



To: Executive Cllr Community Well-being
Report by: Trevor Woollams (Head of Community Development)
Relevant scrutiny committee: Community Services 16.1. 2014
Wards affected: All

Review of Community Development and Arts and Recreation Development Grants

Key Decision

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 This report follows the Director of Customer and Community Service's report to this committee in October 2013 on the future of discretionary services. It provides the scope for the review of community development and arts and recreation development grants which, if approved, will be carried out in accordance with the Cambridgeshire Compact.
- 1.2 The review will focus on consulting voluntary and community organisations and their users about new grants priorities that will, in turn, determine how the grants budgets are allocated. The review will also ask voluntary organisations and groups about the impact on their organisation if the grants budgets were to be reduced from the 2015/16 financial year.
- 1.3 The outcome of the consultation will be reported back to this committee in the June/July 2014 committee cycle where the Executive Councillor for Community Wellbeing will be asked to agree:
 - a) New grant priorities for community development and arts and recreation development grants. The new priorities will be implemented for 2015/16 applications.
 - b) The grant budgets from 2015/16.

2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended to agree that:

- 2.1 Officers carry out a review of the community development and arts and recreation development grants as set out in section 7 of this report.
- 2.2 Officers report back to this committee in June/July 2014 with recommendations about new grants priorities and options for future budgets.

3. Background

- 3.1 A report by the Director of Customer and Community Services to this committee in October 2013 set out proposals to review discretionary services within Community Development and Arts and Recreation and to bring the 2 service areas together under a single head of service by October 2014. The proposals included outline plans to review Community Development and Arts and Recreation Development grants in the first half of 2014. This report provides the scope for the grants review which, if approved, will be carried out in accordance with the Cambridgeshire Compact.
- 3.2 The review will focus on consulting voluntary and community organisations about proposed new grants priorities. The proposed new priorities are set out below and sit underneath an over-arching theme of "Closing the Gap" This means that when we evaluate grant applications, we should seek to prioritise those applications that can demonstrate outcomes that help people in most need.
- 3.3 Given the Council's very challenging financial environment, the review will also consult voluntary organisations and groups and individuals about the impact that reduced grants budgets might have on the Cambridge voluntary sector in general and on their particular organisation or group, should members decide to make savings from 2015/16.

4. Current position

- 4.1 Members will have just considered a report recommending community development and arts and recreation development grant awards for

2014/15. The existing priorities are appended to that report. The report assumes that the 2014/15 grants budgets are maintained at their current level and not increased by inflation.

5. Proposed Priorities and Outcomes

- 5.1 Given the financial pressures and increasing demands on both public sector and voluntary sector organisations, it is important for the Council to focus its discretionary spend on supporting residents with high needs, especially those with needs that are not met by statutory support from other public sector organisations.
- 5.2 It is also important for voluntary and community groups that we have clear grants priorities and that we are clear about the outcomes we want grant recipients to achieve. This helps to keep the application, assessment and awards processes transparent and simple to administer.
- 5.3 Officers are, therefore, recommending that the following draft priorities are endorsed by the Executive Councillor for Community Wellbeing for consultation with voluntary and community organisations and groups, their users and other residents.
- 5.4 The draft grant priorities are:

	Priority	Service area	2014/15 budget
1.	Reduce barriers to access the following:		
a	Sporting activities	Arts and Recreation (+ Area committees)	£222,550 (£18,950)
b	Arts and cultural activities		
c	Legal advice	Community Development (+ Area Committees)	£775,690 (£86,040)
d	Employment support		
e	Community development activities		
		Total	£1,103,230

- 5.5 In addition to the arts and recreation development grants budget shown in the table above, the Council has a 3 year funding agreement with the Junction. 2014/15 will be the third year of this agreement and the payment to the Junction in that year will be £78,894 plus discretionary rate relief. This budget is ring-fenced from the wider grants budget to meet a requirement of the Arts Council. It is proposed that the Junction should be required to apply against the new grant priorities for any funding beyond 2014/15.

