

**SUBMISSION TO COMMUNITY, HOUSING AND HEALTH (OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY) COMMITTEE**

Date: 24TH March 2014

Agenda Item: 8

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REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MEMBER TASK GROUP

FUNDING THE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To advise Members of the outcome of the first meeting of the reconvened Member Task Group looking at future funding for the community and voluntary sector
- 1.2 To seek endorsement for a proposed future budget to recommend to the Cabinet Member

2. Background and rationale

- 2.1 At the last meeting of this Committee, Members were advised that the current Service Level Agreements will come to an end in March 2015 and therefore plans need to be made regarding the level and nature of future investment in the community and voluntary sector. Members agreed that the Member Task Group should be reconvened and volunteers were identified. This Group has now met; the terms of reference of the Group are attached at **Appendix A** and the notes of this first meeting are attached at **Appendix B**.

Future Funding

- 2.2 One of the main objectives of the first meeting was to consider options for the future level of investment in the community and voluntary sector. Members reviewed previous performance information received from the organisations with which the District Council currently has SLAs. Overall, Members were satisfied that the investment made had achieved successful outcomes and represented good value for tax payers' money. Members therefore agreed that the District Council should continue to make an investment in the local community and voluntary sector.
- 2.3 The current budget for grants to outside bodies is £196k per year (for a three year period). This level is on a par with most other District and Borough Councils in Staffordshire. The Task Group was advised that given the need to find further savings for the revenue budget and the significant savings that the District Council has already had to make, there is likely to be some expectation that the budget for investing in the community and voluntary sector is reduced. However, it was also recognised that greater calls are being made on the Voluntary and Community

sector as a consequence of past and prospective cuts to District Council and other public sector services.

- 2.4 The Task Group agreed that they would like to see the current level of funding maintained in view of the pressures on the community and voluntary sector and the council's reduced capacity. However the Group also acknowledged the Council's financial situation and accepted that if a reduction in funding is required they felt that it should not be reduced by any more than 10%. This would reduce the budget going forward from £196k to £176k.

Future Outcomes

- 2.5 Members reviewed the themes which had been used in 2011 as the basis for the tender notices, following a period of consultation; these are as follows:
- Supporting families back to work
 - Help for vulnerable people and their carers
 - Reducing anti social behaviour
 - Advice, information and guidance
 - Support for local voluntary and community organisations
 - Tourism, heritage, arts and culture
- 2.6 Overall, Members felt that these tender themes remain valid (with the possible exception of anti social behaviour as this was covered by other funding streams and had resulted in few submissions during the last round of commissioning). Members will review these themes in more detail at the next Task Group meeting.

3. NEXT STEPS

- 3.1 The Member Task Group will further discuss the outcomes that the District Council should seek to achieve through its investment in the third sector and will also consider how these outcomes (and therefore the budget) should be weighted. It may be necessary to reach some conclusions and move ahead on these matters without it being possible to seek endorsement from the parent Community, Housing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. However, progress reports will be provided to future meetings of the Committee.

4. RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 That it be recommended to the Cabinet Member for Community, Housing and Health that a budget of at least £176k per annum is retained for investment in the community and voluntary sector having regard to the environment of public sector cuts and the increasing expectation that the community and voluntary sector will be able to step in and meet any gaps in service provision.
- 4.2 That Members comment on the tender themes set out at 2.5 above and consider whether there are any additions / deletions should be considered by the Task Group
- 4.3 To note that owing to the timescales involved, it may be necessary for the Member Task Group to provide advice direct to the Cabinet Member in relation to the key

milestones within the commissioning process; this advice will be reported back to the parent Community, Housing and Health O&S Committee at the next scheduled meetings.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None arising directly from this report

6. STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Plan for Lichfield District sets out the following aim:
'We'll support and encourage individuals and groups to take responsibility for shaping and improving their communities through voluntary effort and social action, and support a thriving and diverse community and voluntary sector.'

7. HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

- 7.1 No issues specifically relevant to this report

8. CRIME AND COMMUNITY SAFETY ISSUES

- 8.1 None specifically relevant to this report

MEMBER TASK GROUP - FUNDING THE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR

Terms of Reference (Revised - Draft)

Overall purpose of the Task Group

1. To consider the performance and outcomes achieved by the Community and Voluntary sector Service Level Agreements during 2012/13 and 2013/14.
2. To consider and make recommendations on the level of future investment in the Community and Voluntary sector.
3. To consider and make recommendations on what the Council wishes the Community & Voluntary sector to do or deliver on its behalf: considering the added value from working with the voluntary and community sector and the value for money provided.
4. To consider and make recommendations on what process the Council should follow on the allocation of the future investment, having regard to the resources available.
5. To take into account any other considerations that may be identified.
6. To advise the Cabinet Member regarding the recommendations which Lichfield District Council should seek to achieve through investment in the Community and Voluntary sector
7. 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 current investment in the Community and Voluntary sector and options for the future.
2. Recommendations on the proposed level of future investment in the Community and Voluntary sector
3. Recommendations on the commissioning approach to be taken for investment in the Community and Voluntary sector.
4. Draft focused outcomes which may be subject to wider consultation during the summer (subject to Cabinet Member agreement)
5. Proposed final list outcomes (taking account of consultation feedback) which will be used to commission services (subject to Cabinet Member agreement)
6. Progress report to CHH O&S Committee (June, September and January meetings)
7. Provide comments to Cabinet Member on the successful submissions prior to consideration by Cabinet

