

19 OCTOBER 2017

**REPORT OF THE SOLICITOR TO THE COUNCIL
AND MONITORING OFFICER****FESTIVE GRANT PROPOSAL****PURPOSE**

To consider a proposal for Festive Grants across the Borough in each Ward to replace the Mayoral Hamper Scheme.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

- 1. consider the Proposal for a Festive Grant Scheme**
- 2. adopt the Proposal for a Festive Grant Scheme as outlined in the report and**
- 3. agree the process to administer the Festive Grant Scheme**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Working Party consisting of 6 members (former Mayors) was proposed following the Joint Scrutiny Budget workshop in January 2016. The Working Party was tasked with looking at the current Mayoral Hamper Scheme, making suggestion for amendment and asked to feed the findings back to Cabinet.

The Working Party met on 12 October 2016 and again on 4 October 2017. The Working Party propose that £3000 allocated in the budget for Mayoral Hampers be processed each year through the Municipal Charity meeting.

The Municipal Charity Trustees meet in November each year. The Trustees of the Municipal Charity do not have a current remit to deal with monies separate from the charities account.

Alternatively the allocated amount could be processed through the Cabinet (Grants) Sub- Committee which meets 4 times each year and has a meeting in the month of December.

It is for members to decide which forum is more suitable for processing applications

for distribution of the Festive Grants in each Ward across the Borough.

The aim of utilising £3000 throughout the Borough is -
To relieve social isolation at the Festive Season

It is proposed that each Ward has £300 to be utilised for the residents of the Ward who attend a local group.

Ward members will need to get together to put their proposals for distribution of the £300 in their Ward or for the benefit of residents that reside in their Ward to the Municipal Charity meeting on 15 November 2017 or the Cabinet (Grants) Sub-Committee meeting on 20 December 2017.

If Ward members have several proposals which exceed £300 in total the Trustees of the Municipal Charity/Members of the Cabinet (Grants) Sub-Committee will decide the allocation of the funds. Such decisions are final and cannot be challenged

If a Ward does not put a proposal(s) forward or the proposal(s) are less than £300 the monies will go back into Council funds. It is not possible to carry unspent monies forward into the next financial year.

Members will need to meet soon to collate proposals whether that be through local knowledge or by putting requests for funding of an activity on the website/through the Herald with the assistance of the Communications Team. It will be up to the Ward members to decide their approach.

Nominations from members will need to be submitted no later than Monday 6 November 2017.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

In the budget proposals for 2017/18 the budget for the mayoral hamper scheme was being removed. Members considered that this altruistic scheme should be retained. It was not considered an option to stop such charitable offering completely, thus a working party was set up to provide alternative proposals for a festive season grant in the Borough.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

In this Municipal year there is budgetary provision in the sum of £3,320 for Mayoral Hampers. The proposal is to utilise £3,000 towards the proposed Festive Grant Scheme. It is proposed going forward that a sum of £3,000 is set aside in each municipal year for the proposed Festive Grant Scheme. The administration of the Scheme would be absorbed within current services as provided.

LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND

None.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

None.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

For many years the Mayor offered to senior citizens in the Borough a festive hamper. Senior Citizens were invited to apply for a hamper through the Website and from an article in the local newspaper. The Council also received nominations for hampers from several associations in the Borough e.g. Age Concern. The administration of the Mayoral Hampers is time consuming at a period when we have less staff resource, there was no control over the hampers delivered to outside agencies and on at least two occasions hampers did not reach local residents. Perhaps more importantly it was felt that only one social group received assistance when it would be more inclusive to widen the scope of this charitable giving to all age groups in the Borough. It was said at the Working Party that the hamper scheme had had its day.

REPORT AUTHOR

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LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

APPENDICES

None

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