

Date: 27th September 2011

Agenda item: No. 6

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**SUBMISSION BY THE CHAIR OF THE
FUNDING THE COMMUNITY & VOLUNTARY SECTOR MEMBER TASK GROUP**

FUNDING THE COMMUNITY & VOLUNTARY SECTOR

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To provide Members with an update on the progress of the Task Group which was established at the June meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

2. PROGRESS TO DATE

- 2.1 The first meeting of the Task Group took place on 29th June and was attended by three Members of the Committee and the Cabinet Member for Community as an observer. This was an introductory meeting to enable the Group to agree its purpose and develop an understanding of the community transport scheme.
- 2.2 Terms of reference were approved by the Group – attached at **Appendix 1**.
- 2.3 The Group received a presentation from officers regarding the current and proposed arrangements for investing in community and voluntary organisations. Sandra Payne, Deputy Director, Lichfield & District CVS (Community & Voluntary Sector Support) attended to provide a Community & Voluntary Sector perspective for this discussion. The essence of the debate was to consider a move away from investing in the same organisations year on year and towards a commissioning approach based on assessment of need and a tendering approach, and this was agreed. The Group recommended accordingly that the District Council adopt a commissioning process, and Cabinet approved this in July. (A list of the current funding partners is attached at **Appendix 2**.)
- 2.4 Members were provided with evidence drawn from a range of data sources and local intelligence, highlighting the key issues for the District, where investment in the community & voluntary sector might be beneficial. Based on this evidence, the Group identified five potential areas for funding, these being:
- Support disadvantaged families and help them get back into work, particularly in areas where there are higher levels of unemployment
 - Help for vulnerable people, and their carers, so they can live safely and independently at home
 - Services and activities to prevent alcohol abuse, particularly amongst young people and especially areas where this has led to anti-social behaviour
 - Advice, information and guidance for legal, welfare, debt and benefits issues
 - Support for local voluntary and community organisations to help them grow and develop
- 2.5 The Group agreed to test the proposed priorities through a period of open consultation. The five preferred priorities were included in a longer list of nine, also including:
- Environmental initiatives particularly those aimed at reducing carbon emissions
 - Arts and cultural projects that benefit the community
 - Initiatives to reduce crime and the fear of crime

- Projects that help to create a feeling of community in rural villages
- 2.6 Consultation took place through Voice It, the Council's on-line consultation centre www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/voicelit and also through the (postal) Citizens Survey. Community & Voluntary Sector organisations, including current funding partners, were especially alerted to the consultation.
- 2.7 Respondents were asked to rank each of the nine suggested priorities in order of importance, and were invited to suggest any other areas they felt should be considered.
- 2.8 The Group received the consultation findings at its second meeting on 5th September. This meeting was attended by four Members of the Committee and the Cabinet Member for Community as an observer. 357 responses in all were presented for consideration – these are summarised at **Appendix 3**.
- 2.9 Having considered the consultation findings, the Group felt that the views expressed substantially supported the five preferred priorities identified at the first meeting. The priorities to be recommended to the Committee were agreed as:
 - Support disadvantaged families and help them get back into work, particularly in areas where there are higher levels of unemployment
 - Help for vulnerable people, and their carers, so they can live safely and independently at home
 - Initiatives to reduce anti social behaviour and the fear of crime, particularly in relation to alcohol and other substance misuse by young people.
 - Advice, information and guidance for legal, welfare, debt and benefits issues
 - Support for local voluntary and community organisations to help them grow and develop
- 2.10 The recommended priorities for funding will be considered by Cabinet at their October meeting and, subject to their approval, tendering will commence in October.
- 2.11 The Group will now go on to oversee the development and implementation of the tendering process, with a view to having the new funding arrangements in place from April 2012.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 Members to comment on the work to date and note the report
- 3.2 Members to endorse the priority areas for funding as agreed by the Task Group and recommend these for consideration by the Cabinet Member for Community.

