

THE EXECUTIVE

Tuesday, 13 April 2004

Open Report

Agenda Item 6a Citizenship Ceremonies (Pages 1 - 4)

**Agenda Item 6b Corporate Grants Programme 2004 / 2005 (Pages
5 - 12)**

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THE EXECUTIVE**13 APRIL 2004****REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF LEISURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

The Chair will be asked to determine whether this report may be considered at the meeting under section 100(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 as a matter of urgency in order to meet the government's timescales to allow Citizenship Ceremonies to take place.

CITIZENSHIP CEREMONIES	FOR DECISION
<p><i>This report includes details in excess of the Delegated Authority allowed under the Council's Constitution, therefore approval is reserved to the Executive.</i></p> <p><u>Summary</u></p> <p>Under the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002, all local authorities are required to provide group Citizenship ceremonies for all successful applicants for naturalisation or registration as a British citizen, aged 18 or over, whose application has been received and processed by the Home Office from 1 January, 2004.</p> <p>The ceremony must be conducted by the Superintendent Registrar or Deputy from the Registration service and must take place within 3 months of the applicant being advised by the Home Office that their application for citizenship has been successful. The Home Office is paying local authorities £68 for each citizenship notification, which is intended to cover the full cost of ceremony provision. Based on past Home Office figures, there may be around 600 successful citizenship applications annually in this Borough.</p> <p>The Civic Centre Council Chamber has been identified as a suitable venue for these ceremonies and this report indicates the various arrangements being made.</p> <p><u>Wards Affected</u> – All Wards</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u></p> <p>The Executive is recommended to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree to Citizenship ceremonies being held at the Civic Centre Council Chamber from 26 April 2004 and at other suitable premises as may be required in the future. 2. Note the proposed arrangements for these ceremonies including the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and as needed, past Mayors fulfilling the role of dignitary at the event. 3. Note that the Home Office payment per individual citizen will cover the full cost of ceremony provision. <p><u>Reason</u></p> <p>To comply with requirements of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 and assist the Council in achieving its Community Priority of "Raising General Pride in the Borough".</p>	

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1. **Background**

- 1.1 The Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 includes provisions that require all successful applicants for naturalisation or registration as British Citizens, aged 18 or over, to take an oath and pledge at a Citizenship Ceremony. These provisions came into operation on 1 January 2004 for all successful applications received and processed by the Home Office from that date.
- 1.2 The Citizenship Ceremony is intended to celebrate the significance of becoming a British citizen and welcome the new citizen into his or her community. The ceremony must take place within 3 months of the applicant being advised by the Home Office that their application for citizenship has been successful.
- 1.3 The applicant pays a fee of £68 for the ceremony to the Home Office with the other fees for naturalisation or registration as a British citizen and the Home Office then remits the ceremony fee to the local authority. The fee is intended to cover the full cost of ceremony provision.
- 1.4 Under the Act each local authority
 - I. Must provide or make arrangements for premises where Citizenship Ceremonies may be held.
 - II. Must arrange for ceremonies to be conducted with sufficient frequency to enable applicants in their area to undertake a ceremony within the 3 month period.
 - III. May provide additional facilities or make additional arrangements for which a charge not exceeding the extra cost may be made.
 - IV. And the ceremony must be conducted by a Superintendent Registrar or Deputy Superintendent Registrar from the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration service.

2. **Ceremony Arrangements**

- 2.1 Using figures provided by the Home Office on past successful citizenship applications by persons living in this Borough, the expectation is that there will be an annual need for around 600 persons to attend group Citizenship Ceremonies.
- 2.2 As the ceremony is a celebration of a person becoming British, the Home Office expects national symbols, i.e. a portrait of the Queen and the Union Flag to be displayed at the ceremony.

