Cyngor **Abertawe**
Swansea Council

Report of the Cabinet Member for Well-being

Cabinet - 20 July 2023

Grant Giving Policy and Process

Purpose:	To provide a template and guidance for grant giving within Swansea Council
Policy Framework:	Swansea Grant Giving Policy
Consultation:	Legal, Finance, Access to Services
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that:
1) The Grant Giving Policy and Procedure is endorsed	
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1. Background

1.1 Swansea Council administers a number of grant funding programmes across all departments. Grant programmes are sourced from both internal and external funding.

1.2 The Council is required by Welsh Government to include Welsh Language provision in its grant giving policies, however Swansea Council does not have a formal policy. This report offers a Grant Giving Policy and procedure to standardise process across the Council, and hence meet Welsh Governments Welsh Language Standard 94 – Grant Policy.

1.3 A lot of work has previously been undertaken to standardise Grant Giving processes and this policy builds upon this and establishes a guide to the process to aid further standardisation across the Council.

1.4 The examples in the appendices are for guidance. It is important to note that differing funding programmes will need to adopt different formats

(especially if the grant programme concerned is under the auspices of UK or Welsh Government) however the standardised versions should provide a useful guide.

1.5   It is also noteworthy that this is a Swansea Council Policy and for regional working where Swansea Council is the banker or lead authority on behalf or other authorities they would follow their own processes.

2.   What is a Grant

2.1   The Grant Giving process is separate from procurement and commissioning of contracts, however aims and objectives of grant programmes may be closely linked to commissioned services and should take care not to duplicate provision or services.

2.2   There are many and varied definitions of what is a grant and what is a commissioned service – A grant is defined by UK Government as:

"A sum of money awarded to an organisation in anticipation of it being applied for an agreed purpose. This purpose may be very specific, e.g. to fit a smoke alarm in an old person's house, or less specific, e.g. to promote fire safety among old people"

Competitive grants – which is the process most commonly utilised across the council as:

"Grant funding for which applications are invited and assessed against a pre-published set of criteria, with awards made based on the outcome of the application assessment"

A link to further information on Grant vs Contract guidance can be found on procurement section webpages at:
https://staffnet.swansea.gov.uk/media/4975/Grant-v-contract-paper/pdf/Grant_v_contract_paper.pdf?m=1642162632040

2.3   The definitions above could also be said to be pertinent to commissioned or procured services. Grant programmes are usually short term, lower value, one off (or in a short series of rounds) funds, whereas procured services are usually longer term, higher value and for services complimentary or essential to the statutory duties of a council.

2.4   If there is any uncertainty over the best process to utilise for a funding programme please contact Procurement Officer.
For further information on Procurement please refer to https://staffnet.swansea.gov.uk/procurementinfo and review the procurement Guide for Council Staff.

3.   Suggested Stages in Grant Giving Process

3.1   An infographic on the stages within a grant giving process can be found at Appendix 1. Section 3.2 – 3.8 describe each stage in detail.

3.2   **Pre Grant Process**

- Aims, objectives and criteria
  At the planning stage the aims if the grant programme need to be clear, but not so rigid they exclude innovation or new ways of working.
- Desired outcomes
  Consider what outcomes you envisage at the final evaluation process.
- Budget amount and timescales
  Consider clear and achievable timescales that allow time for application packs to be prepared and translated into Welsh; for applicants to complete and submit documentation and for the decision-making process. All this needs to link with budget deadlines, funding availability and timescales for successful groups to manage and complete projects that are supported.

3.3   **Application process**

- Timely application process
  A clear deadline. Applicants should have sufficient time to review and complete application packs. It should be stressed that applications will not be accepted after this deadline.
- Standardised application forms (example as Appendix 2)
  Design and develop application packs based upon standard application forms. These forms are a guide only and can be amended according to the funding programme in question. Online application and submission preferred – however be careful not to exclude your target groups if you use online application alone. Data protection assurance should be included in every application pack.
- Clear question by question guidance notes
  Application pack should include (where possible) clear guidance notes that take the applicant through the form question by question, explaining what information is required.
- Revenue or Capital/Mix
  Capital expenditures are typically one-time large purchases of fixed assets that will be used over a longer period. This does not include small purchases for one-off use in a project such as stationery, art supplies etc. Revenue expenditures are the ongoing operating expenses, which are usually short-term expenses. (salaries, utilities, rent contributions, etc) This may be dictated by the source funder (eg Welsh Government)
- What you are eligible to apply for/ineligible costs
  The criteria should be clear on what costs are ineligible – for example set a capital spend of £500 or limit wages to sessional costs and not core salaries. Retrospective funding should not be considered. This may be dictated by the source funder (eg Welsh Government).
- Who is eligible to apply – who is ineligible

Be clear on who is or is not eligible to apply – for example many funding bodies exclude political entities, promotion of religion (as opposed to groups who are based in or formed around religious institutions who undertake community work) and statutory bodies from funding programmes. This is dependent upon the programme (for example you may exclude Community Councils or Council departments - but this would be counterproductive if the fund objectives are centred around a literary programme when Libraries are generally operated by Local Government). Eligibility should be limited to organisations working in and preferably based in Swansea and only for projects benefitting Swansea residents (unless funding in question is specifically regional or cross boundary), This may be dictated by the source funder (e.g. Welsh Government).

- Clear and succinct project criteria
It should be clear what the is expected from applications to the programme, linked closely to expected outcomes – however criteria should aim not be so restrictive it stifles innovation and new ways of working or new ideas.