5.6 Applicants will need to demonstrate that their services, projects or activities will achieve one or more of the following outcomes:

	Outcomes
i)	Improve the health and well-being of participants
ii)	Integrate communities
iii)	Help people to gain employment
iv)	Strengthen the voluntary sector in the city

5.7 If relevant, where the grant application is not for a one-off project, applicants will also need to demonstrate how they will seek to ensure that their group or organisation is sustainable beyond the period of City Council grant funding (e.g. through income generation, fund raising etc.).

6. Grants Budget

6.1 The overall budget (subject to agreement by Council) for community development and arts and recreation grants in 2014/15 is £1,103,230. At present this budget is split between arts and recreation development grants and community development grants in the proportion shown in the table at 5.4 above.

6.2 As community development and arts and recreation services are now under a single Executive Councillor and will be brought together under a single head of service later in 2014, members may wish to consider pooling this budget. This would enable members to allocate the budget to the applications that can most effectively demonstrate they meet the priorities and desired outcomes. So one year the percentage budget allocated to “arts and sports” grants might increase if there was a particular need and more applications were received for grants that delivered arts and sports activities. The next year there may be a much higher need for legal advice and so a higher percentage of the budget might be directed towards applications that address this need.

6.3 Due to the financial pressures faced by the Council, it is recommended that voluntary and community organisations and their users are also consulted about possible reductions to the overall grants budget. We would need to make it clear that any reduction in the grants budget would not necessarily be applied uniformly across all groups applying for funding.

6.4 In order for grant applications to be considered for funding, groups would need to clearly demonstrate why and how their service, activity

or project meets the Council's new (at this stage proposed) community development and arts and recreation development grant priorities (which will be much more focused on support for residents with the highest needs) and why and how it will achieve the Council's grant outcomes. The funding would be targeted at those groups that best demonstrated they could meet the grant priorities and achieve the outcomes.

6.5 It is proposed that the consultation also asks voluntary and community organisations and their users to give feedback about the impact of 3 options:

- a) A budget reduction of 10% (this would provide a saving of £110,316)
- b) A budget reduction of 20% (this would provide a saving of £220,632)
- c) A budget reduction of 30% (this would provide a saving of £330,948)

7. Review Process

7.1 In order to comply with the Cambridgeshire Compact and implement any changes to priorities and/or budgets in time for the 2015/16 financial year, the review process will need to start immediately. An outline timetable for the review is shown below. The process for implementing changes following the review will be confirmed at this committee's meeting in June/July 2014:

Key Action / Activity		Date
Exec Cllr agrees draft priorities	Community Services Scrutiny	16 Jan 14
Consultation with voluntary and community organisations on revised priorities	12 weeks	27 Jan to 25 Apr 14
Elections		22 May 14
Exec Cllr agrees new priorities and any budget savings for 2015/16	Community Services Scrutiny	Jun/July 14
Grants applications invited for 2015/16. Voluntary and community organisations informed about new priorities and any budget savings.	Officer process	Aug – Sept 14
Grants assessed	Officer process	Oct – Nov 14
Final scrutiny report with grant award recommendations circulated to grant applicants	Officer process	Dec 14
Exec Cllr agrees grants awards for 2015/16	Community Services Scrutiny	Jan 15
Area Committee awards agreed for 2015/16	1 report to each area committee	March/Apr 15

7.2 The consultation phase will include sending a consultation paper to all voluntary and community organisations that have received grants funding within the last 3 years. The consultation paper will also be distributed through Cambridge Council for Voluntary Services, Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum and other umbrella organisations to groups who may not have applied for funding before. It will also be placed on the Council's website, promoted through Shape Your Place and via twitter, and made available at our community and sports centres so that residents can respond. The paper will include:

- A brief introduction stating why the Council is reviewing its grants priorities and budgets
- details of the current grants priorities and budgets
- details of the proposed grants priorities and possible budget options (as set out in this report)
- A request for feedback asking voluntary and community organisations and residents for their views on how the proposed priorities and budget options would impact on the work of their particular organisation or group.