COMMUNITY, HOUSING AND HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEMBER TASK GROUP - FUNDING THE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Overall purpose of the Task Group

1. To consider the proposed introduction of a commissioning approach to future investment in the community and voluntary sector; this will include consideration of the countywide Third Sector Commissioning Project
2. To advise the Cabinet Member regarding the 'results' which Lichfield District Council should seek to achieve through investment in the community and voluntary sector
3. To consider the outcomes of the procurement process and provide advice to the Cabinet Member regarding the award of Service Level Agreements / contracts

Outcomes from the Task Group

1. Increased knowledge and understanding among Members regarding the District Council's investment in the community and voluntary sector
2. Comments on the proposed commissioning approach
3. Draft a focused (or short) list of results / outcomes which will be subject to wider consultation during the summer (subject to Cabinet Member agreement)
4. Proposed final list of results / outcomes (taking account of consultation feedback) which will be used to invite tenders for services (subject to Cabinet Member agreement)
5. Progress report to CHH O&S Committee (September and January meetings)
6. Provide comments to Cabinet Member on the successful submissions prior to consideration by Cabinet

Practical Arrangements

1. The Task Group will be Chaired by Councillor Sue Woodward
2. Other Members will include Councillors Mrs Bacon, Isaacs, Leytham and Ms Perkins
3. The Task Group will meet on three occasions (June, September and January)
4. The Chairman of the CHH O&S Committee and Cabinet Member Community may attend Task Group meetings
5. Representatives from associated organisations may be invited to attend the Task Group to provide 'expert advice'

Terms of reference approved: 29th June 2011.

Note: Following advice from the Monitoring Officer, Cllrs Mrs Bacon and Isaacs agreed to withdraw. This advice was in relation to the Members' board membership of South East Staffordshire Citizens Advice Bureau.

**STRATEGIC PARTNERS WITH WHOM LICHFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL HAS A
SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT 2009/2012**

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNDING RECEIVED FROM LDC IN 2011/12
South East Staffs CAB	£100k
Community and Voluntary Sector Support (CVS)	£50k
Erasmus Darwin House	£4k
Fusion Credit Union	£5k
HomeStart	£5k
Lichfield District Arts Association	£15k
Lichfield Festival	£15k
Pathway Project	£5k
Relate	£11k

Investing in local voluntary and community organisations consultation – the results

Suggested Priorities for Investment	Results of Member Panel 29/6/11	Results of Voice It Survey (57 responses)	Results of Citizens survey (300 responses)	Results of Member Panel 5/9/11
<i>Support disadvantaged families and help them get back into work</i>	Selected	2nd	3rd	Selected
<i>Help for vulnerable people, and their carers, so they can live safely and independently at home</i>	Selected	3rd	1st	Selected
<i>Environmental initiatives particularly re carbon emissions</i>		7th	8th	Not selected – Members believed other funding streams available to this issue, and that there would be limited impact achievable through such an investment of this source of funding. Furthermore, the consultation results did not support
<i>Services and activities to prevent alcohol abuse, particularly amongst young people and especially re anti social behaviour</i>	Selected	4th	4th	Selected – but in combination with initiatives to reduce the fear of crime (below)
<i>Arts and cultural projects that benefit the community</i>		9th	9th	Not selected – Members expressed appreciation for arts and culture, noting the economic and quality of life benefits they bring, but felt that the investment could not be supported in the context of the current hard economic climate and the public view, expressed through consultation
<i>Advice, information and guidance for legal, welfare, debt and benefits issues</i>	Selected	5th	6th	Selected
<i>Initiatives to reduce crime and the fear of crime</i>		6th	2nd	Selected – but in combination with initiatives to address anti social behaviour and alcohol
<i>Support for local voluntary and community organisations</i>	Selected	1st	5th	Selected
<i>Projects that help to create a feeling of community in rural villages</i>		8th	7th	Not selected – Members felt that the consultation results did not support, despite a representative return from rural wards