



Policy and Resources Committee - 8 November 2010

Future Grant Funding for the Voluntary Sector in East Northamptonshire

Summary

This report asks Members to consider a revised grant funding model that will support the voluntary sector in contributing to the achievement of our corporate outcomes.

Attachment(s)

Appendix 1 - Draft Grant Agreement

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council currently supports 10 voluntary sector organisations with grant funding for their core operations. These are managed through 3-year Service Level Agreements (SLA).
- 1.2 The SLAs terminated on 31 March 2009. However the Policy and Resources Committee approved extensions to cover 2009/10 (minute 263 8 December 2008 refers) and 2010/11 (minute 176 12 October 2009 refers). The 10 organisations are:

Organisation	£ for 2010/11
Northants ACRE	4,704
Nene Valley Citizens Advice Bureau	60,822
Family Action in our Region (FAIR)	4,704
Northamptonshire Racial Equality Council	3,574
Rushden MIND	3,763
SERVICE 6	7,412
Victim Support	3,763
Volunteer Action Oundle	3,294
Community Law Service (formerly Welfare Rights)	5,081
Women's Aid	2,822
TOTAL	99,939

Officers will carry out the 6 month monitoring of the SLAs during November 2010.

- 1.3 Approval was also given to developing and implementing a new model for funding support to commence 1 April 2011. This would move away from funding the core activities of organisations and focus on where they can contribute to our corporate outcomes. Three thematic areas have been identified:
- Advice and Information
 - Counselling and support
 - Community transport
- 1.4 In addition to this the Policy and Resources Committee approved a financial support package of £6,000 for Nene & Ouse Community Transport, for its volunteer car scheme in 2010/11 (minute 325 refers).

2 Developing a new model

- 2.1 Officers have discussed various opportunities with both voluntary sector organisations and colleagues from neighbouring councils. Discussions have also been had with the Welland Partnership Procurement Manager to be clear about our statutory obligations around contracts and the process for commissioning. From all of the discussions held two models have emerged: -

Model 1: A more robust grant funding system

Advantages

- Grant Agreements for each of the 3 themes that are clearly linked to the Council's Corporate Plan priorities and outcomes
- More robust monitoring arrangements
- Can be implemented within the timescales given
- Simple process for organisations to follow resulting in minimal support requirements
- Reduced requirement for consultation with the sector

Disadvantages

- Difficult to specify actual service delivery, which could compromise value for money

Model 2: Tender/Commissioning process

Advantages

- Clear value for money through selection rules (Most Economically Advantageous Tender)

Disadvantages

- Implementation will be lengthy and complex and unlikely to be completed for 1 April 2011
- Considerable legal requirements through procurement process giving rise to additional costs
- Tender process may introduce private sector tenders eliminating voluntary sector support element of current programme

- 2.2 If Members are minded to continue with grant support for the voluntary sector, it is proposed that model 1 be adopted. Whilst both models would refocus work towards our Corporate Plan priorities and outcomes, consideration does need to be given to the high level of time and resources needed for implementing model 2.
- 2.3 From the preliminary work undertaken so far, a draft outline of the work areas for each of the 3 themes has been prepared. Set out in appendix 1 is an example of a model agreement for advice and information.
- 2.4 Members are being asked to consider a separate report at this meeting (agenda item 6 refers) regarding a number of options for this Council around Concessionary Travel. One option is to provide enhanced funding for community transport and if adopted it will increase the Council's funding towards community transport.

3 The grant process

- 3.1 It is proposed that the existing Member panel (minute 176 refers) consisting of the Deputy Leader and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee, work with officers to implement the model. The final decision on the actual award of the new grants will need to be taken by the Policy and Resources Committee and it is proposed that this be presented to the 14 February 2011 meeting.
- 3.2 Given that the introduction of a new model will reduce the number of organisations

funded, it is proposed that an Equalities Impact Assessment be prepared to support the final recommendations.

4 Financial implications of the new model

4.1 Provision will be required in the 2011/12 budget to support the new model and it is proposed that the amount of £100,000 (equivalent to the current amount) be allocated.

4.2 The Community Development Officer (Voluntary Sector) is 21 hours per week and fixed-term until 30 June 2011. This post is co-ordinating the implementation of the new model and administering the small community grants schemes set out in section 5 below. Once the new model is implemented, monitoring of the new Grant Agreements will be undertaken by the Community Partnerships Manager, through quarterly meetings with the providers.

5 Small community grants

5.1 The Council offers a range of small community grant schemes. Consideration has been given to the value of these schemes given the resources needed to administer them and the issues set out below.

Grant scheme	Types of projects	2010/11 budget £	Issues	Proposed changes for 2011/12	Savings £
Arts and heritage	Theatre productions Recording and displaying historic material	10,000	Over subscribed on arts that often seek repeat funding. Low interest around heritage	Remove	10,000
Leisure	Providing new sports equipment	8,000	Low interest – larger grants can be sourced from national schemes	Remove	8,000
Small Autumn Grants	Innovative new projects/pilot studies	10,000	Low interest. Applications often do not meet criteria	Remove	10,000
Total savings					28,000

5.1 Members are asked to approve the proposed changes to the small community grant schemes set out above with total savings of £28,000. This will reduce pressure on the 2011/12 budget.

