

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Cabinet Member for Strategic Communities

Date of Meeting: 22nd April 2013
Report of: Partnerships Manager
Subject/Title: Policies for the Allocation of Grants and Funding to Infrastructure Organisations for 2013/14
Portfolio Holder: Cllr D Brown

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 To enable Cheshire East Council to continue with its Community Grants Scheme for the next financial year.
- 1.2 To enable Cheshire East Council to continue its approach to funding infrastructure organisations that provide support to the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) and Local Councils in the Borough.

2.0 Decision Requested

- 2.1 To adopt the amended policy for the allocation of Community Grants.
- 2.2 To adopt the amended policy for the allocation of Funding to Infrastructure Organisations.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 The Community Grants Policy was adopted for the financial years 2009/10, 2010/11, 2011/12 and 2012/13. Applications were invited from organisations who met the criteria. The Council recognises the valuable input that the voluntary and community sector brings to the quality of life in the community and the scheme has enabled funding to be focused on those organisations that complement the aims and objectives of the Corporate Plan. A large number of organisations have received funding which has enabled a wealth of community activity to take place. A similar demand for funding is anticipated in the future. The draft Policy is appended to this report.
- 3.2 The Partnerships team work closely with infrastructure organisations across the Borough, who offer support to the VCFS and Local Councils. The purpose of the funding is to increase the capacity and capability of the VCFS and the Local Councils across Cheshire East.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 The recommendations relate to all wards within Cheshire East

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 All Ward members

6.0 Policy Implications (including carbon reduction and health)

6.1 Positive Impact

7.0 Financial Implications (authorised by Director of Finance and Business Services)

- 7.1 The recommendations will enable grant applications for 2013/2014 to be funded within existing budget provision.

8.0 Legal Implications (authorised by Borough Solicitor)

- 8.1 In awarding grants, the Council must ensure that in each case it has the legal power to fund the proposed scheme. In all cases there is a condition requiring a report back to the Council on the expenditure of the grant. Consideration should also be given in each case to the imposition of other appropriate conditions.

The Council's legal power to award these grants is contained in area specific statutes and by exercising its general power of competence in section 1 of the Localism Act 2011. The Council's decision to award a grant is subject to judicial review and this means that it must satisfy public law principles, be free from bias and not be made for improper purposes or motives. It should take into account all relevant considerations and not be otherwise irrational. In awarding or declining to award a grant the Council should also have regard to its public sector equality duties. The existence of a grant policy with a clear statement of the criteria that the Council will apply is essential if the Council is to defend a challenge that its decision making has not been transparent or has been improper.

9.0 Risk Management Implications

- 9.1 The risk of not agreeing an approach to funding the community and voluntary sector is that some organisations may be unable to continue their activities, resulting in a loss of community benefit. This is a particular issue during an economic downturn when other funding sources may not be available.

10.0 Background and Options

- 10.1 A decision is required to enable the allocation of grants to voluntary and community organisations and funding to infrastructure organisations in 2013/14.

11.0 Access to Information

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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