

Committee: CABINET

Agenda Item

Date: 17 JANUARY 2013

15

**Title: GRANTS – THREE YEAR VOLUNTARY
SECTOR FUNDING**

**Portfolio Holder: COUNCILLOR HOWARD ROLFE,
COMMUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS,
01799 510742**

Key decision:

Summary

1. Previously, the Council has provided funding on a three year basis for a small number of voluntary sector organisations. The funding period came to an end in March 2011. It was decided that those organisations should be funded for a further two years but on the basis of a re-launch of the scheme to ensure an equitable process was followed. This report seeks approval for the Leader of the Council to delegate power to the Community Engagement Portfolio Holder (with support from officers).

Recommendations

2. It is recommended that
 - a) the Leader of Council is requested to delegate power to the Community Engagement Portfolio Holder with support from officers to assess the three year funding applications..

Financial Implications

Proposals to increase the three year funding allocation will be presented to Members as part of the budget setting process in February.

Background Papers

None.

Impact

3.

Communication/Consultation	All organisations are communicated with on a regular basis and utilise other funding streams that enable them to secure additional funding.
Community Safety	None

Equalities	All organisations have an equal opportunities policy and have demonstrated compliance with the Council's protected characteristics.
Health and Safety	None.
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None.
Sustainability	All organisations contribute towards ensuring a sustainable quality of life is secured/maintained by those accessing their services
Ward-specific impacts	None.
Workforce/Workplace	None.

Situation

4. The Three Year Funding Grants Scheme was originally devised as the Contributions Fund Scheme (with an annual inflationary uplift) and was established to encourage and support the provision of services that might not otherwise be available to the local community.
5. The scheme has been re-launched to ensure that the grants are awarded to those organisations deemed to be providing essential services in accordance with the needs assessment of the district. Also to ensure that the grants are awarded on an equitable basis.
6. The total funding available for the grants in 2013/14 is £270,340 and the total of the applications received as part of the re-launched process amounts to £367,594.
7. Given that the grants budget is oversubscribed proposals for an increased budget will be presented to Members in February as part of the budget approval process. This will enable the voluntary sector to be provided with greater resources to meet the needs of the community.
8. Assessment criteria have been developed and the application forms requested that organisations provide details of three areas of work to be achieved during 2013/14. Additionally, for those organisations successful in being awarded funding a balanced scorecard approach to agreeing performance indicators will be pursued to ensure that the Council's corporate objectives as well as individual organisation's targets are being met. It is proposed that all of the above mentioned organisations be considered via this process as part of a three year funding arrangement.

9. It is proposed that the process for assessing funding be delegated by the Leader of the Council to the Community Engagement Portfolio Holder with support from officers. This is to enable the process to be completed before the 1 April and thereby give the charities advance notice of the amount of their individual award, if any. The outcome of the assessment process will be reported back to the Cabinet in March for final approval of the awards.
10. It is also proposed that the successful organisations will be required to make presentations to the Council in January 2014 to provide feedback on compliance with the agreed performance criteria. The feedback and evidence will be evaluated and, subject to satisfactory compliance, the award of the second year's funding will be approved or amended as required.
12. In January 2014, subject to funding, the process for considering new bids will commence again.

Risk Analysis

13.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
The Council has previously supported key voluntary sector organisations to enable them to provide advice, guidance and specific support services to the local community in the absence of many statutory agencies operating in Uttlesford.	3 Without continued funding from the Council many of the voluntary sector organisations will find it difficult to sustain the current level of service as they have identified there is less access to funding from other organisations in the current financial climate	4 Due to the lower volume of problems experienced by the Uttlesford community there are fewer statutory organisations based in the district to support people. Therefore the role of the voluntary sector is essential and withdrawal of some of those services would have a significant adverse	Increasing the funding available to the organisations will result in services continuing to be provided by the Council resourcing more organisations and existing ones being resourced to a higher level..

		impact on the wellbeing of the local community.	
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1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.