bank in Port Talbot from a group of 5 churches. They indicate that the cost of establishing the Food Bank is in the order of £1,500. For Members information there are other Food Banks within the County Borough which the Council does not support financially.

Recommendation

1.6 It is recommended that Members approve the grant payable to:

- Bowling Clubs for a maximum of 5 years in line with the lease agreement.
- Community Groups operating former Library Premises for a maximum of 5 years in line with the lease agreement.

1.7 To consider the grant application from the Port Talbot Food Bank.

Reason for proposed decision

To decide on the funding applications.

List of Background Papers

Letters of application.

Appendices

None

Wards Affected

Various.

Officer Contact

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COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

MISCELLANEOUS GRANTS APPLICATIONS

(a) **Implementation of Decision**

The decision is proposed for implementation after the 3 day call-in period.

(b) **Sustainability Appraisal**

Community Plan Impacts:

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| Economic Prosperity | Positive |
| Education and Lifelong Learning | Positive |
| Better Health and Well Being | Positive |
| Environment and Transport | Positive |
| Crime and Disorder | No impact |

Other Impacts:

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| Welsh Language | No impact |
| Sustainable Development | Neutral |
| Equalities | Positive |
| Social Inclusion | Positive |

(c) **Consultation**

There has been no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

ITEM 2

BETTER SIMPLER CHEAPER – PROGRESS REPORT

Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To update Members on the progress being made on delivering two key improvement programmes contained within the Council's 6th improvement priority - Better Simpler Cheaper (Corporate Improvement Plan 2013-2016). This report is a summary of the work achieved to date and during the meeting there will be a presentation to demonstrate the new technology adopted.

Introduction

- 2.2 The Council's 6th improvement priority – Better Simpler Cheaper – focuses on the transformation of how we deliver services and the streamlining of our internal management and administrative processes. This transformation work is essential in helping the Council deliver good quality services at a time when we have a significant additional savings target to meet whilst protecting jobs to the maximum extent.
- 2.3 Two programmes have been established to deliver this work which is being overseen by the Efficiency Programme Board, chaired by the Director of Finance and Corporate Services.
- 2.4 This progress report highlights the achievements within those two programmes during the current year (2013/14) and provides a summary of the work that is being targeted in 2014/15.

Improving Customer Experience Programme (ICE)

- 2.5 This programme focuses on the delivery of citizen focused services and the following two projects have been initiated:

Project 1 - Web Enabling Project - Good progress has been made in making better use of modern technology to enable citizens to access council services on-line at a time that is convenient to them (24 hours a day, 365 days a year). This will also improve the performance of those services and make them more efficient to administer. The following are examples of work progressing under this project.

Bulky Items Collection Service

During 2012/13, the council received 7,347 requests for the collection of domestic household items. Only 526 (7%) of these were received electronically via email (completion of an on-line form).

Since October 2013, citizens are now able to book and pay for a bulky item collection on-line at a time that suits them. Data collected indicates there has been increase in the number of citizens accessing this service since its launch:

| Month | Collections Booked on-line by the Public | % of Collections Booked |
|---------------|---|--------------------------------|
| October 2013 | 38 | 8.9% |
| November 2013 | 69 | 10.6% |
| December 2013 | 40 | 11.4% |
| January 2014 | 106 | 17.3% |
| February 2014 | 79 | 17.2% |

Customers are sent a confirmation email on booking and are again informed by email when the item has been collected via handhelds which are being utilised by the staff who collect the items.

Refuse and Recycling Equipment & Stock

From February 2014, citizens are able to request refuse and recycling equipment on-line (wheelie bins, recycling bags etc.). During the first month 880 requests were received on-line for equipment which was 32.7% of the total requests received.

To further improve the efficiency of this service an Integrated Stock Control System has been developed to deal with the replenishment of Refuse and Recycling Stock.