FUNDING THE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR
COMMUNITY HOUSING AND HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE -
MEMBER TASK GROUP

Notes of meeting of 12 March 2014

1. Apologies and introductions

Cllr Sue Woodward (Chairman), Cllr Norma Bacon, Cllr Ken Humphreys and Cllr Don Isaacs

Apologies from Cllr Doug Pullen (representative from the Leisure, Parks and Waste Management O&S Committee)

Officers: Helen Spearey, Clive Gibbins, Susan Bamford

2. Terms of reference

The terms of reference were discussed and agreed, with an addition (in italics) to point 3: To consider and make recommendations on what the Council wishes the Community & Voluntary Sector to do or deliver on its behalf, *considering the added value from working with the voluntary and community sector and the value for money provided.*

3. Review of SLA performance and outcomes achieved 2012/13 and first 6 months of 2013/14

The measurement of performance and outcomes was discussed; in particular the relationship between what the council has contributed and reported outcomes. In some instances it was noted that the outcomes appeared far in excess of the amount of funding given and it was sometimes difficult to disaggregate what is being delivered over and above day to day delivery.

Cllr Isaacs highlighted the need to measure added value. Cllr Mrs Woodward suggested that what is needed going forward is light touch performance management and this was agreed by the task group.

Cllr Isaacs also reiterated the need to look at what the council wants in this environment and Cllr Mrs Bacon was keen to ensure that value for money is delivered. The issue of whether the council should be providing core funding or funding special projects was also discussed.

Given the lack of figures provided by Lichfield District Arts it was felt that a further discussion is required with the organisation to establish what has been delivered, particularly across the district.

4. Options for level of future investment in the Community and Voluntary Sector

The level of future investment was discussed. The group was advised that given the need to find further savings for the revenue budget and the significant savings that the District Council has already had to make, there is likely to be some expectation that the budget for investing in the community and voluntary sector is reduced. However, it was also recognised that greater calls are being made on the Voluntary and Community sector as a consequence of past and prospective cuts to District Council and other public sector services.

The task group agreed that they would like to see the current level of funding maintained in view of the pressures on the community and voluntary sector and the council's reduced capacity. However the group also acknowledged the financial situation and accepted that if a reduction in funding is required they felt that it should not be reduced by any more than 10%. This would reduce the budget going forward from £196k to £176k.

The need to continue to talk to other partners and bring in more funding to the voluntary sector was also recognised.

5. Options for the future on what the Council wishes the Community and Voluntary Sector to do or deliver

In considering how we prioritised use of the funding, Cllr Mrs Woodward referred to:

- LDC's statutory duties / 'must do's' (eg. the voluntary sector can provide debt and housing advice which helps LDC with its statutory duty by preventing homelessness)
- the morally 'good to do' (eg. although LDC has no statutory duty to provide 'help for vulnerable people and their carers', the District Council has a strategic objective to 'help and support vulnerable adults, families and children to live independent lives' (*Plan for Lichfield District*))
- the nice to do which can impact of a larger number of people by improving quality of life (eg. supporting cultural festivals and events). Again, the District Council does not have a statutory duty to do this but does have a strategic objective to 'build a more prosperous District through heritage, tourism and culture' which has a significant economic impact

It was also felt that the future emphasis on funding should be on services that deliver direct support, the do'ers. The group also wanted to see creative thinking and the bringing forward of innovative ideas to achieve outcomes

6. Options for allocation of the budget

The discussion focussed on whether the previously agreed outcomes (six) should be continued and how they should be weighted.

Cllr Mrs Bacon also raised the need to consider other fundraising opportunities for groups, the savings that groups have in reserve and the need to consider other funding streams eg. grants provided by the City Council.

The need for continuing to fund anti social behaviour was discussed; this tender had attracted few submissions last time and Members were not convinced that the outcomes being achieved against this tender were of direct relevance to reducing ASB. It was also noted that other funding streams (in relation to community safety) can be directed towards this area of work. The added value of arts funding was also discussed. The number of partners involved in helping get people back into work was also raised, in particular the need to ensure there was no duplication.

6. Any other considerations

The next steps in the decision making process were discussed. It was agreed that a proposal on future funding be put to the CHH overview and Scrutiny Committee for onward consideration by the Cabinet Member.

8. Date of the next meeting and suggested agenda

To be confirmed