

Cabinet Member for Communities and Health

Agenda

Date: Monday, 27th June, 2016
Time: 12.30 pm
Venue: Committee Suite 1, Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

1. **Apologies for Absence**

2. **Declarations of Interest**

To provide an opportunity for Members and Officers to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in any item on the agenda.

3. **Public Speaking Time/Open Session**

In accordance with Procedure Rules Nos.11 and 35 a period of 10 minutes is allocated for members of the public to address the meeting on any matter relevant to the work of the body in question. Individual members of the public may speak for up to 5 minutes but the Chairman or person presiding will decide how the period of time allocated for public speaking will be apportioned where there are a number of speakers. Members of the public are not required to give notice to use this facility. However, as a matter of courtesy, a period of 24 hours' notice is encouraged.

Members of the public wishing to ask a question at the meeting should provide at least three clear working days' notice in writing and should include the question with that notice. This will enable an informed answer to be given.

4. **Funding of Community Radio Stations (Pages 1 - 14)**

To consider the method of grant funding for community radio stations.

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CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Cabinet Member for Communities and Health

Date of Meeting:	27 June 2016
Report of:	Head of Communities
Subject/Title:	Funding of Community Radio Stations
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Paul Bates – Communities and Health

1.0 Report Summary

As a Residents First Council we recognise the support and added value our community and voluntary sector bring to our local residents and communities. Community radio stations play an important role within the communities they serve. They are a community focussed body that highlights and promotes news and events in the local area, raising awareness of the range of services available not only within the council but its wider partner organisations and the community and voluntary sector as a whole.

- 1.1. Community radio stations have received direct funding awards from Cheshire East Council since 2012. The budget for community radio stations is £10,000 and is managed by the communities and partnerships team.
- 1.2. In line with corporate commissioning intentions, there is a requirement to review this funding and ensure that there is a robust process for the allocation of this budget that is equitable, transparent and open to public scrutiny and challenge.
- 1.3. In order to manage expectations and minimise impact for community radio stations that have received previous direct funding a phased approach is recommended for the financial year of 2016/17.
- 1.4. It is proposed that for 2016/17 the £10,000 community radio station budget is available to all community radio stations in the borough with acknowledgement that this may result in a lower funding award for some organisations than in previous years.
- 1.5. To mitigate financial impact to community radio stations have received funding in previous years, there will be a tapered approach to the financial support, and encouragement for those organisations to apply for an additional further grant via the existing community grants scheme.
- 1.6. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and is attached for consideration. It is proposed that the findings and recommendations are addressed by implementing the proposed approach.

- 1.7. In 2017/18 it is proposed that the community radio station budget will transfer to the existing community grant budget, for which there is a robust policy in place which was approved by Cabinet on the 12th April 2016.
- 1.8. In 2017/18 all community radio stations will be encouraged to submit applications for funding through the community grant scheme.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 To consider the Equality Impact Assessment
- 2.2 To support the need to ensure that there are equitable funding opportunities to the whole of the voluntary and community sector, through open and transparent processes, whilst acknowledging the need to support the community radio stations through a period of transitional change.
- 2.3 To support a stepped approach to change, with assurance that there is support for these organisations to move towards having a sound financial plan.
- 2.4 To agree that the £10,000 community radio station budget is available to all community radio stations in the borough with acknowledgement that this may result in a lower funding award for some organisations than in previous years.
- 2.5 To note that the funding will be advertised directly with the community radio stations operating in Cheshire East from Monday 27th June for 10 working days. Decisions on the allocation of monies will be made no later than the 15th July 2016. This process will apply to the financial year of 2016/17 only.
- 2.6 To note that the application process will require community radio stations to submit information on the following:
 - 2.6.1 The level of previous funding that they have received from the Council;
 - 2.6.2 The level of previous and current funding from other sources over the last 3 fiscal years of the organisation
 - 2.6.3 What the funding is requested for and how it will be used within their business plan (a copy of which must be supplied);
 - 2.6.4 What the benefits are of the funding to the Council and its residents?
 - 2.6.5 To declare that the community radio station will not have any political bias to any particular party as a result of any funding award.
- 2.7 To agree that all applications are to be considered by the Portfolio Holder in consultation with Steph Cordon, Head of Communities, who will make the final decision on the funding allocation.
- 2.8 The £10,000 community radio station budget will be transferred to the community grants budget from 2017/18 onwards.

