

Executive Committee

13 January 2009

Minutes

Present:

Councillor Carole Gandy (Chair), Councillor Michael Braley (Vice-Chair) and Councillors P Anderson, J Brunner and B Clayton

Also Present:

K Banks, P Mould, J Pearce, M Shurmer and D Thomas

Officers:

J Bayley, S Hanley, A Heighway, A Marklew and P Rose

Committee Services Officer:

I Westmore

196. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor MacMillan. Apologies for absence were also received from Councillor Hall who, in accordance with the requirements of Section 81 of the Local Government Act 2000, had made a declaration of personal and prejudicial interest as detailed at Minute 199 (Decision 4 on this notice), below.

Members asked that the question of interests in respect of this report be clarified prior to the meeting of Council on 19 January.

197. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest other than those indicated in the Apologies above and the previously declared interests of the Task and Finish Group Members as detailed within the Report from the Group.

198. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Leader's announcements.

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Chair

199. REPORT OF THE THIRD SECTOR TASK AND FINISH GROUP

Representatives from the Third Sector Task and Finish Group attended the meeting to present its final report as endorsed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The former Chair of the Group commended the report and the work undertaken by both Members and Officers during preparation of the report. A considerable amount of work had been undertaken on the general policy underlying the Council's grants process but proposals for further work were included amongst the Group's recommendations.

Among the more significant points to come out of the review were a proposal for an additional post to assist in administering the grants process, the development of a mission statement and the need to officially endorse the Worcestershire Compact. The central proposal that the authority move to a framework of shopping, investing and giving for the grants process was highlighted as was the aligning of the criteria for grants applications with the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy priorities.

It was noted during the presentation that one of the principles underlying Recommendation 1, as detailed below, had been omitted in error from the executive summary, although included in the full report:

- i) "organisations should demonstrate an outcomes focus in applications for funding."

The Executive Committee welcomed this piece of work and thanked those involved in the production of the report. At the outset, Members encouraged Officers to follow the example of the report from the Task and Finish Group and make use of executive summaries within reports to all Committees.

A number of the more problematic issues were discussed. The provision of multi-year funding was recognised as presenting particular difficulties to the authority but there was a general acceptance that it would be present to some extent where the Council was shopping for services from the Third Sector.

The Executive stated that they agreed with the rationale for proposing additional Officer resources to support the Grants process. The benefits of a strong relationship between Officers and the Third Sector were clear. The Leader indicated that she was prepared to discuss the provision of a joint-funded post to support the grants process with the other local authorities in the north of the County as a means of delivering such an outcome. In addition, the

Executive were happy for this proposal to go forward as a revenue bid, although there was a recognition that the present financial climate was not conducive to the creation of additional posts.

The Leader also indicated that the Executive would consider the further work to be undertaken (detailed in Recommendation 5) and come back with suggestions for further work in due course. It was anticipated that the majority of the additional work to be undertaken would be carried out in due course by a further Task and Finish Group established for such a purpose.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) the Council adopt a written Grants Policy and Procedure;**
- 2a) the Council's purpose for funding the third sector be aligned to the following mission statement "Redditch Borough Council supports Voluntary and Community Sector organisations because we believe that a vibrant third sector is vital to our community";**
- 2b) the criteria for grants applications be aligned to the Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy priorities;**
- 3) the Shopping, Investing and Giving funding framework be adopted for the Council's grants process;**
- 4) the Council officially endorse the Worcestershire Compact;**
- 5) further work be undertaken into the following issues:**
 - a) a review of ways to enhance Voluntary and Community Sector involvement in the Redditch Partnership;**
 - b) a review of the Council's provision of non-grant support to the Voluntary and Community Sector;**
 - c) a review of how the Council should meet its responsibilities as set out in the Worcestershire Compact agreement;**
 - d) a review of how the six equalities strands could be embedded in the working practices of Redditch Borough Council and the Redditch Partnership;**
 - e) a review of the Council's procurement code; and**

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- f) a review of how multi-year funding arrangements should be implemented as part of the Council's grants process; and
- 6) subject to the successful submission and approval of a revenue bid, the Council introduce a clerical support role in the policy team to support the grants process.

(Prior to the meeting, and in accordance with the requirements of Section 81 of the Local Government Act 2000, Councillor Hall declared a personal and prejudicial interest in view of his being the Chair of a possible recipient of future Council grant funding .)

200. MINUTES / REFERRALS - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE, EXECUTIVE PANELS, NEIGHBOURHOOD GROUPS ETC.

There were no further referrals under this item.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00pm
and closed at 7.54pm

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Chair