Customer feedback received to date:

- *“Just wanted to say thank you for the prompt response to my request for a replacement food waste bin. I am very impressed with the service you provided” (Ordered 7:05pm – Delivered 10:15 next day)”*
- *“I requested recycling bags yesterday at around 4:00pm and they were delivered this morning before 10:00am. I’d like to thank all involved for this speedy response”*
- *“Great idea, this saves a lot of hassle and time”*
- *“Just a line to say thank you, the delivery crew were very helpful, an asset to NPT Services”*
- *“Very good web page, the layout was easy to follow”.*

- *“Thank you for the delivery of my new food waste bin. Super efficient service, greatly appreciated”*

Allotments

Citizens are now able to add themselves to the waiting list and enquire as to their position on the waiting list via an on-line form.

Pest Control

From March 2014, citizens will be able to make payments on-line and from April 2014 will be able to make appointments. New web pages for the service have also been developed.

The availability of these on-line services will be advertised widely using many channels including:

Facebook
 Twitter
 Internet
 Intranet
 In The Loop (Staff newsletter)
 Posters in all Civic Buildings and Libraries
 Livery on Streetcare Vehicles
 Radio Advert
 Roadshows
 Members
 Third Sector
 Older Persons Council

Project 2 - Preventable Demand Project – Good progress has been made on undertaking service reviews, using our Systems Thinking approach, in those services where there is a high level of preventable demand (where we are not getting things right first time). This work enables us to:

- reduce the volume of preventable demand coming into the Council
- realise cashable and non-cashable savings in the service areas reviewed

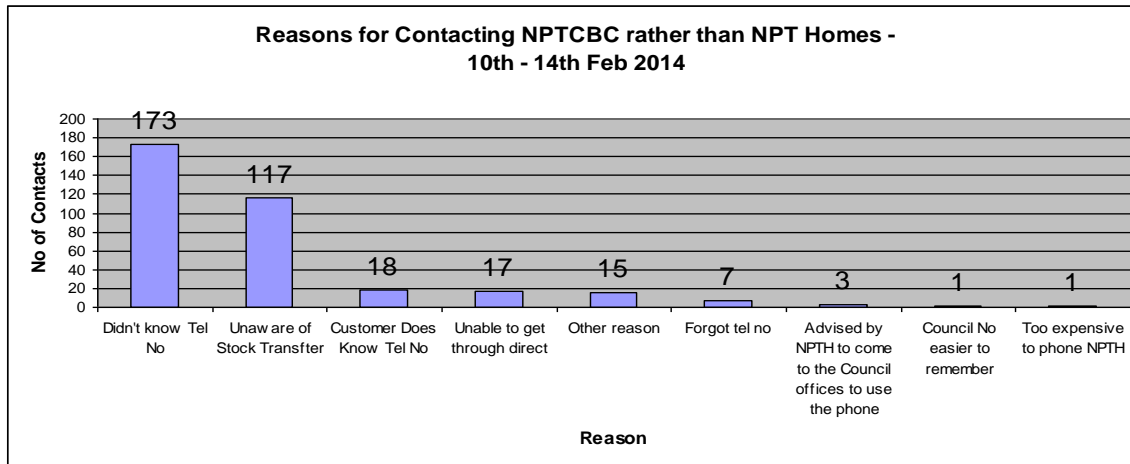
To identify those services where there is a high level of preventable demand, data has been collected from the Council’s One Stop Shops and Contact Centre.

NPT Homes

In November 2012, there were over 800 NPT Homes demands coming into the Council’s Contact Centre and One Stop Shops. By December 2013, this figure had reduced to 241. However, due to major problems with their telephone lines, the number of calls doubled in January and February. This

was rectified mid February and we are monitoring the situation. Regular meetings are taking place with NPT Homes to progress this work.

During February 2014, an analysis has been undertaken of why citizens are still contacting the Council instead of NPT Homes:



Pull Outs

Our Pull Out Service is used by elderly or disabled citizens who are unable to take their refuse and recycling bins to the collection point on the street. The crew call into the property and 'pull out' the waste onto the street.

A new system was developed in conjunction with the back office to better manage the service given to customers. Although demand was not high, following the new system roll-out the demand with repeat calls have halved (complaints) currently at 0 for the last 2 months.

