

London Borough of Brent
Report from the Director of Social Services
Meeting of the Executive – 8th March 2004

TRANSPORT GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

For Action

Name of Wards Affected

ALL

FP REF: SS-03/04-15

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report asks the Executive to agree new criteria for providing transport grants to local voluntary organisations. It provides details of the organisations currently funded and makes recommendations for future funding if the new criteria are approved.
- 1.2 If the proposals are accepted the new criteria will be effective from April 2004.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to:

- 2.1 Note the contents of the report and,
- 2.2 Approve the new criteria for providing transport grants to voluntary organisations as set out in paragraph 6.13 of this report.
- 2.3 Agree the allocation of £18,256 to the voluntary organisations that meets the new criteria. Details of the organisations are listed in section 6.16 of this report.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 If the recommendations are agreed, any resources released arising (currently estimated at c. £41,000) by this process will be reinvested in mainstream services from vulnerable people.
- 3.2 Details of the grants to individual organisations in 2003/2004 are set out in Appendix 1.

4.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no staffing implications.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Constitution requires the Executive to approve any grants in excess of £5,000 per annum.

5.2.1 The Council has the power to make the grant described in this report.

6.0 DETAIL

Background

6.1 A number of voluntary organisations have been in receipt of transport grant funding from Social Services for a considerable period of time. The grant is used by voluntary organisation to provide transport to enable people to attend activities in the community run by them.

6.2 Over the last few years concerns have been raised about the type of services these organisations provide and in particular whether services are provided to those with the most need. The Department has therefore decided to review the services provided by these organisations to establish whether funding is targeted at appropriate services and offers value for money.

The Review

6.3 A review of all transport grants to voluntary organisation was undertaken in 2003/04. The review considered what the organisations provided, to whom, for what purpose, where and how often.

6.4 Letters were sent to all organisations in April 2003 asking them to provide details of the transport arrangements by 30th May 2003. Of the 22 organisations in receipt of the grant 15 organisations provided the information requested and 7 did not. Of these 7, 2 responded but did not provide the information requested and 5 did not respond to the letter.

6.5 Information from the review was presented to the Forward Plan Select Committee on the 8th July 2003. At the meeting Members requested further details on the organisations that did not respond to the Review and the actions to be taken by the Department in respect of these organisations. As a result a further request was made to these organisations and letters were sent in October 2003 asking them to provide the information needed for the review by 1st December 2003.

6.6 In total 20 responses have been received from organisations. A summary of the information provided by each is attached as Appendix 1.

6.7 The Review highlighted the following:

- Most if not all the organisations provided social and leisure activities. Organisations are involved in a wide range of activities some of which are

- not connected to social care services Only 2 organisations provide day care services and accept referrals from Social Services.
- Some organisations provide services to people in other local authorities and this implies that the grant may not be used solely for Brent residents. Also, 3 of the organisations are based outside Brent
- Costs appeared to be high for the numbers of people transported by some organisations. Costs varied annually from £61.48 per person to £650.00 per person.
- 2 organisations did not respond and neither of these organisations have made a claim against their grant allocation for the past 2 years

6.8 The purpose of the Review was to establish whether funding was being used to provide essential transport services to support social care provision. The review found that this was not always the case and a number of organisations were involved in a range of activities which were unconnected with Social Services functions. It became clear that the funding provided by Social Services was being used to support social activities and in a number of cases those attending fell outside the department's criteria for services.

The Criteria

6.9 Currently there are no criteria for the transport grants. The basis for the grant allocation is largely historical, with allocations having been rolled forward for a number of years. The availability of the grants has not been recently advertised and organisations who have been in receipt of the transport grant have received funding each year provided they submit invoices proving they have incurred transport expenditure. The amount allocated is cash limited and is subject to an inflationary increase each year.

6.10 Input from Social Services in terms of monitoring the activities of these organisations ceased in 1998. Because the services provided were not monitored it would appear that organisations have not had any guidance in relation to the department's service priorities, and as such have developed services which although meeting some community needs do not necessarily meet Social Services service criteria.

6.11 In line with the 'Fair Access to Care Services' eligibility criteria for social services that were introduced in April 2003, Members agreed that Brent Social Services Department would meet the needs of people whose needs are critical and substantial as defined by the new criteria.

6.12 With this in mind, officers are recommending a new process for awarding the transport grants that will meet the Department criteria for services and be in line with the Fair Access to Care Service eligibility framework.

6.13 Officers propose that funding should be made using the following criteria;

1. The service is provided to Brent residents
2. The service user falls into one of the social care categories for which services are provided by Social Services
3. The service assists the user to maximise his or her independence (i.e. rehabilitation services or support to carers)
4. The grant is spent only for transport
5. Evidence of expenditure can be produced

6. The expenditure can be justified by the numbers transported

In order to qualify for transport grant funding, agencies should meet all criteria.

