

Title – Voluntary Sector funding
What are the main issues? <i>what is the policy background?, how does it link to the councils corporate priorities?</i>
<p>Voluntary sector agencies perform a vital role in assisting the council to deliver services to local people. Many of the services currently provided are 'preventative' in that they support people who may not meet the eligibility thresholds required to access some statutory council provided services.</p> <p>We need to ensure we get the best value for money and the highest quality of service provision possible from organisations funded by the local authority.</p>
Why are we looking at this area? Have there been recent legislation/policy changes? Are there any performance or budgetary issues?,
<p>The council's main programme grant funding through the corporate voluntary sector team provides just under £1m per year to local voluntary agencies. Much of the funding is seen as 'historical'. For a number of years there has been little change in the organisations receiving funding, and the levels of funding provided. It is very difficult for new or currently un-funded organisations to access the council's resources.</p> <p>There is a need to ensure best value for money from the organisations and services funded, and to ensure that they are delivering services in line with identified and agreed council priorities.</p> <p>There has also been consideration for some time over developing the relationship between the local authority and local voluntary organisations to move from the current grant giving position to a more formalised 'commissioning' arrangement which could include longer term funding agreements (contracts or SLAs).</p>
What should the review cover? Give brief outline of what members could focus on, which partners to engage with, how residents/public can be involved.
<p>The review could usefully cover the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Which organisations are currently funded – how much and what for;• Are funded services meeting priorities identified and agreed by the local authority;• Is there any duplication or gaps in current funding arrangements;• How could the main grant programme processes be reformed to ensure the fairest, most effective allocation of resources. <p>Partners who will need to be engaged in the review include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Voluntary organisations (both currently funded and un-funded);• Service users & carers;• Partner organisations eg PCT, other neighbouring boroughs.

What could the review achieve? - influence policy change?, improvement to service delivery?, budget savings?, develop partnerships?.

The review could deliver the following:

- Identify duplication/gaps in current funding
- Confirm priorities for funding
- Develop new arrangements for funding which ensure best value for money, high quality service provision and strategic fit with local priorities
- Enable new groups to access funding
- Identify opportunities and capacity for partnership approaches to voluntary sector funding (e.g. with PCT or other boroughs)