- 2.3 As the Home Office is encouraging prospective citizens to bring guests, the venue where the standard group ceremonies are held must be sufficiently large. There also needs to be an ante-room/waiting area where everyone can assemble prior to the ceremony and be served refreshments either beforehand or afterwards.
- 2.4 Although the ceremony must be conducted by a Superintendent Registrar or Deputy Superintendent Registrar, it does not have to take place at a register office. The local authority may arrange for other premises to be used that have neither a religious nor a political connection for the standard group ceremonies.
- 2.5 In order to accommodate ceremonies for the anticipated number of new citizens and up to 2 guests each, the Civic Centre Council Chamber was considered to be the most suitable venue to hold these ceremonies, taking into account flexibility of seating, size of venue, availability of ante-room and in the evening, sufficient car parking.
- 2.6 This accommodation has been booked twice monthly on Monday evenings from 26 April 2004 to ensure that the first citizenship notifications received on 17 February can be dealt with within the required 3 month period. Subject to the flow of citizenship notifications being received, it may be necessary to increase or decrease the frequency of ceremonies.
- 2.7 The ceremony wording is in the format prescribed by the Home Office, which is to be performed by the Superintendent Registrar or their Deputy and during the ceremony each prospective citizen must either swear or affirm an oath of allegiance to the Queen and make a pledge of loyalty to the United Kingdom.
- 2.8 In order to introduce local flavour to the ceremony, local authorities are being encouraged to invite a dignitary to speak, however, the content of their speech should be non political. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor have been invited to take on this role. However, as the dignitary does not have to be an elected member of the local authority, the Home Office suggestion is that the Lord Lieutenant, Deputy Lieutenant or High Sheriff, as appropriate to the area, may be willing to attend some ceremonies. Alternatively, there may also be local celebrities, perhaps naturalised or registered British citizens who would also be willing to attend. Taking into account the anticipated need for frequent ceremonies, the Mayor has suggested that it would be appropriate for past Mayors to be invited to take on this role at appropriate times.
- 2.9 The Citizenship Certificate is being presented to the new citizen with an information pack supplied by the Home Office and local authorities are encouraged to add any appropriate local information. Additionally, the Home Office intend that the fee paid to local authorities should cover the cost of a gift for each new citizen. In order to make this meaningful for them, a commemorative photograph of the person being presented with their Citizenship certificate is planned.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 Although the Home Office have advised that there were around 600 new citizens in this Borough in the last year, there is no current information about the level of pending applications although, this is expected to be forthcoming in the future.

- 3.2 The Home Office is paying the Borough £68 for each new citizen notification. There will be staffing, refreshment, and photography costs for each ceremony and associated administration. However, the income received will more than cover these costs even if, on occasions, the ceremony were to be for as few as five people to meet the government's three month timescale. Depending on the flow of citizenship notifications, the aim is to hold ceremonies for around 15 people at a time.
- 3.3 In anticipation of this new requirement, an adjustment of £20,000 has been made to the budget for the Registration Service from 2004/05 to reflect both additional income and expenses for ceremony provision.

Background Papers

Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002; Home Office Guidance on citizenship ceremonies for Local Authorities and Superintendent Registrars

THE EXECUTIVE**13 APRIL 2004****REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE STRATEGY**

The Chair will be asked to determine whether this report may be considered at the meeting under section 100(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 as a matter of urgency in order to allow voluntary sector organisations to make financial planning decisions.

CORPORATE GRANTS PROGRAMME 2004 / 2005	FOR DECISION	
<i>This report requires Executive approval due to the need to allocate the Corporate Grants Programme funding, and make decisions on the Council budget.</i>		
<p><u>Summary</u></p> <p>This report provides proposals on how the Council's corporate grants programme will be utilised to support local voluntary and community sector organisations in 2004 / 2005. This corporate grants programme has been evaluated in a context of savings of £200,000 in the budget. It has also been undertaken within the context of a revised assessment process where each application has been assessed in relation to its capacity to deliver the Community Priorities and cross-cutting targets identified in the revised Community Strategy.</p> <p><u>Recommendations</u></p> <p>The Executive are asked to agree:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That any voluntary sector organisation receiving funding from the corporate grants programme will at best receive a standstill amount for 2004 / 2005 compared with 2003 / 2004; 2. That those organisations delivering health and social care or education services are funded through Social Services or Education FSS (£121,700 in 2004 / 2005); 3. To support a budget for the corporate grants programme of £531,037 in 2004 / 2005, which represents a budget reduction of £185,859. 4. That the necessary budget adjustments are made to meet the required budget reduction. 5. In view of the significant reduction in overall budget, that no single organisation receives a grant above £150,000 <p><u>Reason</u></p> <p>To allocate Corporate Grant funding to voluntary sector organisations.</p>		
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1. Background

1.1 The corporate grants programme has been an established way for the Council to support voluntary sector organisations in the Borough in meeting local and national priorities. There is a compelling case to retain the Corporate Grants Programme, which can be summarised as follows:

- CPA 2002 Corporate Assessment indicated the need to build more effective partnership arrangements, ensuring that the voluntary sector are clear about their role and build their capacity to deliver Community Priorities
- Voluntary sector organisations who receive funding from the programme are then able to seek matched funding from a range of sources, which encourages inward investment and enhanced service delivery in Barking & Dagenham
- As a means in which to influence direction of service delivery
- Strong external stakeholder expectations to capacity build the voluntary and community sector, particularly in relation to services to communities who may be excluded or hard to reach through existing mainstream services.