3.0 Other Options Considered

- 3.1 There is an option to consider the continuation of directly awarding funding to community radio stations as per current practice, however legal advice recommends that this practice is not continued as it is not equitable.

4.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 All Council services have budgetary pressures and all funding must be able to be justified and stand up to public scrutiny.
- 4.2 As a commissioning council, the funding arrangements for community radio stations have been reviewed and are to be brought in line with the Council's corporate commissioning principles. This will address inequalities and ensure transparency of funding so that all eligible community radio stations can apply for funding on the same basis.
- 4.3 The partnerships and communities team will work with all community radio stations in order to help them to become self-sustaining and look at a number of different options for financial management to help reduce the reliance on grant funding, particularly from the Council.
- 4.4 Community radio stations will also be eligible to apply to the Council's community grants scheme, alongside all other voluntary, community and faith organisations within the borough. The Community Grants Scheme operates under a policy which is reviewed by Cabinet each year to ensure that it is fit for purpose. The process is open and transparent with all grant decisions being made at a Portfolio Holders meeting, which are open to the public.

5.0 Background/Chronology

- 5.1 There are a number of community radio stations that have received funding from the Council, these include: Canalside Radio, RedShift Radio and Beartown Radio, the latter of these three has since ceased operating. Funding support to community radio stations has varied from £3,000 up to £7,000 per annum for annual radio licence fees and rent.
- 5.2 There are currently four community radio stations operating in the Cheshire East area, the newest of the stations being Dane Sound, formed in the summer of 2015, which has not received any funding from the Council and is not currently aware of any funding opportunities other than the Council's Community Grant Scheme.
- 5.3 It is proposed that for 2016/17 a phased and tapered approach will be applied to organisations that have received previous funding and as such may have an element of reliance on this. To reflect this it is suggested that the funding will be awarded as follows:
 - 5.3.1 The previous year funding will be tapered and reduced across the 2016/17 financial year:
 - 100% applied for the Qtr 1 and 2 (April – September)
 - 50% applied for Qtr 3 (Oct – Dec)
 - 25% applied for Qtr 4 (Jan – March)

5.3.2 Applying this approach using the example of Canalside Radio who in 2014/15 and 2015/16 received £7,000, this would result in their funding being:

- Qtr 1 and Qtr 2 = £3500
- Qtr 3 = £875
- Qtr 4 = £437

Total funding award: **£4812**

5.4 A scoping exercise, with contact being made with a number of other local authorities and community radio stations operating across the country, has shown that it is unusual for community radio stations to be funded through local authorities. Best practice has shown that those that do receive funding do so through council community grant schemes for specific initiatives.

5.5 Moving the funding for community radio stations into the Council's Community Grant Scheme will bring the approach in line with what is happening elsewhere.

6.0 Wards Affected and Local Ward Members

6.1 The recommendations relate to all wards within Cheshire East.

6.2 Currently, community radio stations operate in the areas of Crewe, Nantwich, Macclesfield and Holmes Chapel and cover a total of 24 wards.

7.0 Implications of Recommendation

7.1 Policy Implications

7.1.1 There are no policy implications.

7.2 Legal Implications

The Council has powers to award grant funding under the general power of competence as set out in section 1 of the Localism Act 2011. In exercising the power the Council must only take into account relevant considerations, follow procedural requirements and not act unreasonably. The Council must also be mindful of its public sector equality duties and the impact the decision may have on residents that have protected characteristics as detailed in the Equalities Act 2010.

