

REPORT TO: Executive Board
DATE: 17 March 2011
REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Health and Community
SUBJECT: Voluntary Sector Funding – Grant Allocation 2011/12
WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To recommend Voluntary Sector Grant Awards for 2011/12.

2.0 Recommended that:

(1) The board approve the recommended grant allocations.

3.0 Supporting Information

3.1 In a report to the Executive Board on 3 January 2002 the expectations for voluntary sector funding were established. It was agreed that awards be judged against agreed criteria and actual targets be negotiated prior to signing a service level agreement. Targets are now linked to both departmental and corporate priorities reflecting a targeted approach to funding.

Applications are assessed and recommendations agreed by a Panel consisting of the Executive Board Member with portfolio responsibility for the Voluntary Sector and Officers from Adult & Community Department.

3.2 Monitoring Arrangements

- 1) All grants in excess of £5k must agree a Service Level Agreement and provide quarterly monitoring reports. Grants under £5k provide mid year and end of year reports.
- 2) Review meetings are held with the organisations in receipt of core grant on a quarterly basis.
- 3) Mid-year and annual reports are presented to the Corporate Policy & Performance Board and are made available in the Members Room at Municipal Building.

4.0 Approval of Grants 2011/12

4.1 Voluntary Sector Core Funding Grants

The recommended grants are listed below; the recommendations are in the context of the budget allocation and the panel's assessment. These recommendations are for an annual allocation for the financial year 2011/12.

The budget available is £239,716

| | 2010/11 | 2011/12 | Cuts |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Cheshire Asbestos Victims Support | £13,300 | £8,000 | £5,300 |
| Cheshire Race & Equality Council * | £5,000 | £4,000 | £1,000 |
| Cheshire Victim Support | £5,000 | £5,000 | £0 |
| Halton Citizens Advice Bureaux * | £139,000 | £137,000 | £2,000 |
| Halton & St Helens VCA * | £56,676 | £48,276 | £8,400 |
| Halton Talking Newspapers* | £1,000 | £1,000 | £0 |
| Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre | £3,300 | Did not apply | £3,300 |
| Relate* | £10,000 | £9,000 | £1,000 |
| Runcorn & Frodsham Mencap | £2,590 | £2,590 | £0 |
| Samaritans | £4,000 | £4,000 | £0 |
| Vision Support* | £8,850 | £7,850 | £1,000 |
| Widnes & Runcorn Cancer Support Group | £13,000 | £13,000 | £0 |
| TOTAL | £261,716 | £239,716 | £22,000 |

4.1.1

*** Reduction in funding**

This year there was a budget saving of £22k. In January/February the panel interviewed each of the organisations who had made an application to this fund. At this meeting it explained the current budget constraints that the Council was facing and that it was necessary make reductions to funding awards.

It consulted with each organisation to establish :

- Their current funding situation from all sources.
- Their service delivery benefits for the residents of Halton.
- The effect to their service if they were to receive no funding.
- Ability to continue delivering a service if not funded at the same rate as last year.

4.1.2

***Organisations receiving reductions in funding**

Based on the results of the discussion the panel decided on the level of funding detailed in the table above. The organisations who received a reduced award are listed below together with the rational for each decision.

It was decided to provide each organisation with funding as receiving an award from the Local Council can benefit organisation when applying for other grants.

Cheshire Asbestos Victims Support Group

This organisation has healthy reserves and has the ability to raise funding through a referral system to Solicitors. They also have the opportunity to request donations from individuals whom they have helped to claim substantial awards. They could also explore funding opportunities from the Primary Care Trust (soon to be GP consortia) as their work meets the Health Agenda.

Cheshire Race & Equality Centre

This organisation has a low take up of service from Halton. They have had an active role supporting the development of a BME network in Halton funded from the Change Up programme which is due to end in March 2011. The BME network is being handed over to HBC's Community Development Team. Cheshire REC are also expecting to take over the management of a new project in Chester which will help contribute to their overhead costs.

Halton Citizens Advice Bureaux

This organisation has only received a small comparative cut as it was felt that, although they receive the largest award, in this time of recession debt work is crucial to Halton residents. Halton CAB is facing significant cuts from other funders and is expecting to make some redundancies.

Halton and St Helens VCA

Halton Voluntary Action and St Helens CVS underwent a merger in 2010 which resulted in the formation of Halton and St Helens VCA.

The merger of the organisation resulted in efficiency savings, particularly in back office expenses and management costs. This organisation doesn't deliver front line services and has a track record for successfully attracting alternative funding through grants and contracts, particularly the Primary Care Trust and funding ring fenced for infrastructure organisations.

Relate

Have moved premises to Halton Hospital during 2010 which has resulted in lower overhead costs and better accessibility for clients. The service could continue with a small reduction.

Vision Support

Also receive funding towards their services from HBC Social Services and the Primary Care Trust. The organisation use the funding they received from the Core Grant funding for the Home Visiting Services and could survive with a small cut.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None at this stage.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The recommended grants do not exceed the current budget allocations in the general grants budget.

6.2 The work of the voluntary sector organisations receiving grant impacts greatly on health improvements, social inclusion, and community involvement, anti-poverty and diversity issues.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

The service delivery from organisations receiving core grant in many cases is

cross cutting in the context of the Council's strategic priorities. There are significant levels of welfare rights and debt handling support provided which impacts on anti-poverty issues for the Borough.

7.1 Children & Young People in Halton

The work delivered by Relate in preventing family breakdown and offering counselling to teenagers has a direct impact on those children and young people in the Borough.

The Youth Volunteer programme delivered by Halton Voluntary Action (the V Project) is targeted at young people participating in their community.

The Samaritans is open to all age ranges and does receive calls from young people in the Borough looking for support.

Widnes & Runcorn Cancer support group offer support to all members of families affected by the disease, encompassing young members of families.

Mencap runs a weekly youth group for young people with extra needs

Halton CAB provides advice to Sure Start families and is involved with a money management project in schools

7.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

The voluntary sector organisations have a significant reliance on volunteer time to deliver services. The organisations provide training opportunities for volunteers to enable the delivery of service and improve their skills and employability. The CAB in particular has experienced local volunteers gaining local employment as result of the training and experience.

Relate offers placements for students on counselling degrees.

7.3 A Health Halton

Widnes & Runcorn Cancer support have a major impact on the health and well being of our residents diagnosed and in remission from cancer through the support, advocacy and therapies they are able to offer.

Cheshire Asbestos works with sufferers and their families to support them through the illness, offering welfare support and recreational breaks for the sufferers and their families.

Vision support provides a resource centre for visually impaired and offers home visits and welfare rights support.

The Talking Newspaper service enables their clients to receive news on current affairs weekly.

7.4 A Safer Halton

Cheshire Victim Support provides support to victims of crime through to pre trial preparation and court attendances which can be daunting for residents left vulnerable from crimes against them.

Cheshire, Halton & Warrington Race & Equality Centre work with minority groups in the Borough to contribute to a cohesive and integrated community in Halton. They offer support to individuals experiencing discrimination and will support in challenging discriminatory practice and will help people through tribunal processes.

Mencap provides a community meeting point for disabled members in Halton offering a safe environment for their clients to engage in community activity and participate in skill development and recreational activity.

7.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None directly.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 The PPB will monitor the grants and ensure the Council and Halton residents receive value for money.

8.0 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 To receive a grant, organisations have to demonstrate that acceptable equality and diversity policies are in place.

9.0 List of Background Papers Under Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

9.1 None under the meaning of the Act.