

**DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND SOCIAL INCLUSION
20th February, 2004**

Present:- Councillor Robinson (in the Chair) and Councillors Ali, Doyle and Sangster (Policy Advisers).

15. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet Member for Community Planning and Social Inclusion held on 23rd January, 2004 be received.

16. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved:- That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 5 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972 (information relating to financial assistance provided by the Council).

17. FUNDING FOR VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR ORGANISATIONS

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Voluntary Sector Liaison Manager, which outlined the grants provided by the Social Inclusion Unit for voluntary and community sector organisations across the Borough.

The submitted report provided a breakdown of expenditure both from revenue and C.E.R.B. funding during the current financial year and projected levels of expenditure for 2004/2005. Many of the currently funded projects have been historically linked to these budgets.

In the next financial year a saving of at least £10,000 of revenue funding was required and this had been achieved with the recommendations made to Members. The C.E.R.B. budget for 2004/05 was made up of £22,000 new C.E.R.B. money, £150,000 from Neighbourhood Renewal Fund with carry forward from 2003/04 leaving available C.E.R.B. of £288,000.

In terms of allocations thirteen projects had agreements over a period of two or three years, five of which had been previously approved with 3% annual increase inflation costs.

Most of the other projects funded on a single year basis were subject of an application process and their requests were clearly outlined.

Contact was to be made with the projects concerned once decisions had been reached on the budget reductions and followed up in writing.

Reference was made to the funding reductions for two organisations. The two organisations were aware of the situation in light of the current budget pressures in that funding reductions were possible.

Consideration was given to the increases in funding for three groups and the reasons for this were clearly outlined.

Discussion ensued and questions were raised about the reasons for funding some groups. Members were informed of particular groups in detail, but also informed that some of the funding provided by the Council very often attracted much greater sums of external funding to assist the functions of the groups.

Members noted the net savings from the suggestions put forward, which amounted to almost £158,000 and that some groups with three year funding streams would disappear from the list for the next financial year.

Resolved:- (1) That the funding levels for projects requesting financial support as detailed in the report be approved.

(2) That the five projects be informed that the 3% inflation increases for 2004/05 be not approved.

(3) That all groups supported through C.E.R.B. funds be informed that this was the final year of funding and be asked to provide a funding strategy by July, 2004 detailing their plans for alternative funding if they wish to continue their projects.

(4) That projects that were held at standstill budgets or not granted inflation increases be provided with a full lump sum payment of grant in April, 2004.

(5) That arrangements be made for a period of intensive liaison with funded groups to ensure that alternative funding avenues are explored.

(6) That any savings from C.E.R.B. be utilised for the 2005/06 financial year unless there was a specific need for project support during 2004/05. In this case each application would be judged on individual merit, considered through the application process and approved by the Cabinet Member (Community Planning and Social Inclusion).

(Councillors Ali and Sangster declared personal interests in the above items being Council representatives on Rotherham Credit Union and Crime Reduction Programme respectively.)

18. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Resolved:- That consideration be given to Community Development Workers from Voluntary Action Rotherham as an agenda item for a future meeting of the Cabinet Member and Advisers.

19. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved:- That the next meeting be held on Friday, 19th March, 2004, commencing at 10.00 a.m.