6. Summary

6.1 The development of the new grant funding model will strengthen the voluntary sector's role in helping us achieve our Corporate Plan priorities and outcomes. Grant Agreements with the organisations will be based on the achievement of outcomes.

6.2 Of the two models identified, model 1 (a more robust grant funding system) is more straightforward to implement than that of a tendering or commissioning approach. It can be in place for 1 April 2011.

6.3 The small community grant schemes require resources to administer. Removing these

schemes will offer savings of £28,000 and tie in with the fixed-term Community Development Officer post coming to an end, as set out in 4.2 above.

7. Recommendations

Members are recommended to approve:

1. The implementation of model 1 for grant funding for the voluntary sector set up around the 3 thematic strands and in-line with our corporate outcomes.
2. Reconvening the Member Panel to support the development of the above.
3. The proposed changes to the small community grants set out in section 5 above.
4. Provision in the 2011/12 budget for a maximum of £100,000 grants funding for the new model when implemented.
5. A report on the grant award recommendations is brought to the Policy and Resources Committee meeting 14 February 2011, to include the financial implications for future financial years and an Equalities Impact Assessment.

Implications:	
Corporate Outcomes or Other Policy/Priority/Strategy	
Good Quality of Life	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good Reputation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Good Value for Money	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High Quality Service Delivery <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Effective Partnership Working	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strong Community Leadership <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Effective Management	<input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge of our Customers and Communities <input type="checkbox"/>
Employees and Members with the Right Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Decision(s) would be outside the budget or policy framework and require full Council approval <input type="checkbox"/>	
Financial	There are no financial implications at this stage <input type="checkbox"/>
	There will be financial implications – see paragraph 5 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	There is provision within existing budget <input type="checkbox"/>
	Decisions may give rise to additional expenditure at a later date <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Decisions may have potential for income generation <input type="checkbox"/>
Risk Management	An assessment has been carried out and there are no material risks <input type="checkbox"/>
	Material risks exist and these are recorded at Risk Register Reference - inherent risk score - residual risk score - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff	There are no additional staffing implications <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Additional staff will be required – see paragraph <input type="checkbox"/>
Equalities and Human Rights	There will be no impact on equality (race, age, gender, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation) or human rights implications <input type="checkbox"/>
	There will be an impact on equality (see categories above) or human rights implications – see paragraph 3.2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Legal	Power: Local Government Act 2000
	Other considerations:
Background Papers:	
Person Originating Report: Mike Greenway Community Partnerships Manager Tel 01832 742244 mgreenway@east-northamptonshire.gov.uk	
Date: 11 October 2010	
CFO	MO
	CX

Appendix 1

Proposed Grant Funding Model

Outline Grant Agreement Example:

Theme 1 - Advice and Information

To provide an advice and information service for tackling debt across East Northamptonshire

Amount allocated £60,000 per annum – 3 year Grant Agreement

(to be split into equal annual amounts with grants being paid in advance in two stages during the year)

Mandatory and discretionary council tax relief (subject to eligibility)

Sample Core Service Outcomes

- Reduced debt in East Northamptonshire
- Increased benefit take up

Minimum Requirements

1. To provide 3 sessions a week (including Mondays and others by appointment) between 9:00am and 1:30pm at the
2. To receive referrals from and provide free advice / information on a wide range of debt / multiple debt issues and, where relevant, provide advocacy assistance in the Courts, hearings and tribunals and support clients in negotiating repayments with creditors.
3. To provide for any necessary follow up work.
4. Provide telephone advice when not with a customer
5. Actively seek other funding to develop / extend the service that help achieve the outcomes of this SLA.
6. To provide a minimum 20 hours per week free drop in / telephone advice / information service on a wide range of issues (such as family issues)

Performance Indicators

- a) Amount of agreed debt repayments of at least £..... to the Council
- b) Number of clients with multi-debts who are advised

- c) Actively seek other funding to develop / extend the service that help achieve the outcomes of this SLA with a target of 75% achieved.
- d) At least 96% service user satisfaction with the service demonstrated through surveys (at least once per year).
- e) Adopt and adhere to East Northamptonshire Council's Customer Service Standards.
- f) Provide details of any events to the ENC Customer Services
- g) Attendance at quarterly monitoring meetings with a designated Lead Officer from ENC.
- h) Evidence that a diverse group of users is supported and that opportunity for interaction are maximised.

Added Value

- I Demonstrate partnership working with other voluntary and statutory agencies that help achieve the objectives of this specification.
- II Organisation's activities also support other local Priorities (Sustainable Communities Strategy, Community Safety Partnership Plan etc.)
- III Evidence of implementation of Quality Management systems including the quality of data for management purposes.