

SCRUTINY REVIEW OF GRANTS TO COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

ACTION PLAN

Recommended that

1. The terms grant, contract and service level agreement, as defined in the 1999 Policy paper, be endorsed, and that these definitions be applied consistently across all Departments. These definitions to be supplemented by clear guidelines on the criteria for using each type of funding			
Action	Resource implication	Responsibility	Timescale
1.1 The definition as stated in the Policy Paper on what qualifies for grants, contract and SLA's to be affirmed	None	Performance & Overview	April 2004
1.2 Each Department / Service to review all payments to the voluntary and community sector, to assess to what extent they are in accordance with the definition above, and report results to Service Boards	It is anticipated that this could be undertaken within existing staffing levels	County Managers	Sept 2004
1.3 All agreements to be within the correct procedure for Grants or Contracts	None	County Managers	April 2005
1.4 The processes for monitoring as approved in the 1999 Paper to be reaffirmed and applied by all Departments (see also action 5.4)	This would probably require some additional resource	County Managers	April 2004

2. All funding awards be linked more closely to the County Council's priorities and values statement, and should be widely published as such			
Action	Resource implication	Responsibility	Timescale
2.1 In approving funding criteria and awarding grants and contracts, Members and Officers to identify clearly the contribution that the funding will make to the achievement of the Council's priorities	None	County Managers and Executive Members	Sept 2004

3. The relevant sections of the Financial Regulations, and the Code of Practice on Financial Management, be applied on all funding allocations to the voluntary sector			
Action	Resource implication	Responsibility	Timescale
3.1 Financial Regulation 12.1 to be applied	None	Executive	April 2004
3.2 All payments for the year 2004/5 to be in accordance with the Code of Practice on Financial Management, Grants Section 14 Contracts Section 8	None	County Managers	Sept 2004
3.3 The current review of the Code of Practice on Financial Management to take full account of the recommendations of this Scrutiny Panel	None	Director of Policy and Performance	Completion of the review

4. All funding awarded on a historical basis be reviewed as a matter of urgency, with particularly consideration given to the ongoing validity of these awards in the light of changes to both the County Council's priorities, and the nature of the recipient organisation and the services it delivers			
Action	Resource implication	Responsibility	Timescale
4.1 All grants or contracts that have been reported as 'historical' to be reviewed. The outcome of the review reported to Service Boards	This would probably require some additional resource	County Managers	Sept 2004
4.2 The LMS Grants within Community Youth & Lifelong Learning to be reviewed, with a view to a deletion within MTS 2005/6, with a compensatory establishment of an LMS Extended Schools Budget	It is anticipated that this could be undertaken within existing staffing levels	Director Education & Community	Oct 2004

5. A County Co-ordinating Group be established to gather data, ensure that processes are adhered to and review processes to explore possibilities for further improvement			
Action	Resource implication	Responsibility	Timescale
5.1 A designated named Officer, probably appropriately located in Policy and Performance, to be identified as County Co-ordinator – Community and Voluntary Sector, to monitor the co-ordination, collation and reporting to the Grants Officer of all funding to the community and voluntary sector, this includes both grants and contracts. (see also action 8.3) This Officer will, with Departmental Co-ordinators, establish a County Co-ordinating Group	This would probably require some additional resource	Director of Policy and Performance	May 2004
5.2 A designated named Officer to be identified in each Department to co-ordinate, collate and report on all funding to the voluntary and community sector from his / her Department (This includes both grants and contracts).	This would probably require some additional resource	Departmental Management Teams	May 2004
5.3 The County Co-ordinating Group to review and recommend any changes required to the Council's grants application processes and forms, including providing clearer guidelines and detailed criteria to applicants	This would probably require some additional resource	County Co-ordinating group	Sept 2004
5.4 County Co-ordinating Group to investigate changes to the County Council's systems and timescales relating to the issuing of grants and contracts (including adequate monitoring and feedback to recipient organisations) and to recommend changes necessary to become Compact compliant (see also action 8.4)	This would probably require some additional resource	County Co-ordinator	Sept 2004
5.5 The County Co-ordinating Group to investigate with the County ICT Manager any additional ICT systems that will assist in the administration of funding to the voluntary and community sector. Any new requirements to be costed and submitted within MTS 2005/06	If additional ICT systems required - £20k - £80k	County Co-ordinating group	Review to be completed by Sept 2004. (Implementation in 2005/06)
5.6 The County Co-ordinating Group to commission further research into different levels of spend across the districts and to	This would probably require some additional	County Co-ordinating group	Sept 2004

