

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Policy and Resources
Date:	19 January 2012
Title:	Annual Grants to Voluntary and Community Organisations
Reference:	3537
Report From:	Chief Executive

Contact details: Gail Tong

Tel: (01962 847591) Email: gail.tong@hants.gov.uk

1. Executive Summary

1.1. This report recommends the approval of annual grants in 2012/13 from the Policy and Resources budget to the following Voluntary and Community organisations:

- District Councils for Voluntary Service and Community Action Hampshire
- Hampshire Association of Local Councils
- Winchester and District Relate
- Victims Support
- Citizens Advice Hampshire

1.2. The report also recommends that the County Council undertakes a review of the existing funding arrangements with the Councils for Voluntary Service beyond the current 2009-2012 agreement. This will ensure that maximum value for money, for the intended outcomes of the funding, is secured.

2. Background

2.1. Hampshire County Council recognises the value of supporting voluntary and community organisations (VCO's) and is committed to working with them to deliver excellent services to Hampshire residents. It is recognised that VCO's make a significant contribution to the County's economy, society and environment and support the County Council in delivering its objectives. The demographic and financial pressures faced by the County Council emphasise the need to work effectively with other organisations to develop community capacity, activity, and cohesion, and to protect vulnerable people. This work itself needs to be achieved in a cost effective way.

2.2. A number of VCOs have received on-going funding from the Policy and Resources budget subject to annual review. In 2009 it was agreed that the

Councils of Voluntary Service (CVS) would have a 3 year agreement on funding. This agreement runs from April 2009 to March 2012.

- 2.3. In 2011 these grants were reduced by 8% and the organisations have been given early written notification of a similar reduction in 2012/13.
- 2.4. A number of County Council services have other partnership and funding arrangements with the bodies receiving annual grants. In November 2010, the County Council published a Policy Statement for working with the Voluntary and Community Sector setting out its approach to conducting business in a challenging financial climate. The County Council has been working with the Hampshire Voluntary Sector Consortium over the past 12 months to develop the relationship.
- 2.5. All of the annual grants presented for consideration have been subject to the revised grant application process and will therefore be held on the updated grants database.

3. Budget position

- 3.1. The total amount of grants being recommended for approval in 2012/13 is £1,009,878 which can be accommodated within the existing budget.
- 3.2. For all the organisations the amounts being recommended are an 8% reduction on the 2011/12 awards adjusted for inflation.
- 3.3. The organisations are being encouraged to continue their work to make efficiencies throughout the year by working in consortia and sharing resources. To this end the CVS network has applied to the Transformation of Local Infrastructure (TLI) fund, managed by the Big Lottery, for funds to transform and rationalise infrastructure services.

4. Recommended grant allocations

Organisation	Sum Awarded 2011/12	Amount recommended 2012/13
Community Action Hampshire (CAH)		
- Grant	285,990	268,110
- Accommodation	22,075*	
District Councils of Voluntary Service Including Volunteer Centres	561,300	526,207
Hampshire Association of Local Councils	80,733	75,686
Citizens Advice, Hampshire	106,368	99,718
Victim Support, HIOW	15,516	14,546
Relate	27,319	25,611

* The amount of £22,075 was the final agreed transition payment for CAH following their purchase of Beaconsfield House in 2009.

5. Community Action Hampshire (CAH)

- 5.1. CAH exists to strengthen and support community and voluntary action across Hampshire. It is a county-wide Council for Voluntary Service working alongside the CVSs in each district and is also the Rural Community Council for Hampshire.
- 5.2. CAH provides information, support and training to its 600 members and has continued to facilitate the creation of networks covering the main areas of work for the sector and to promote representation of the sector.
- 5.3. The delivery of care and community transport services has been transferred to other organisations to enable the organisation to focus on its core support services to the sector. CAH has developed its social enterprise support through the continued development of the Hampshire School for Social Entrepreneurs. It has also supported Hampshire's rural communities through a range of projects including the enablement of rural housing schemes, advice to local committees of village halls and other rural community buildings, rural energy services and parish plans.

6. Councils of Voluntary Service

- 6.1. The 11 Councils of Voluntary Service (CVS), one in each district/borough, provide support to local voluntary and community organisations. The main core funding partners are the County Council and the respective district and borough councils. In 2011/12, the district and borough council funding was £762,000 in total. The County Council therefore provided 42.4% of all local authority funding across the county for district CVSs and 100% in respect of CAH.
- 6.2. The grants provided to the Councils for Voluntary Service (CVS) are for core funding to enable them to fulfil their role to support and build capacity in the wider sector. During the past three years the CVS network has endeavoured to find more efficient ways of working. In particular over the past year many have made savings by reducing their workforce and overheads e.g Winchester and Test Valley CVS' have moved into shared accommodation with their respective district/ borough councils.
- 6.3. In all aspects of their role CVS outputs has increased with the noticeable exception of the value of external income / grants. There are now some 2,300 member organisations representing approximately 50,000 Hampshire residents. In 2009, the funding given to CVS' to promote or encourage volunteering was re-distributed across the county. Evidence provided by the volunteer centre managers shows that the impact has been positive with a:
 - 54% rise in number of volunteer referrals to organisations
 - 113% rise in the number of volunteering opportunities, and
 - 5% increase in the number of unemployed people placed into volunteer roles by the volunteer centres.

