

**TITLE
COMMITTEE**

Date: 24 May 2011

REPORT TITLE Third Sector Task & Finish update

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr Carole Gandy, Portfolio Holder for Community Leadership and Partnership
Relevant Head of Service	Angie Heighway, Head of Community Services
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

This report provides an update on the recommendations of the Third Sector Task & Finish Group reported to the Executive Committee on the 13 January 2009 and resolve by Council on the 19 January 2009.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that

the report be noted.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Third Sector Task and Finish Group was established in July 2008. The Group consisted of six Members: former Councillor Thomas who chaired the Group; Councillors Pearce and Shurmer and former Councillors Banks; Cookson and Farooqui. Mrs Ann Sowton, from the Bromsgrove and Redditch Network, (BARN), an infrastructure organisation that supports the third sector, acted as a co-opted member on the Group.

3.2 The Task and Finish Group were commissioned to undertake a strategic review of the Council's overarching approach to funding third sector organisations. The group were specifically tasked with reviewing the Council's arrangements for awarding grants and donations to third sector organisations. They were asked to bring forward proposals that would shape the Council's grants process from 2010/11 onwards.

4. KEY ISSUES

4.1 The Task and Finish Group made a number of recommendations to Council to provide a more transparent and inclusive grants process and building more effective partnerships with the Third Sector. Below is an update on the progress on these recommendations.

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- 4.2 **Recommendation 1: The Council adopt a written Grants Policy and Procedure.** Officers completed a written Grants Policy which was presented to Executive Committee on the 10th June 2009 and agreed and resolved by Council on the 22nd June 2009. Following the implementation of this policy a review was undertaken and a revised policy was presented to Overview and Scrutiny committee on the 17th November 2010 and the Executive Committee on the 2nd December 2010 and approved at Council on the 13th December 2010.
- 4.3 **Recommendation 2a): The Council's purpose for funding the third sector should 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".** This statement has been incorporated into the Council's Grants Policy.
- 4.4 **Recommendation 2b): The criteria for grants applications be aligned to the Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy priorities.** Following the review of the Grants Policy the priorities have been aligned to the Council priorities with the flexibility to include Sustainable Community Strategy priorities.
- 4.5 **Recommendation 3: The Shopping, Investing and Giving funding framework be adopted for the Council's grants process.** The Shopping Investing and Giving Framework was presented to the Executive Committee on the 10th June 2009 and agreed and resolved by Council on the 22nd June 2009. The Council has not undertaken any Shopping element of the framework at this point, but officers will be working with members to introduce a small shopping element for the 2012/13 grants process.
- 4.6 **Recommendation 4: The Council officially endorse the Worcestershire Compact.** The Worcestershire Compact was endorsed by the Executive Committee on the 13th January and Council on the 19th January 2009.
- 4.7 **Recommendation 5: Further work should be undertaken to address recommendations 5 a-f below.** The Executive Committee proposed in January 2009 that they would consider the most appropriate ways to address the issues identified by the Group in relation to recommendation 5. Subsequently it was decided that no further formal review work was required. If members wish for this further work to be undertaken they may bring forward proposals to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration.
- a) a review of ways to enhance Voluntary and Community Sector involvement in the Redditch Partnership;**

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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

f) a review of how multi-year funding arrangements should be implemented as part of the Council's grants process;

- 4.8 **Recommendation 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; or subject to funding using a portion of the grants budget the Council introduce a clerical support role in the policy team to support the grants process.** A Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Officer was appointed on a 12 month contract in July 2010. A successful revenue bid has been made and this is now a permanent post.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None from this report

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to incur expenditure which in its opinion is in the interest of and will bring direct benefit to its area or any part of it or all or some of its inhabitants. The direct benefit accruing must also be commensurate with the expenditure to be incurred.

- 6.2 There is a further power to make grants to voluntary organisations providing recreational facilities under Section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976

7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

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- 7.1 The Grants Policy was presented to the Executive Committee on the 2nd December 2010 and approved at Council on the 13th December 2010.

8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

- 8.1 Enterprising Communities – Recognising the value of the Third Sector as an integral part of shaping and delivering better services for the citizens of Redditch. The Council can be flexible in its approach to partnership and funding so as to recognise the Third Sector’s role in the sustainability of delivery of public services.

- 8.2 Safe – Specific projects that will be delivered to support and raise awareness of issues that affect Redditch citizens.

- 8.3 Clean and Green - Specific projects that will be delivered to support and raise awareness of issues that affect Redditch citizens.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT INCLUDING HEALTH & SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

None from this report.

10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

None from this report

11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

None from this report

12. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS, PROCUREMENT AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

None from this report

13. CLIMATE CHANGE, CARBON IMPLICATIONS AND BIODIVERSITY

None from this report

14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

None from this report

15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

None from this report

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16. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS INCLUDING SECTION 17 OF CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998

None from this report

17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

None from this report

18. LESSONS LEARNT

18.1 The previous policy did not promote or engage with small community groups and, with only having one bidding round, small events / projects missed out on funding as projects were required to be designed several months before their inception.

18.1 By not previously having a designated Grants Officer the monitoring of the grants scheme had been minimal. This did not allow the grants scheme to reach a wider range of VCS organisations and add value to the Council's priorities. In order to cultivate an atmosphere of trust and partnership working within the VCS, it has been recognised that the support of a Grants Officer will be invaluable to ensure the long-term strength and success of Redditch Borough Council's grant scheme.

19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

None from this report

20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

There has been no further consultation in the preparation of this report.

21. WARDS AFFECTED

All wards

22. APPENDICES

None

23. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Grants Policy
Shopping Investing and Giving funding framework.

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24. KEY

VCS – Voluntary and Community Sector.

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