1.2 In November 2003, TMT received a report on the revised process for managing the corporate grants programme linking funding arrangements to the Community Priorities and the revised Community Strategy. This focus requires a willingness to dispense with previous custom and practice which may have based funding decisions upon a tradition of supporting organisations because they have always received financial support, rather than because they are best placed to meet the Council's objectives and priorities.

2. The Corporate Grants Programme delivery process

2.1 The process of establishing who should receive a corporate grant in 2004 / 2005 arises out of the context of the report agreed at the Executive in May 2003, on the 2003/04 programme. This agreed a corporate grants programme of £838,596 for 2003/4. At this meeting it was agreed that health and social care organisations would be funded by Social Services FSS if they were to receive grant support. It was also agreed that those delivering education services would be funded by Education FSS. Social Services agreed to fund organisations to a total of £87,137 in 2003/04 and Education FSS to a total of £25,000. A total of £121,700 is deducted from the general grants budget for 2004 / 2005 which DEAL and Social Services have made decisions to support the funding of organisations based upon their priorities and performance improvement requirements (see appendix 2).

2.2 All other applications to the corporate grants programme were assessed in relation to their capacity to deliver the Community Priorities and the revised Community Strategy. All groups applying had to go through the following process:-

- Submission of grant application
- Review of the capacity of the proposed service to deliver the Community Priorities
- Impact assessment on each application, to assess capacity to meet the needs of all members of the community and promote equality and diversity
- Review of previous monitoring data and performance results where available
- Assessment visit by the link council officer to determine the organisations capacity to deliver the services outlined in the application
- Recommendation on whether application should be supported

2.3 The overall amount applied for from the Corporate Grants Programme for 2004 / 2005 from the **66** applications received from voluntary sector organisations in the Borough was **£1,193,384**. This compares to grant provision available from the Corporate Grants Programme of **£531,037** and funding from Education and Social Services of **£121,700**, totalling **£652,737**.

3. The role of the Umbrella Groups

3.1 It is critically important for the Council's community leadership role that strong and effective umbrella groups are functioning within the voluntary and community sector. The Executive will be aware that the existing umbrella groups have experienced some difficulties in recent times. This means that the umbrella groups are not currently in a position to manage the administration of the whole grants process, although this could be a longer term aim. The management of the corporate grants programme requires clarity of purpose, and a commissioning process which builds capacity in key service areas. The Local Compact, which is currently out for consultation, should formalise current working arrangements, and promote the longer term goal of empowering the umbrella groups to deliver these tasks.

3.2 The Council for Voluntary Services (CVS) has recently appointed a new director, who is committed to building the capacity of the organisation. He has only been in post for just over two months, and the Council is likely to require more time to assess whether CVS is able to fulfil the role of lead umbrella group for the voluntary and community sector organisations in Barking & Dagenham.

3.3 The Council's corporate Equality and Diversity Adviser and Corporate Community Development Manager have recently undertaken a review of the other two umbrella groups, Race Equality Council (REC) and Ethnic Minorities Partnership Association (EMPA). This has assessed the viability of these groups and whether their role and function can be sustained in the longer term. The outcome of this review will be submitted to the Executive shortly.

3.4 While the Council may query the need for three umbrella groups in the medium term, the assessment process for the corporate grants programme 2004 / 2005 suggests that the CVS and REC should continue to receive standstill funding in the next financial year. It is also proposed that EMPA is the one organisation which will receive additional funding, due to the expiry of lottery funding and to sustain its operations through this transitional period.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 The proposals of this report represents a saving of £185,859 in the Corporate Grants programme. The necessary budget adjustments will be made to service budgets to enable the agreed saving to be implemented.