6.14 Existing organisations have been assessed against the new criteria and the results are shown in the table below.

	NAME	CRITERIA						GRANT AWARD
		1	2	3	4	5	6	
1	B’Nai B’rith Friendship Club	x	x	x	✓	✓	x	NO
2	Kenton Methodist Club	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x	NO
3	Harrow Friendship Club	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x	NO
4	Starfish Swimming club	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x	NO
5	West Indian Self Effort	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Yes
6	Elders Voice	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Yes
7	Wembley TOCH Blind Club	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x	NO
8	British Red Cross	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x	NO
9	Neasden Gateway Club	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Yes
10	PHAB Central London	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x	NO
11	Deaf Plus London	x	✓	✓	✓	X	x	NO
12	Pisces Swimming Club	No longer requires the grant but may re-apply in the future						NO
13	Wembley and Kingsbury Arthritis Care	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Yes
14	Wembley Glad Club	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x	NO
15	Kingsbury Friendship Club	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x	NO
16	Brondesbury & Willesden Friendship Club	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x	NO
17	Brent Multiple Sclerosis Society	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Yes
18	Wembley Friendship Club	Closed in March 2003						
19	Kilburn Salvation Army	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x	NO
20	Wembley Care Society	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x	NO
21	Brent Association for Disabled People	Did not provide information for the review						NO
22	North Kensington Stroke Club	Did not provide information for the review						NO

6.15 All the voluntary sector organisations have been informed on the new criteria and are aware of the department’s intention to review the process for award of grants.

The Proposal

- 6.16 Based on the above table, 5 organisations meet all the criteria for funding. These organisations provide specific social care services which are similar to those provided by the Department. Most of the users attending these services would be classified as having a social care need and would be eligible for services under the department's criteria. The organisations that meet the criteria are listed below and Members are therefore asked to approve funding to these organisations for the financial year 2004/5.
- West Indian Self Effort
 - Elders Voice
 - Neasden Gateway Club
 - Wembley and Kingsbury Arthritis Care
 - Brent Multiple Sclerosis Society
- 6.17 The funding process will remain the same and the Council would reimburse those organisations for the actual costs of transport incurred on production of invoices up to a maximum sum. The total maximum for the organisations mentioned above in 2004/5 will be £18,256.
- 6.18 2 organisations (Elders Voice and WISE) currently receive a grant to provide day care services to the Department under a Grant Agreement and if this proposal is accepted it is our intention to include transport grant funding in any longer-term contractual arrangements with these organisations. This will enable organisations to achieve greater consistency and financial stability in their operations.
- 6.19 Organisations have been aware since April 2003 of the Council intention to review the grant and that funding may no longer be available to them for transport costs. Under the new criteria some organisations will lose their funding. It is our intention to work with these organisations in assisting them where possible to identify alternative transport arrangements for their clients. There is a possibility that the transport needs of some of the organisations can be met at no extra cost within our current arrangements with Brent Transport Service.
- 6.20 Transport needs may also be met under an existing agreement with Brent Community Transport to provide subsidised group transport to social care organisations. Also some service users may have access to the local taxi card or dial a ride services. Discussions with these organisations will take place immediately if the proposal is accepted. Assistance will also be offered to identify alternative source of funding where possible.

Conclusion

- 6.21 The review highlighted officers views that funding was not targeting people with the most needs, and many organisations were providing social activities rather than social care services. It also showed that the grants were not used in a cost-effective way as there was a wide variation in transport costs between the organisations.
- 6.22 The new criteria for the grants will ensure a consistent approach in terms of who receives the grant and how it is used. The new criteria focus on meeting

the Department's eligibility criteria and service priorities and this will ensure that resources are targeted to meet priority needs and provide value for money. It will also ensure that services provided by the voluntary sector will support and complement those provided by the Department.

- 6.23 The proposal furthers the departments aim to eliminate small grants which are expensive to administer, and to build more influential relationships with the voluntary sector in more mainstream partnerships in our main areas of client care.

7.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Criteria Assessment Working Papers
- Briefing Note to Forward Plan Select Committee Meeting on 8th July 2003, 26th November 2003 and 27 January 2004.
- Letters sent to voluntary organisation on 5th April and 12th November 2003.

