

CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES

RECORD OF DECISIONS taken by the Cabinet Member for Resources, Councillor Hugh Mason, at his meeting held on Thursday, 6 March 2014 at 9.00 am at the The Executive Meeting Room - Third Floor, The Guildhall

Present

Councillor Hugh Mason (in the chair)
Councillor David Horne

Officers Present

Mandy Lindley, Third Sector Partnership and
Commissioning Manager
Susan Page, Finance Manager

Councillor Hugh Mason welcomed the opposition spokesperson and officers to the meeting.

1. Apologies for Absence (AI 1)

There were no apologies for absence.

2. Declaration of Members' Interests (AI 2)

There were no declarations of members' interests.

3. Support for the Voluntary and Community Sector 2014/2015 (AI 3)

(TAKE IN REPORT)

Mandy Lindley introduced the report and explained that as part of its support to the voluntary and community sector, Portsmouth City Council normally operates an annual grant programme. In line with the previous year organisations currently receiving funding were invited to reapply for grant funding for 2014/15. The decision was taken in recognition of the fact that due to budget savings, grant funding has been reduced across the board over the past four years. If funding for grants is limited expectations can be raised unfairly by advertising an "open for all" programme.

Ms Lindley explained that there was often a difference between what an organisation requests and the grant recommendation.

The purpose of the report is make recommendations on the allocation of funding for the voluntary and community sector in the grant year 2014/15. Ms Lindley said that she would amend the report in 3.5 to show that the total grants requested by Housing amounted to £27,814 rather than £25,000.

DECISION:

That the Resources portfolio holder agrees the allocation of funding for 2014/2015 in Appendices 1-4.

4. Grant Applications from the Twinning Advisory Group (if any) (AI 4)

The Resources portfolio holder advised that the Twinning Advisory Group (TAG) met last week and received reports and final statements from the Caen Committee and details of money spent by the Duisburg Committee. He said that all of the £8,000 budget allocation for twinning had been spent, other than £244.82. He reported that following discussion at the Twinning Advisory Group, it was suggested that this be allocated to the Lord Mayor's Office to be used to buy small friendship gifts for the Lord Mayor to take to Zhuhai on her forthcoming trip to promote trade relations.

DECISION:

That the portfolio holder makes available to the Lord Mayor's Office the sum of £244.82, being the remaining money from the Twinning budget. This to be used to buy gifts for the Lord Mayor to present to the city of Zhuhai during her visit there.

5. Monitoring of the Third Quarter 2013/14 Revenue Cash Limits and Capital Programme (AI 5)

(TAKE IN REPORT)

Ms Sue Page, Finance Manager outlined the report and said that it was very similar to that of the last quarter. She highlighted that there had been some movement in the HR, Legal & Performance forecast overspend due to a shift in resource towards the provision of corporate project feasibility work rather than income generating work from outside of the general fund. She said that the overall forecast overspend for the service is now £7,000. Ms Page also drew attention to item 5.10 Local Welfare Assistance Scheme. She said that the Local Welfare Assistance Scheme replaced the Social Fund that was abolished as part of the government's welfare reform policy. The current forecast underspend has reduced since the last report reflecting the claimant rate to date. However, given that the number and value of claims is subject to significant variation, this position is kept under detailed review.

Ms Page said that Appendix C provides a briefing note on future use of Resources portfolio underspend/overspend. She said that the aim is to remove financial barriers to the delivery of savings and promote medium term financial and service planning by enabling services to retain any year end underspendings and accept the responsibility of managing and funding their overspends, cost pressures and contingent items.

Details of how this would work in practice were also included in the briefing note.

Ms Page highlighted item 5 - Landlord's Maintenance, item 9 - Major Repairs to Corporate Property Portfolio and item 13 - Civic Ductwork Cleaning.

In response to a query Ms Page said that she would find out whose responsibility it was to make good damage caused by the recent storms to the seafront.

The Cabinet Member for Resources said that he would contact Guy Mason and would let the opposition spokespersons know who would be responsible for maintaining the flood cell 1 upgrade carried out by the Environment Agency, once that work had been done.

DECISION:

That

- (1) the content of the report be noted;**
- (2) the principles outlined in Appendix C, paragraphs 3.1 to 3.7 regarding the future use of this portfolio's underspends be approved.**

6. Date of Next Meeting (AI 6)

Councillor Mason said that he would be unavailable for a special meeting on 27 March 2014 and suggested that this be moved to Monday 31 March at 1.00 pm. This was agreed.

The meeting concluded at 9.30 am.

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Councillor Hugh Mason
Cabinet Member for Resources