5. Conclusion

5.1 The proposed allocation of the corporate grants programme 2004 / 2005 is outlined in appendix 1. This allocation is founded upon the following principles:-

- Any voluntary and community sector organisation needs to demonstrate its capacity to assist the council in delivering the Community Priorities in 2004 / 2005

- Any organisation receiving funding has been subject to an assessment by both written application and external visit
- As a result of the reductions in the corporate grants programme, no organisation will receive a level of funding above that awarded to it in 2003/04 (with the exception of EMPA)
- Organisations fulfilling health and social care and educational priorities will be considered for funding support through education and social services departments.
- No single organisation will receive more than £150k support in 2004 / 2005.

5.2 Those organisations that will be funded by Education and Social Services FSS are outlined in appendix 2.

5.3 Those organisations which have submitted applications but which will not receive any grant funding from the Council are outlined in appendix 3. These have been divided for reference in relation to health & social care, education, existing projects and new applications.

Proposed Corporate Grants Programme Allocation 2004 / 2005

Organisation	Amount awarded from Grants Budget	In Kind – Rent
Umbrella Group		
CVS	87,560	
EMPA	41,627	
REC	56,277	3,000
Total	185,464	3,000
Raising General Pride in the Borough		
Arc Theatre Ensemble	5,000	
Barking Operatic Society	2,906	
Chain Reaction Theatre Company	1,500	
Dagenham Camera Club	400	
Sports Council	1,462	
Studio 3 Arts	8,500	
Gifted and Talented (x2)	9,000	
Total	28,768	
Rights and Responsibilities/Equalities and Diversity		
AbPhab Youth Project	2,000	
Access Group	2,000	
African Youth League	0	13,000
BADAWA Youth	10,000	
Barking Muslim Social & Cultural	0	11,000
Caress	5,000	
Citizens Advice Bureau	150,000	20,500
Community Accountancy Project	10,000	
Gascoigne and Thames View Advice Centre	9,625	7,450
Mencap	0	2,800
Relate	11,000	
Somali Women's Project	2,000	
Turkish Womens Project/Arabic Womens Speaking Project	2,000	
Vineries Young Women's Project	13,820	
Volunteer Bureau	10,000	
Total	227,445	54,750

Organisation	Amount awarded from Grants Budget	In Kind – Rent
Cleaner Greener Safer		
Quaker Social Action (furniture recycling project)	2,000	
Thameside Farm	35,200	
Wellgate Farm	21,160	6,000
Victim Support	31,000	
Total	89,360	6,000
Umbrella Group	185,464	3,000
Raising General Pride in the Borough	28,768	
Rights and Responsibilities/Equalities and Diversity	227,445	54,750
Cleaner Greener Safer	89,360	6,000
TOTAL	531,037	69,750

Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations to be funded by Social Services and Education FSS

Organisation	Amount awarded from Grants Budget	In Kind – Rent
Health Housing and Social Care		
Age Concern	10,000	
Crossroads	3,000	
CIIL	8,800	
Daybreak	25,000	
Deaf PLUS	800	
NE London Mediation Service	6,000	
PACT	3,000	
Carers	15,900	
Disablement Association	24,200	
Total	96,700	
Education and Learning for All		
East Street Project	25,000	
Total	25,000	
Health Housing and Social Care	96,700	
Education and Learning for All	25,000	
TOTAL	121,700	

Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations who made unsuccessful applications for grant funding in 2004 / 2005 with detail of amount requested

Health/Social Care and Education Groups

Befrienders	£ 9,000
Bereavement Service B&D	£10,846
B&D Stroke Club	£462
U Can Do It	£ 2,470
DIAL	£ 9,311
MIND	£10,000
Bewise	£ 6,000
Preschool Learning Alliance	£22,168
Dagenham Ass Mental Health	£10,000
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>£ 80,257</u>

Existing Projects

Barking Flower Arrangement	£ 100
Barking Photographic Society	£ 100
B&D Historical Society	£ 100
10/18 Barking Scouts	£ 5,000
17 B&D Scout Group	£ 1,600
Reach Africa (Supported two African Youth Projects)	£ 9,000
Widows & Orphans	£ 2,000
International Christian Care Foundation	£ 2,000
African Legal Advisory Project	£ 5,000
Environmental People's Organisation	<u>£ 2,000</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>£26,900</u>

Other Applications

Integration via Bantu	£ 6,000
Transocean Development Agency	£ 9,000
Dagenham Baptist Church (capital bid access)	£10,000
Family Value Association	£50,000
Refugee Resettlement	£ 5,760
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>£80,760</u>