There is currently no overarching Council policy/framework by which grant funding should be allocated but the Council needs to apply transparent and fair criteria and treat all potential grant recipients equally.

As part of the application process, organisations should be required to disclose any other sources of funding as well as previous funding granted by the Council to assess and guard against any potential state aid issues. It is unlikely that organisations have been or will be allocated grant funding in

excess of the current de minimis levels applicable to state aid of 200,000 Euros (over 3 fiscal years) but it is prudent for the Council to seek a declaration to this effect from each organisation.

7.3 Financial Implications

There will be no overall financial impact to the Council as the total budget for community radio stations will remain at £10,000 in 2016-17. £10,000 will then be added to the Community Grants budget from 2017-18 onwards.

7.4 Equality Implications

7.4.1 The current process is not equitable as has been shown by the Equality Impact Assessment, which has highlighted that the current process is not transparent and not open to all eligible organisations to apply to.

7.5 Rural Community Implications

7.5.1 There are no specific implications on the rural community.

7.6 Human Resources Implications

7.6.1 No extra personnel will be required to implement the recommendations.

7.7 Public Health Implications

7.7.1 There are no public health implications.

7.8 Other Implications (Please specify)

7.8.1 There are no other implications.

8.0 Risk Management

8.1 There is a risk that by not adopting a robust approach to funding of community radio stations in Cheshire East would leave the Council open to scrutiny and challenge.

8.2 There is a risk that community radio stations could, in the short term, find it difficult to fund their radio licences (under the community grant scheme no organisations can apply for payments towards licences). The Council provides pre-application support and advice to all organisations applying under the community grants scheme and will provide assistance in identifying areas of their operations where the community radio stations can potentially apply for assistance.

9.0 Access to Information

9.1 Access to more information can be made by contacting the report writer.

10.0 Contact Information

Contact details for this report are as follows:-

Name: Tina Jones
Designation: Partnership Support Manager
Tel. No.: 01270 685811
Email: tina.jones@cheshireeast.gov.uk

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

Equality impact assessment is a requirement for all strategies, plans, functions, policies, procedures and services under the Equalities Act 2010. We are also required to publish assessments so that we can demonstrate how we have considered the impact of proposals.

Section 1: Description

Department	Communities		Lead officer responsible for assessment		Tina Jones	
Service	Partnerships and Communities		Other members of team undertaking assessment		Kirstie Hercules Natalie Robinson	
Date	1 st March 2016		Version		1.1	
Type of document (mark as appropriate)	Strategy	Plan	Function✓	Policy	Procedure	Service
Is this a new/existing/revision of an existing document (mark as appropriate)	New		Existing✓		Revision	
Title and subject of the impact assessment (include a brief description of the aims, outcomes, operational issues as appropriate and how it fits in with the wider aims of the organisation) Please attach a copy of the strategy/plan/function/policy/procedure/service	<p>Proposed change from direct funding awards to some community radio stations to an application process.</p> <p>Direct funding awards have been made to some community radio stations operating in Cheshire East to provide financial assistance in paying for their radio licences.</p> <p>There is no policy to accommodate the current arrangements and not all radio stations are aware of the current process. It is proposed that an application process for 2016/17 only is established and promoted to all community radio stations, following which the budget will be moved into the Community Grants Scheme.</p> <p>A scoping exercise has shown that it is unusual for community radio stations to be funded through local authorities. Those that do receive funding do so through council community grant schemes for specific initiatives.</p>					
Who are the main stakeholders? (eg general public, employees, Councillors, partners, specific audiences)	Voluntary and community organisations, particularly community radio stations. Local councillors.					