- Available in English and Welsh.
Legislation requires all documentation to be available and accepted in both languages as per Welsh Governments Welsh Language Standards

- Clarity on what is expected from monitoring information including timescales.
The application pack should inform of the monitoring information required, and allow the applicant to outline how they will collect the requisite information. Monitoring should be appropriate to the size of the project and amount of grant and not be so onerous as to place the group in a situation where effort collecting monitoring information detracts from the performance of the actual project being funded.

- Closing dates
As previously prescribed closing dates should be clear and allow appropriate time for applicants to complete packs and compile supporting documentation. Applications received after closing dates should not be included, unless there are extenuating circumstances.
Certain funding programmes may take place on a rolling application/decision making process the timescales in these circumstances should also be clearly communicated.

- Publicity and PR
Utilise internal PR and external networks to disseminate information. All applicants should be made aware that grant awards will be in the public domain.

3.4 **Due diligence on applicants- All applicants should supply.**

- Constitution – Status of organisation (charity, benevolent, CIC etc.)
All applicants should supply a robust constitution/governing documents. Applicants do not necessarily have to be registered Charities – if they are they should supply Charity numbers, but smaller groups can be classed as benevolent or for community good. Many organisations are Community Interest Companies or not for profit businesses these are also eligible, but

the governing document should clearly state the type of organisation and its governing processes.

- Confirmation of a bank account requiring two signatories
  (For very small organisations these types of accounts are becoming harder to open or keep, as banks are eager to close small accounts discretion may need to be used in these circumstances)
- Annual Accounts, preferably independently audited (or bank statements if in first year of trading) and confirmation of appropriate bank account.
  New groups will not have audited accounts, projects which aim to seed fund new projects should still seek assurances appropriate financial protocols are in place.
- Awareness of requirements under the WG Welsh Language (WL) guidance policy and supply WL policy - WL policy should explain how they will be met by the applicant group.
- Awareness of requirements under equalities policies and supply appropriate policies including environmental policies - policies should contain information on how these objectives will be met by the group
- Safeguarding policies appropriate to the organisation and project in question.

  Third Sector groups that need assistance to develop any aspects regarding due diligence should contact Swansea Council for Voluntary Service (SCVS) they are commissioned by the council to provide such assistance.
  Swansea CVS (scvs.org.uk)

3.5 **Assessment process**

- Recommendations to panel (if possible/feasible) by relevant officers
  Any recommendation should be based on due diligence, eligibility and criteria.
- Panel mix of council and whenever possible third sector - Cabinet Member or Local Ward member involvement when required – *council should have majority* – chair should be a Council representative and have deciding vote.
- All members of the panel need to sign a non-disclosure and Conflict of Interest form.
  Following advice from procurement this should become standard practice for grant funding applicable to all internal and external panel members.
- Limited wherever possible/appropriate to Swansea organisations & only for work undertaken in the City. (unless programmes are specifically regional or cross boundary)
- Assessment panel decisions are final.

3.6 **Awarding practices**

- Identify key performance targets or specific requirements of grant.
  Should be related to submission on application form or amended and agreed in negotiations with the grant recipient.
- Letter of notification – containing additional agreed targets or requirements.

- Standard Contract of acceptance (including the provision of bank account details) Sample attached as Appendix 3
- Payment arrangements
  For example - full amount in advance or other agreed payment schedule
- PR – successful projects should be in the public domain, Swansea Council support for projects should be credited on any paperwork or advertising materials, utilising council logo in line with Council branding protocols.

3.7 Monitoring Protocols

- Appropriate to the size and requirements of the grant awarded,
  Sample monitoring form attached as Appendix 4. Monitoring should be appropriate to the size and type of project and not be too onerous for smaller groups – the aim wherever possible is to run the project efficiently not to clog the process up with excessive data collection. However monitoring requirements can also be prescribed by the Source Funder. (eg Welsh Government)
- Share information internally on poor performance (for whatever reason).
- Where possible and appropriate look carry out a quality assurance visit.
- PR – If undertaking quality assurance visits link with PR officers.

3.8 Final Evaluation

- Final Report and Overall Performance against aims and objectives of funding programme and grant project.
  A summary report (spreadsheet) on project by project monitoring figures and an overall picture of outcomes, number of attendees etc.
- Lessons learned.
  Summarise and share appropriate lessons learned during the grant giving process with other funding sections.

4. Integrated Assessment Implications

4.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage
- Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language
- Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.

- Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

4.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2005 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.

4.3 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.

4.4 The IIA screening undertaken can be found at **Appendix 5** demonstrates that there are no equality implications for Swansea Council. This is because the report recommends a policy and process be noted with reference to grant giving. The grant programmes themselves my directly impact protected characteristics the policy forms a guideline for administration rather than recommending specific criteria for grant programmes. This policy process does however strengthen the awareness and requirement for policies that safeguard protected characteristics in grant programmes.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 There are no legal implications.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 Whilst there are clearly no direct financial implications arising from this report, there are clear benefits from a consistent overarching framework for grant giving to maximise the grant benefits and outcomes achieved and to achieve compliance with procurement and legal obligations as well as grant terms and conditions. Grant giving provides an opportunity to extend the reach of our support closer to communities and community groups.

Background Papers: None.

Appendices:
Appendix 1 - Grant Process – Infographic
Appendix 2 - Sample Application Form
Appendix 3 - Sample Contract
Appendix 4 - Sample Monitoring Form
Appendix 5 - IIA Screening Form