Anyone wishing to see the above papers should contact:

Beverleigh Forbes, Contracts Manager, Social Services
6th Floor, Mahatma Gandhi House, 34 Wembley Hill Road
Wembley, Middlesex HA9 8AD

Mike Bibby , Strategy, Planning and performance Manager, Social Services I
6th Floor, Mahatma Gandhi House, 34 Wembley Hill Road
Wembley, Middlesex HA9 8AD

Telephone No: 020 8937 4163, Fax: 020 8937 4194
Email: beverleigh.forbes@brent.gov.uk

APPENDIX 1

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES RECEIVED TRANSPORT GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

NAME	GRANT PAID 2003/4 (£)	CLIENT GROUP	MEMBERS	BRENT MEMBERS	ACTIVITIES	ALTERNATIVE FUNDS	COST PER PERSON PER ANNUM	TRANSPORT PROVIDED BY
B’Nai B’rith Friendship Club	381.00	Older people	Details not provided	Not known	Meet on Tuesday afternoons for social activities	Unknown	Unknown	Dial A Ride and Taxis
Kenton Methodist Club	3,030	Older people with physical disability	Not known	9	Meet every fortnight on Tuesdays, between 2.30 and 4.30 Provides mainly social activities	Unknown	336.66	BTS
Harrow Friendship Club	2,159	Older People with physical disability	70	20	Meet on Mondays 11 – 3pm for lunch and social activities	Unknown, may receive funding from Middlesex Synagogue where they are based	151.50	Dial A Ride and occasional Taxis
Starfish Swimming club	3,210	Physical and learning disability	50 from Brent Camden and Westminster	9	Provides swimming sessions at Swiss Cottage Pool on Tuesday evening between 7-8pm	Club have regular fund raising activities	356.66	BTS
West Indian Self Effort	1,983 (paid in 2002/3)	Older People	107	107	Operates day centre, which opens 5 days a week. Provides lunch and social activities	Receives Grant from Social Services £57,200	Don’t know not all members have transport	BTS for outings
Wembley Friendship Club	Closed in March 2003							

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Elders Voice	6,684	Older People	31	31	Operates 2-day centres, which provides social activities for older people. Centres are open on Mondays and Thursdays	Receives Grant from Social Services £62,950 Cares Grant £31,419 Promoting Independence £51,030	Unknown as only some members have transport	Buses hired from New Testament Project and BCT
Wembley TOCH Blind Club	2,355	Older people	17	17	Meet on the 1 st Wednesday of each month and provides social and leisure activities	Receives donations from organisations that work for the Blind.	138.52	BTS
Neasden Gateway Club	7,254	Children and young people with learning disability	74	74	Social club which provides respite to cares, help parents complete benefit forms and provides advice and support service	Unknown – may receive funding from Brent Mencap	72.10	BTS
PHAB Central London	3,713	Physical disability	Unknown	7	The club meets on Monday evenings and provides social activities for disabled people. Meetings are held in Victoria.	Westminster Council and other charities	530.28	BTS
British Red Cross	4,210	Older people	Unknown	17	Club meet in Harrow, and provides social activities every Friday afternoon 1 – 4pm	Unknown	247.11	BTS

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Deaf Plus London	500.00 (Paid in 2001/2)	Physical Disability – Sensory Impairment	289	Bus visited Brent 3 times last year and made 11 visits to Brent in the last 3 years. Details of users not provided	Provides a mobile advisory service where information of different types of equipment and services for people with sensory impairment	Unknown	Unknown	Own Transport
Wembley and Kingsbury Arthritis Care	2,130	Older people physical disability	85	28	Club provides social activities on the 2 nd Wednesday of each month at Queensbury Methodist church.	Unknown – Arthritis care is a national org. and may receive funding centrally.	76.07	BTS, BCT
Kingsbury Friendship Club	1,317	Older people	14	14	Club provides social activities on Wednesday afternoons for its members.	Unknown	94.07	BTS
Wembley GLAD Club	4,932	Older People with physical disability	22	22	Social activities, education and entertainment. Club meets twice a month	Unknown	224.18	BTS
Pisces Swimming Club	2,630 (Paid in 2002/3)	Physical disability	Details not provided	Details not provided	Weekly swimming sessions at Gemini Pool, Kingsbury	Unknown	Unknown	BTS, Dial a ride and Taxis

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Brondesbury & Willesden Friendship Club	3,070	Older people	13	13	Meet on Mondays 1.30 – 3.30 for social activities and provide members with afternoon tea	Unknown, but the organisation is supported by the League of Jewish Women	£236.15 per person per year	Unknown
Brent Multiple Sclerosis Society	2,130 (Paid in 2002/3)	Physical Disability	21	21	Meet once a month at have occasional outings to museums, art galleries, park etc	Unknown	£101.42	BTS
Wembley Care Society	2,774	Older People	33	33	Operates day centre which opens 2 days a week within the ground of Edinburgh House Club	Unknown	£84.06	Unknown
Kilburn Salvation Army	4,572	Unknown	24	10	Luncheon clubs held each week – Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Activities include games quizzes and other social activities	Unknown but the club is also open residents Camden & Westminster who may also provide funding	£457.24	Unknown
BADP	Did not provide information for the review							
North Kensington Stroke Club	Did not provide information for the review							
Total	£59,034	-	-	432	-	-	-	-