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

Section 2: Initial screening

Who is affected? (This may or may not include the stakeholders listed above)	Four community radio stations operating in the Cheshire East area.										
Who is intended to benefit and how?	The voluntary and community sector in Cheshire East will benefit through a fair and equitable process of funding opportunities for all.										
Could there be a different impact or outcome for some groups?	Yes funding for one organisation may be reduced whilst all other organisations will have an opportunity to apply to the limited amount of funding available.										
Does it include making decisions based on individual characteristics, needs or circumstances?	No										
Are relations between different groups or communities likely to be affected? (eg will it favour one particular group or deny opportunities for others?)	No the proposed changes will make the opportunities fair to all.										
Is there any specific targeted action to promote equality? Is there a history of unequal outcomes (do you have enough evidence to prove otherwise)?	Direct funding awards unfairly single out some organisations, whilst other community organisations do not have access to the same opportunities. All organisations will be supported to produce financial management plans to support their organisations going forward. They will also be given support to apply for other funding opportunities, both within the Council and externally.										
Is there an actual or potential negative impact on these specific characteristics? (Please tick)											
Age	Y	N✓	Marriage & civil partnership	Y	N✓	Religion & belief	Y	N✓	Carers	Y	N✓
Disability	Y	N✓	Pregnancy & maternity	Y	N✓	Sex	Y	N✓	Socio-economic status	Y	N✓

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

Gender reassignment	Y	N✓	Race	Y	N✓	Sexual orientation	Y	N✓			
What evidence do you have to support your findings? (quantitative and qualitative) Please provide additional information that you wish to include as appendices to this document, i.e., graphs, tables, charts									Consultation/involvement carried out		
									Yes	No	
Age											
Disability											
Gender reassignment											
Marriage & civil partnership											
Pregnancy & maternity											
Race											
Religion & belief											
Sex											
Sexual orientation											
Carers											
Socio-economic status											
Proceed to full impact assessment? (Please tick)											
Yes			No✓			Date 1 st March 2016					

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

If yes, please proceed to Section 3. If no, please publish the initial screening as part of the suite of documents relating to this issue

Section 3: Identifying impacts and evidence

This section identifies if there are impacts on equality, diversity and cohesion, what evidence there is to support the conclusion and what further action is needed

Protected characteristics	Is the policy (function etc....) likely to have an adverse impact on any of the groups? Please include evidence (qualitative & quantitative) and consultations	Are there any positive impacts of the policy (function etc....) on any of the groups? Please include evidence (qualitative & quantitative) and consultations	Please rate the impact taking into account any measures already in place to reduce the impacts identified High: Significant potential impact; history of complaints; no mitigating measures in place; need for consultation Medium: Some potential impact; some mitigating measures in place, lack of evidence to show effectiveness of measures Low: Little/no identified impacts; heavily legislation-led; limited public facing aspect	Further action (only an outline needs to be included here. A full action plan can be included at Section 4)
Age				
Disability				
Gender reassignment				
Marriage & civil partnership				

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

Pregnancy and maternity				
Race				
Religion & belief				
Sex				
Sexual orientation				
Carers				
Socio-economics				

Is this project due to be carried out wholly or partly by contractors? If yes, please indicate how you have ensured that the partner organisation complies with equality legislation (e.g. tendering, awards process, contract, monitoring and performance measures)

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

Section 4: Review and conclusion

Summary: provide a brief overview including impact, changes, improvement, any gaps in evidence and additional data that is needed			
Specific actions to be taken to reduce, justify or remove any adverse impacts	How will this be monitored?	Officer responsible	Target date
Ongoing financial support for the period of change in 2016/17, through an application process	Ongoing communications with officers from the Council, radio station managers and others responsible for completing grant applications for the radio stations.	Tina Jones	13 th May 2016
Support to produce a financial management plan	Regular meetings with officers from the Council and radio station managers.	Tina Jones	31 st July 2016
Support to review business plans	Signposting to relevant organisations able to provide the bespoke support and advice needed. Regular communications with officers from the Council and radio station managers.	Tina Jones	31 st July 2016
Please provide details and link to full action plan for actions	N/A		
When will this assessment be reviewed?	31 st July 2016		
Are there any additional assessments that need to be undertaken in relation to this assessment?	No		

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM



Lead officer signoff		Date	
Head of service signoff		Date	

Please publish this completed EIA form on your website