

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Executive Director of Corporate Services

Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee – 24 March 2010

Subject : Old People's Welfare Grant Funding

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Committee with an update regarding the grant funding for elderly welfare organisations.

2. Background

- 2.1 A report was submitted to the Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee on 25 February 2009 providing information on a focus group held in January. The focus group had representation from each elderly welfare organisation receiving Christmas grant funding from the Council. Historically members of the organisations from Dumbarton and Alexandria benefit mainly through social events, whereas within the wider area of Clydebank and Old Kilpatrick members benefit from individual cash payouts.
- 2.2 A report was submitted to the Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee on 29 April 2009 with future options regarding the best use of grant funding for elderly welfare organisation.
- 2.3 At that meeting the Committee agreed that the status quo should remain. However, in order to address safety and other concerns, a review on the administration of financial payments was requested.
- 2.4 Over recent years, the police have promoted their involvement and presence during the payout process. However, due to their concerns over personal safety, the local Clydebank police played a more active role during the 2009 payout process.
- 2.5 During the Christmas payout for Clydebank in December 2009, the West Dunbartonshire Community Volunteer Service (CVS) assisted with the administration and in doing this reviewed the process.

3. Main Issues

Police representation

- 3.1 The police raised a number of concerns over the security of such large sums of cash being held and paid out over the period of the payout week. Security issues due to advertisement of the cash held were highlighted both for the individuals receiving the cash and also those individuals involved in paying out the cash.
- 3.2 The police are in attendance at the Committee meeting to present their views on this issue.

CVS involvement

- 3.3 The CVS helped administer the 2009 payout at Clydebank Town Hall. Appendix 1 identifies the issues which have been highlighted by them (in line with officers' previous findings), with recommendations on how to make the process fairer to those receiving the cash and easier for those administering the cash.
- 3.4 The CVS also recommends that a survey is carried out with Dumbarton and Vale of Leven organisations regarding possible options for delivery.
- 3.5 However, with previous issues arising over the inconsistency of approaches throughout the authority, a survey to all organisations and perhaps a sample of those receiving the benefits may allow the Council to have a full representative view. The CVS has advised they would be willing to carry out an independent survey on behalf of the Council.

4. Personnel Issues

- 4.1 There are no personnel implications at this stage.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications.

6. Risk Analysis

- 6.1 No additional risk analysis was necessary at this stage.

7. Equalities Impact Assessment

- 7.1 A full equalities impact assessment will be required during the survey and analysis of the results prior to reporting back to Members.

8. Conclusions and Recommendations

- 8.1 There are a number of safety issues and the need for higher police presence suggests that the status quo can no longer remain.
- 8.2 The time required from staff and individuals administering the payouts would suggest that the status quo can no longer remain.
- 8.3 Members are asked to agree to the West Dunbartonshire CVS completing an independent survey of the elderly welfare organisations receiving grant funding; the individuals benefiting from the grant funding and any other key stakeholders (e.g. police). If agreed, Members are asked to note that a report will be brought back to Committee in May 2010 with an update and recommendations based upon the findings.

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Date: 8 March 2010

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Appendix: Report on Christmas Payouts by CVS

Background Papers: Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee report 25
February 2009

Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee report 29
April 2009

Wards Affected: All Wards