develop methods to compare spending against population and need	resource		
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6. Each Department supplies the relevant information for the maintenance of a consistent and complete Funding to Community and Voluntary Organisations database			
Action	Resource implication	Responsibility	Timescale
6.1 An up to date database recording all funding arrangements between the County Council and the voluntary and community sector to be established and maintained from 2004/5. Grants and Contracts to be reported separately within the database	It is anticipated that this could be undertaken within existing staffing levels	Grants Officer, Community Youth & Lifelong Learning (CYLL)	April 2004
6.2 Departmental and County Co-ordinators to ensure all relevant activity is reported to the Grants Officer (see also actions 5.1 and 5.2), on agreed pro forma returns, when agreements are signed and prior to any payments being made	It is anticipated that this could be undertaken within existing staffing levels	Grants Officer CY&LL and County Co-ordinator – Voluntary Sector	May 2004
6.3 Prior to any agreement Officers to access the database to ensure that no double funding for the same activity occurs	None	Lead Officers	April 2004

7. Cheshire Local Strategic Partnership be identified as the appropriate body to take the lead in developing a local Compact between public bodies and the voluntary sector			
Action	Resource implication	Responsibility	Timescale
7.1 Cheshire LSP to be supported in taking the lead to develop a Compact between the Public bodies in Cheshire and the voluntary and community sector, so that a Compact may be established by April 2005 (see also action 5.4)	This would probably require some additional resource	Director Policy and Performance	April 2004 – April 2005

8. Further information be provided to Area Forums concerning funding to local voluntary organisations, and that the role of the local Member in linking with the allocation of resources and monitoring these organisations be further investigated and developed			
Action	Resource implication	Responsibility	Timescale
8.1 Strategic Partnership Unit to consider reporting the funding activity of the Council within each district to the appropriate County Forum	None	County Manager - Communications and Research	Sept 2004
8.2 Management Board to consider and report to the Executive the possible benefits of allowing individual local Members or County Forums to allocate small delegated grant funds	Implementation of review outcomes may require extra resources	Management Board	Jan 2005
8.3 People and Communities Scrutiny Sub-Committee to receive annual reports on funding for the community and voluntary sector and to make any appropriate recommendations	None	County Co-ordinator	Autumn 2004
8.4 County Co-ordinating group to consider other ways of developing Member involvement in the funding process (see also action 5.4)	None	County Co-ordinator	Jan 2005

9. The County Council should provide better publicity on the availability of funding for the community and voluntary sector, and recipient organisations should be encouraged to publicise the financial support they receive from Cheshire County Council.			
Action	Resource implication	Responsibility	Timescale
9.1 A page on the Council inter and intra nets be established that identifies all the County Council funding streams that fund grants and contracts to the community and voluntary sector, application and tendering processes and the lead Officer for contact purposes.	It is anticipated that this could be undertaken within existing staffing levels	County Manager – Communications and Research	July 2004
9.2 The County Council to produce a statement that outlines the financial and other contributions from the County Council to the community and voluntary sector for 2003/4. This statement to include recognition of the role the organisations play in improving the quality of life for residents of Cheshire.	None	County Manager – Communications and Research	May 2004
9.3 All recipient organisations to be encouraged to give adequate	None	Lead Officers &	May 2004

publicity to the financial support they receive from CCC		County Co-ordinating group	
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Note on resource implications

The Panel recognise that the actions recommended will result in extra costs in some cases but this is difficult to quantify at this stage as further work needs to be undertaken. However, it is clear that whilst few extra resources may be required for each individual action, cumulatively these actions would probably imply a considerable resource allocation.