7. Hampshire Association of Local Councils (HALC)

- 7.1. HALC serves the parish and town councils of Hampshire. 255 of the 261 councils in Hampshire are members of HALC which is the highest percentage of membership anywhere in the country.
- 7.2. The County Council contribution towards HALC's expenditure is 40% with 40% raised from membership fees and 20% from income from sold services.
- 7.3. The priorities of HALC are to:
 - support new councils.
 - encourage more contested elections.
 - induct new Parish Councillors.
 - provide comprehensive employment support to all its members.
 - work with the Hampshire County Council to provide more integrated services where appropriate.
 - provide funding advice for project work.
- 7.4. This year's grant has supported the following for local councils:
 - increased confidence over their legal position following accurate advice provision
 - better empowered, through training and development, to engage and support their communities
 - improved skills, through knowledge, training and networking to provide representation and service provision to their communities
 - improved rural and urban environments, access to services and enhanced knowledge and skills in the community, through the work of councils, supported by the ALC
 - improved partnership work with the County Council for example through the Parish Lengthsmen Project, the provision of the parish council database to all County Council employees, support for the Transport Self-Help Toolkit, and the distribution of many HCC communications across the parish network.

8. Winchester and District Relate

- 8.1. The grant from the County Council supports the rental of suitable premises which ensure a safe confidential and secure environment in which to deliver services and provide safety for clients and counsellors. The funding also ensures that venues can be hired for those clients who require disabled access.
- 8.2. Relate have achieved efficiencies by moving into new premises in City Road Winchester.

9. Victims Support

- 9.1. All residents in Hampshire are entitled to the free services, practical and emotional support, provided by Victim Support (VS). The annual grant from the County Council enables Victims Support to raise awareness and recruit, retain and train volunteers so that more people to access the service.
- 9.2. In 2010 Victim Support Supported 49,257 Hampshire residents via Community and Witness programmes and facilitated £2,214,133 of Criminal Injuries Compensation Awards.

10. Citizens Advice Hampshire (CitAH)

- 10.1. The services provided by Citizens Advice across Hampshire provides free and impartial advice, ensuring vulnerable people are aware of their rights and responsibilities. They operate several specialised services aimed at marginalised groups. CitAH facilitates the Hampshire Advice with 45 advice organisation members joining to date. This network aims to drive collaboration, provide a forum to build partnerships and share resources.
- 10.2. The annual grant to Citizens Advice Hampshire from the County Council is used to support projects and activities throughout the network of Citizens Advice Bureaux across Hampshire, at the same time leveraging additional funding from other sources eg to fund *Hampshire Advice Plus* which improves access to legal advice for vulnerable people.
 - In Hampshire last year Citizens Advice Bureaux dealt with 87,061 client enquiries, an increase of over 24% from the previous year.
 - There are 1,060 volunteers, 158 trustees and 210 mostly part time paid staff in the service. The volunteers' economic value was estimated at £6.5 million during last year.
 - Macmillan Advice Service - In its second year of operation, the service has reached over 1,800 people affected by cancer, addressing 11,343 advice issues through 1,750 enquiries and generating 13,534 contacts. Most importantly, the financial gains achieved for these clients amount to £ 2,623,106.
 - The Interpretation and Translation service – since starting in September 2009 it has assisted over 176 clients who do not have English as their first language or need British Sign Language.

11. Proposed future funding for CVSs

- 11.1. The Hampshire County Council's three year grant agreement with the CVS's will end in 2012. It is therefore proposed that over the coming year, the County Council review with all stakeholders:
 - the changing needs of the sector and the focus of support required to build capacity in communities and protect vulnerable people.
 - the total range of options for delivering that support.
 - partnership arrangements between the CVSs and County Council services.

- the role of infrastructure bodies in bidding for and delivering contracts on behalf of the County Council and other public bodies.

12. Recommendations

- 12.1. That the grants to those organisations listed in section 4 of this report be approved for 2012/13.
- 12.2. That a full and transparent review as per section 11 be undertaken for Voluntary and Community support services during 2012 /2013 to inform future funding decisions.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	Yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Maximising well-being:	Yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Enhancing our quality of place:	Yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:		
<u>Title</u> Leaders Decision Financial Assistance to Voluntary and Community Organisations – Annual Grants Reports	<u>Reference</u> 2345 1109	<u>Date</u> 9 th March 2011 21 st January 2010
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives		
<u>Title</u> Building a Stronger Civil Society Localism Bill		<u>Date</u> November 2010 15 th November 2011

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
Working with the Voluntary and Community Sector Hampshire County Council Policy Statement	Chief Executives
Monitoring the Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure bodies	Chief Executives

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

- 1.1. The corporate efficiencies work programme and grants work stream, have taken in to account the impact of the proposals covered in this report. Voluntary & Community Organisations (VCOs) are in general ideally placed to have a positive impact on equality.
- 1.2. This decision is likely to have a moderate impact on equality. In line with the reduction in funding for the Council all grant funding streams have been reduced by a further 8% this year. It is recognised that this is likely to have an adverse impact on vulnerable communities. The organisations funded from the P&R budget have a role in supporting smaller organisations, this includes reaching out and working with diverse groups. Whilst the amount allocated in this report is reduced the Council will be working with these organisations to ensure that this doesn't adversely affect their ability to support vulnerable groups.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

- 2.1. Providing grant funding to the infrastructure organisations will potentially have a positive impact on crime & disorder as many projects are run through voluntary organisations, volunteers are involved in neighbourhood watch and safer community schemes.

3. Climate Change:

- a) By awarding grant funding to support the core functions of the infrastructure organisations the Council will have an improved opportunity to ensure these organisations support our aims to reduce carbon footprint / energy consumption. This should have a long term positive impact.
- b) By working more closely with the infrastructure organisations and improving their accountability the Council will have an improved opportunity to ensure they and ultimately their members support our aims to tackle climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts.