

Funding to Infrastructure Organisations

Service owner:	<i>Performance and Partnerships</i>
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Key words:	<i>Summarises Cheshire East Council's approach to funding infrastructure organisations that provide support to the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) and Local Councils (Town and Parish Councils) in the borough.</i>
Links:	<i>Community Grants Policy</i> <i>Cheshire East Compact</i>

1. Executive summary

The Policy details the Council's approach to funding infrastructure organisations that support the VCFS and Local Councils across Cheshire East.

2. Introduction

2.1 *Purpose, aims and vision*

The Partnerships Team work closely with infrastructure organisations across the Borough who offer support to the VCFS and Local Councils. The Performance and Partnerships Manager manages the Council's budget for supporting infrastructure organisations in line with this policy.

The purpose of the funding is to increase the capacity and capability of the VCFS and Local Councils across Cheshire East.

2.2 *Policy context*

Cheshire East Council understands that strengthening infrastructure support for the sectors is vital to ensuring that the VCFS and Local Councils can achieve their aims. The policy has been developed to clarify the purpose of the funding and the process for the allocation of funds.

3. Policy details

3.1 *Funding Policy*

Funding is only available to Infrastructure Organisations who support the VCFS or Local Councils to achieve their aims. Our work with and funding to infrastructure organisations aims to:

- **Identify and fill the gaps** – equipping organisations to tailor their services to the changing needs of the community.
- **Raising standards** – by providing access to information, training and quality assurance standards, ensuring local organisations have the knowledge, skills and resources they need to support the local community.
- **Enable communication and collaboration** - encouraging local organisations to share resources and to work collaboratively, providing opportunities to network, enabling them to share good practice and expertise.
- **Providing a voice** – acting as a conduit, representing the diverse views of local organisations to the Councils and other public bodies. Promote two-way communication and consultations so that local organisations can contribute to discussions and decision-making at a local level.
- **Promote strategic involvement** – encouraging organisations to engage in strategic and local area partnerships and actively work with representatives to ensure they keep on top of key local issues.

3.2 Funding Process

The budget is managed by the Performance and Partnerships Manager and annual contracts are agreed with infrastructure organisations. Annual changes to funding are decided by the Performance and Partnerships Manager as the budget holder, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

Equality Impact Assessment Screening is carried out annually on all funding changes and if necessary full Equality Impact Assessments undertaken in line with the Council's policy.

Funding is paid half yearly, with 50% of the annual allocation being paid in April (as long as monitoring reports are up to date) and the remainder paid in October, upon receipt of the first half yearly report or as soon as possible after the receipt of the necessary reports.

To ensure that monies are used in an appropriate manner as set out in the contracts, a monitoring process will take place throughout the financial year. This requires 6 monthly progress reports from organisations which are due before the next payment will be released.

3.3 Policy recommendations

To approve the approach to funding Infrastructure Organisations as detailed above.

4. Performance and evaluation

4.1 Monitoring, evaluation and Review

The Policy will be monitored and evaluated annually as part of the Council's business planning process and any changes made will be approved by the Portfolio Holder.

5. Further information

Further information is available from Kirstie Hercules, Partnerships Manager.

POLICY APPROVED:

Portfolio Holder Signature:.....

Date: