

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

**Confidential Report to
Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care
9th March 2016**

REPORT AUTHOR: Lee Anderson
Senior Strategic Commissioning manager

SUBJECT: Grant Funding Allocation Process.

REPORT FOR: Decision

1. Purpose

1.1 A Corporate Review of Grant Funding was undertaken in 2015. Recommendations within the review sought to both promote enhanced cost effectiveness of invested resources, and to improve the coordination of investments through a greater use of Service Level Agreements as opposed to 'grants'. This Report builds upon the outcome of the Corporate Grant Review, and seeks agreement to remodel the way that Adult Social Care allocates grant sector funding to the voluntary and community sector within overall corporate grant processes. The proposed remodelling would result in:

- An increase in the number of voluntary and community organisations that are able to apply for grant funding from Powys County Council.
- Improved targeting and alignment of grant funding investment and One Powys Plan strategic priorities.
- The development of a competitive grant allocation process for 2017/18 enabling voluntary and community sector organisations to apply for support designed to enhance residents' health and social wellbeing needs via agreed Service Level Agreements.

1.2 The proposed changes to the grant allocation process are proposed for 2017/18. This would provide sufficient time for consultation with the voluntary and community sector on the proposed changes.

1.3 Currently, annual grant allocations are agreed each year with supported voluntary and community sector organisations. This report also seeks agreement to reduce the level of grant funding agreed in the next financial year (2016/17) by 10% for all organisations that currently receive more than £1,000 grant funding from Adult Social Care. The £1,000 grant floor below which existing grant allocations would not be reduce in 2016/17 is being proposed due to the anticipated disproportionate impact that a 10% reduction in grant funding would have on the four physical disability and sensory impairment voluntary groups that currently receive less than £1000 grants compared to the total additional £119 savings that would be available to the Council by applying

the reduction. This overall reduction reflects the ongoing pressures on Council budgets, and will release modest savings for continued investment in other early intervention and prevention community based services.

- 1.4 Implementation of the Corporate Review of Grant Funding will see a further proportionate reduction in the level of 'grant' funding available for the People Directorate to invest in community groups as the Directorate incur its share of savings to be made against grant budgets. The level of proportionate budget reduction in 2017/18 has yet to be agreed.

2. Background

2015/16 Grant Funding Programme

- 2.1 The Voluntary and Community Sector makes a significant and essential contribution to the wellbeing of Powys residents, and neither the Council nor PtHB would be able to achieve all their aims without the contribution that the third sector makes. Voluntary and community organisations play a crucial role in providing a wide range of services that the Council cannot easily provide, often benefiting 'hard to reach' residents who sometimes feel excluded from mainstream services. It is therefore vital to ensure that these organisations are funded in a clear and transparent manner so that they, and the community they serve, can benefit in the best possible way from public funding.
- 2.2 Public Sector investments through the provision of grants to voluntary and community sector organisations fulfil a number of functions, including:
 - providing core funding to sustain voluntary and community sector organisations where alternative income streams are not available;
 - enabling organisations to lever in other funding;
 - encouraging opportunities for local people to contribute to the wellbeing of their communities by engaging in volunteering.
 - providing training and the opportunity to gain experience that will enhance volunteers' skills and employability.
- 2.3 A Corporate Review of Grant Funding was undertaken in 2015. Recommendations within the review seek to both promote enhanced cost effectiveness of grant programmes, and to improve the coordination of grant aid across the Council. This Report builds upon the outcome of the Corporate Grant Review, and seeks agreement to remodel the way that Adult Social Care allocates grant sector funding to the voluntary and community sector within overall corporate grant / service level agreement processes.
- 2.4 Adult Social Care currently grant funds 23 voluntary and community sector organisations, investing around £222k a year in delivering support for residents across a range of thematic and geographic communities in Powys. Details of the 2015/16 grant programme, and the proposed 2016/17 programme is provided in Appendix 1.
- 2.5 Grants provided range from small grants around £190 to more substantial grants of £79,543. Allocation of grants has not substantially changed in many years, and the same organisations continue to receive the same level of annual grant each year. This report includes proposals to work with the voluntary and

community sector to introduce appropriate changes to the way grants are allocated by Adult Social Care from 2017/18.

3. Proposed fee setting methodology 2016/17 and 2017/18

3.1 The value of Adult Social Care's 2016/17 grant funding level is subject to approval of the Council Budget for 2016-17 in March 2016. Individual grant funding levels are agreed with organisations each year. In line with expectations across a number of commissioned services, it is anticipated that financial savings will be required across grant funded organisations. To support local voluntary and community groups' financial sustainability, and enable organisations to review their ongoing business plans, it is proposed that:

- Any changes to the groups funded by the Council will be introduced in 2017/18. This will enable appropriate consultation to be undertaken with communities. The time period will also provide time for affected community groups to review their respective business plans. This will also mean continuing to support the delivery of Information and Advice Services, support for voluntary and community sector infrastructure services across mental health and older people support sectors, and the promotion / development of local volunteering initiatives.
- As with all public funding we need to ensure that we achieve good value for money from this investment, and that our spending in the voluntary sector helps to achieve wider efficiencies that are crucial at this time of reducing budgets. A 10% reduction in 2016/17 grant allocations therefore proposed against all grants provided above £1000. This is to provide a floor value to further support very small community groups.

3.2 To enable such a change within current grant allocation processes, it is also proposed that a full review of the current Voluntary Sector Grant Aid criteria and processes takes place between January and September 2016 that will:

- identify the viability of establishing a new allocation system
- streamline the management of the funds
- align grants with corporate priorities and those identified by the voluntary and community sector so that they are targeted at our most vulnerable communities
- ensure clarity of communication and marketing.

3.3 Where possible, grant funding will be aligned to PtHB and Corporate grant funding to generate synergies and economy of scale. This is considered to be of particular merit when considering the future investment of Mental Health grant funding. It is also proposed that Adult Social Care will investigate the potential to work with PAVO to utilise their existing grant funding mechanisms rather than the Council set up its own revised application process.

3.4 Consultation will commence in Spring 2016 with voluntary and community sector organisation on a future grant allocation methodology that will introduce a competitive requirement against which local groups can compete for funding to help deliver the One Powys Plan strategic priorities, including promoting

better health and wellbeing, through promoting independence through targeted early intervention and prevention measures.

- 3.5 Ahead of the consultation outcomes, the precise details of how future grant allocations will be made have yet to be finalised. However, it is envisaged that the mechanisms used will be co-produced with representatives from the voluntary and community sector, with the first competitive bids received in Autumn 2016 to start from April 1st 2017.
- 3.6 The outcome of the project could if desired, could be the start of a single pooled budget from across the Council that can be used to invest in developing community resilience, social capital and community leadership, particularly within the voluntary and community sector and with communities of interest.
- 3.7 Service Level Agreements will be agreed with organisations awarded a grant detailing the terms and conditions the grant funding, including outcomes to be achieved and monitoring requirements.

4.0 Sustainability and Environmental Issues/Equalities/Crime and Disorder/Welsh Language/Other Policies etc

- 4.1 The focus of this report is to support the immediate sustainability of existing voluntary and community sector organisations grant funded by Adult social Care. Over the next 15 months, the proposed changes to way grant funding is allocated to voluntary and community groups will potentially extend the range of groups funded, and is anticipated to have a positive impact on equality of access to funding across all local communities.

5.0 Children and Young People's Impact statement – Safeguarding and Wellbeing

6.0 Local Members

- 6.1 This report covers the whole of the County Council area.

7.0 Other Front Line Services

8.0 Support Services (Legal, Finance, HR, ICT, BPU)

Legal:

Finance – The Finance Business Partner notes the recommendations in the report of the 10% reduction in 2016/17 and for 2017/18 and seeks agreement to remodel the way that Adult Social Care allocates grant sector funding to the voluntary and community sector within the overall corporate grant processes. The proposed remodelling would result in an increase in the number of possible applicants, the development of a competitive grant allocation process via agreed Service Level Agreements and assist to meet the budget pressures in Adult Social Care.

9.0 Local Service Board/Partnerships/Stakeholders etc

9.1 Investment of grant funding is not currently integrated across the Council and Powys Teaching Health Board. The Health Board do however commission a range of Third Sector organisations to help deliver health care support to patients. Should the proposed changes to the way grant funding is allocated be agreed, work will be undertaken in partnership with Powys Teaching Health Board to maximise achievable outcomes from resources invested by both organisations. Subject to the outcome of consultation and work undertaken with the Health Board, a key aim of the proposed changes is to integrate the way both organisations support the development of community based health and social care markets.

10.0 Communications

11.0 Statutory Officers

The Solicitor to the Council (Monitoring Officer) has commented as follows:

12.0 Members Interests

The Monitoring Officer is not aware of any specific interests that may arise in relation to this report. If Members have an interest they should declare it at the start of the meeting and complete the relevant notification form.

Future Status of the Report

(This section must be completed if the report is a confidential/exempt report)

Members are invited to consider the future status of this report and whether it can be made available to the press and public either immediately following the meeting or at some specified point in the future.

- The appendix to the report should remain confidential as:
 - It includes commercially sensitive information.

The view of the Monitoring Officer is that:

Recommendation:	Reason for Recommendation:
1. Approval is given to continue to grant fund the same voluntary and community groups in 2016/17 that have been grant funded in 2015/16 by Adult Social Care.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continuation of grant funding will permit sufficient time for Adult Social Care to consult on proposed grant allocation proposals.• Continuation of grant funding will permit sufficient time for grant funded organisations to review their business plans should any organisation not be grant funded under future revised grant processes.
2. Grant allocations agreed for 2016/17 should be 10% lower than existing 2015/16 allocations for organisations receiving more than £1,000 grant funding from Adult Social Care.	
3. Adult Social Care managers	

<p>undertake consultation with the voluntary and community sector on proposals to introduce a competitive grant allocation process for 2017/18</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed 10% grant reduction reflects the current challenging financial position, requiring organisations to also seek efficiencies. The proposed reduction is targeted at organisations that receive over £1,000 annual grant. This is to safeguard funding for very small organisations. • Consultation
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Person(s) To Action Decision:	Lee Anderson
Date By When Decision To Be Actioned:	31st March 2016

Relevant Policy (ies):	
Within Policy:	Y
Within Budget:	Y

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Relevant Local Member(s):	Whole County
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