7.3 Officers will also arrange 2 consultation workshops (one daytime and one evening) where voluntary and community organisations will be invited to attend to discuss the proposed priorities and possible budget options. The workshops will need to take place before the end of March 2014 to avoid the election purdah period.

7.4 It is proposed that a small 'observation' group be set up to work alongside officers through this process, hear at first hand the views of voluntary groups at the workshops and observe the evaluation of consultation feedback. It is proposed that this group comprise:

The Executive Councillor for Community Wellbeing
The opposition Spokes for Community Wellbeing
The Chief Executive of Cambridge Council for Voluntary Services

8. Implications

(a) Financial Implications

The review will be carried out within existing budgets. Any reductions to the community development and /or arts and recreation development budgets from 2015/16 will be agreed by the Executive

Councillor for Community Well-being at Community Services Scrutiny Committee in the June/July 2014 cycle.

(b) Staffing Implications

There is a heavy workload within community development and arts and recreation due to work to deliver significant savings over the next 12 to 18 months and preparatory work for the merger of the 2 service areas under a single head of service by October 2014. This review will also need to be prioritised for staff within the grants team.

(c) Equal Opportunities Implications

An initial Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out on the review process. The main impacts and mitigation are:

- i) That we need to ensure we give all voluntary groups and their users an opportunity to feed back their views, not just those we currently fund. We will do this by working with umbrella groups such as CAB, CCVS, CECF and CAN to ask them to disseminate consultation papers to their member groups and individuals.
- ii) That we also give individual residents and members the chance to respond. We will do this by publishing consultation papers on the city council's website and promoting them through social media. We will also place consultation papers in community centres and other public buildings such as sports centres, libraries etc.
- iii) That we need to provide opportunities for groups to have face to face discussions with officers and other groups so that options can be considered and debated. We will do this by holding 2 workshops (one in the day time and one in the evening). The workshops will be promoted as above. They will be held in accessible venues with hearing loops to accommodate people with disabilities. Officers will also be available (subject to demand) to attend meetings called by individual groups to discuss the proposals.
- iv) Some groups may need support to understand the consultation and respond – for example, some BME groups may not speak English. We will work with umbrella organisations to try and ensure such groups are supported – e.g. Muslim women's groups through CECF, disability groups through Age UK, COPE or LGB and T groups and individuals through Encompass.
- v) It may prove difficult to consult young people using the methods above. We will use ChYpPS to disseminate

information through their contacts and via the ChYpPS Facebook site. We will also seek the support of groups such as Romsey Mill, Centre 33 and Young Lives to seek the views of young people.

- vi) We will also ensure that voluntary groups supporting people on low incomes are consulted including CAB, CCVS and the local credit unions.

The EQIA has been published on the Council's website at this link:
<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/equality-impact-assessments>

A detailed Equalities Impact Assessment on the proposed priorities and the impact on any proposed budget reductions will be informed by the consultation process and carried out at the end of the review. This will be included with the scrutiny report to members in June/July 2014 so that its content and conclusions can be taken into account when a decision on any changes is made.

(d) Environmental Implications

None for community development or arts and recreation grants.

(e) Consultation and Communication

This is set out in the report.

(f) Procurement

None. The Council's approach to grant aid through community development and arts and recreation grants is via an application process rather than through the direct commissioning of services.

(g) Community Safety

None

9. Inspection of papers

Previous report to Community Services Scrutiny Committee:

Future Options of Discretionary Services – Report to Community Services Scrutiny Committee on 10 October 2013.

<http://mgsqimh01/documents/g999/Public%20reports%20pack%2010th-Oct-2013%2013.30%20Community%20Services%20Scrutiny%20Committee.pdf?T=10>

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

Author's Name: Trevor Woollams
Author's Phone Number: 01223 457861
Author's Email: Trevor.woollams@cambridge.gov.uk