Next Steps

- 2.6 Currently developing a fuller list of those services identified to go on-line which will be available shortly. Planned work includes:

Map Based Reporting

This development will enable citizens to report incidents such as fly tipping, street lighting, pot holes, graffiti and dog fouling on-line. The first phase is currently being developed and includes a new back office database system to hold details of calls logged which will also provide better management information. The objective being that citizens will be able to specifically mark on the map the issue they are reporting. The aim will be to inform the public of contact/referral that has already been made. This should reduce referrals.

Trade Waste

The developments in Trade Waste will include a new back office system, which will better integrate the service and provide better management information, a new web-front end to better inform customers which will also enable traders to price waste collection services provided by the Council and map-based hand held technology to aid staff delivering the service.

Programme for Improving Corporate System (PICS)

2.7 This programme focuses on streamlining our major management and administrative processes and when completed we expect to reduce the cost of administration associated with these processes and have much improved management information available to inform future improvement plans. Although progress has been made during 2013/14, the pace of change will be increased next year.

Project 1 - Implementing a new Procure to Pay system – By March 2015 it is planned for all services to be using a new procure to pay system. To date, the new system has been implemented in 13 sections including ICT, Procurement, Training & Development, Hillside Secure Unit and various Social Care Units. Work is also underway on required system changes as a result of the Welsh Purchasing Card contract moving to Barclaycard with effect from 1st April 2014.

Project 2 - Moving all staff to monthly pay – Good progress has been made in moving all staff (2,359) over to monthly pay by March 2015.

| | Total Transferred | Running Total |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Completed as at end Dec 2013 | 245 (10.4%) | 245 (10.4%) |
| Projected to complete at end Mar 2014 | 465 (19.7%) | 710 (30.1%) |

Transferring by March are Passenger Transport staff and staff in schools (principally lunchtime supervisors).

Timetable:

| | 2013 | | 2014 | | | | | | | | | 2015 | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | NOV | DEC | JAN | FEB | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV | DEC | JAN | FEB | MAR |
| SESSIONAL EMPLOYED STATUS (43) | ■ | ■ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SCHOOL SUPERVISORY ASSISTANTS (243) | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | | | | |
| PRIMARY SCHOOL CATERING (509) | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | | | | |
| COMP SCHOOL CATERING (93) | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | | | | |
| COMP. SCHOOL CLEANERS (134) | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | | | | |
| HILLSIDE (56) | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | | | | |
| TECS TRANSPORTATION (64) | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | | | | |
| SSHS RESIDENTIAL/DAY SERVICES (85) | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | | | | |
| TECS SURVEY TEAM (35) | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | | | | |
| EDLS LEISURE SERVICES (128) | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | | | |
| TECS SCHOOL CROSSING PATROLS (39) | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | | | | |
| TECS NEIGHBOUR MANAGEMENT (63) | | | | | | | | | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| TECS REFUSE & CLEANSING (92) | | | | | | | | | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| TECS VEHICLE MAINTENANCE (20) | | | | | | | | | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| TECS GROUNDS MAINTENANCE (240) | | | | | | | | | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| TECS HIGHWAYS MAINTENANCE (10) | | | | | | | | | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| TECS BUILDING SERVICES (48) | | | | | | | | | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |

Project 3 - Implementing better payroll / HR systems to improve the way we manage our workforce – As part of this project the organisational data held in the Council’s Vision IT system is being validated and systems put in place to improve record management and information timeliness. Work is currently underway within Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning - Access Managed Services to validate their information and this work will be extended across all other council departments by the end of the year. Amongst other benefits, this exercise will improve the quality of absence information provided to managers. Further work on absence information will take place later this year with development of a new absence management module within the Vision system. This work will seek to improve the way absences are coded, reported and monitored, and will aim to review the way that individual staff working patterns are reflected in the absence statistics.

System Demonstration

2.8 At the Committee meeting there will be two demonstrations covering the web based technology and procure to pay / i-procurement service project work.

Consultation

2.9 Consultations with Management and Trade Unions are ongoing and the proposal to move to monthly pay is as per the Workforce Agreement 2013.

List of Background Papers

The Neath Port Talbot Corporate Plan - 2013/2016 “Rising to the Challenge”

Wards Affected

All

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