

## HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Decision Report

<b>Decision Maker:</b>	Executive Member for Policy and Resources
<b>Date:</b>	14 March 2013
<b>Title:</b>	Annual Grants to Voluntary and Community Organisations
<b>Reference:</b>	4677
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Policy and Governance – Corporate Services

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#### 1. Executive Summary

1.1 This report recommends the approval of annual grants in 2013/14 from the Policy and Resources budget to the following voluntary and community organisations:

- Community Action Hampshire (CAH)
- Councils for Voluntary Service (CVS)
- Hampshire Association of Local Councils (HALC)
- Winchester and District Relate
- Victim Support (VS)
- Citizens Advice Hampshire (CitAH)

1.2 This report also makes a number of other specific recommendations about future arrangements for the annual grants to these organisations.

#### 2. Background

2.1 The County Council has provided long term funding to a range of voluntary sector infrastructure bodies to help support front-line organisations through a series of annual grants. This includes co-funding, with district and borough councils, local Councils for Voluntary Service (CVS).

2.2 The current economic climate has resulted in a reduction in external income sources for many voluntary and community organisations. At the same time, Central Government expects the sector to play a more significant role in delivering public services and in making communities

more resilient and there are increased demands for services as a result of the continuing recession and public service reforms.

- 2.3 The County Council has encouraged the infrastructure organisations to collaborate and pursue opportunities for improved effectiveness and efficiency in responding to these challenges. There has been evidence that the sector has started to implement changes to enable this to happen but there is a need to go much further to ensure sustainable models of delivery for the long term.
- 2.4 Notably, Community First East Hampshire and Havant Council of Community Service merged in September 2012 to become Community First Havant and East Hampshire (HEH). The Hampshire Association of Local Councils (HALC) has achieved significant efficiencies, which enables the organisation to offer its service to the sector with a reduced contribution from the County Council on the basis of a longer term settlement.
- 2.5 Best Value Guidance has been followed in the provision of advance notice of funding changes and the offer of support to help transform services.

### 3. Finance

- 3.1 The total amount of the grants recommended for approval in 2013/14 is £1,004,509 which can be accommodated within the existing budget. The proposed allocations for 2013/14 are set out in the table below. For the most part this represents a 2% reduction on the awards in 2012/13.
- 3.2 In respect of HALC, a 7.5% reduction (some £5,700 p.a) has been self promoted. In return HALC are seeking a longer term arrangement of up to three years which will provide initial stability but importantly, sufficient time to modernise and transform the HALC offer for the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the decade.
- 3.3 Citizens Advice Hampshire has made representations and applied for a one-off additional contribution of £19,000 to help absorb the impact of demand for increased specialist advice mainly arising from welfare reforms.
- 3.4 The Director of Corporate Resources has assessed the financial health of the applicants and is satisfied that the recipients of the funding will be able to operate during 2013/14.
- 3.5 In relation to the CVS (including CAH), the financial assessment reveals that there is a low degree of risk associated with funding the organisations in their current state. However, an analysis based on published accounts shows, on average, a direction of reduced financial security in the future.

<b>Organisations</b>	<b>Funding in 2012/13</b>	<b>Recommended award for 2013/14</b>
<b>Community Action Hampshire</b>	£268,110	£262,748 (-2%)
<b>District Councils of Voluntary Service including Volunteer Centres</b>	£526,207	£515,683 (-2%)
<b>Hampshire Association of</b>	£75,686	£70,000 (-7.5%)

<b>Local Councils</b>		
<b>Winchester and District Relate</b>	£25,611	£25,099 (-2%)
<b>Victim Support</b>	£14,546	£14,255 (-2%)
<b>Citizens Advice Hampshire</b>	£99,718	£116,724 (uplift)

#### 4. Annual Grants Applicants

##### **Councils for Voluntary Service (CVSs)**

- 4.1 The ten Councils of Voluntary Service in Hampshire represent and provide support to a wide range of voluntary and community organisations. The grants provided are for their core funding which enables them to fulfil their role to support and build capacity in the wider sector. This includes:
- assistance with grants, fundraising or submitting bids;
  - recruiting volunteers;
  - providing networking opportunities;
  - providing training and staff development.
- 4.2 The County Council's financial support for district CVS core services represents 41% of total local authority core funding. A number of CVS receive other income in the form of grants and contracts with the County Council. Support to 5 of the 10 CVS's is being maintained (or in one case increased) by the district and borough councils. Others are reducing their award by as much as 10%. In general terms there has been a significant cumulative reduction over the past three years. A detailed schedule of district and borough co-funding for 2013/14 is attached at Appendix 1.
- 4.3 The County Council's current three year grant agreements with the CVS (including Community Action Hampshire) conclude in March 2013. The County Council has written to these bodies to make it clear that this years award will be a one year arrangement pending further consideration on the long term direction of infrastructure support.
- 4.4 A review of the funding of CVS services involving district council co-funders and all County Council Departments was started in 2012/13. As part of this work a survey and consultations with front-line organisations were conducted to assess the voluntary organisations and community groups support needs, and the value of CVS' in meeting these needs. This research confirmed that the support provided by the CVS core services is valued highly and that they deliver the priority support requirements. Adult Services say that the CVS' are a valuable link to local services and provide a mechanism through which to make better connections with these groups.
- 4.5 The review is set to continue and conclude over the first half of 2013/14. This will help the County Council to explore further the value and cost of services and to develop longer term support options for the sector.

##### **Community Action Hampshire (CAH)**

4.5 CAH is a Council for Voluntary Service operating on a county-wide basis. Their role is to assist county-wide voluntary and community organisations to function more effectively and efficiently in order to deliver better quality services. CAH is also the Rural Community Council for Hampshire.

4.6 The funding application from CAH is to deliver its core services to the voluntary and community sector in Hampshire and act as the Rural Community Council. The core funding is supplemented by other specific project related grants from the County Council amounting to around £111,500 including Hampshire School for Social Entrepreneurs, Hampshire Alliance for Rural Affordable Housing (HARAH) and a contribution to a Village Hall advisor. This funding enables CAH to generate additional income and operate to a budget of some £560,000. This will enable CAH in 2013/14 to:

- serve 530 subscription members, represent the voice of the sector in 12 public sector partnerships, and support a range of county-wide voluntary and community sector networks;
- support communities in enabling the delivery of around 45 new rural affordable homes and promote and facilitate community-led planning processes;
- play an active role in shaping and delivering a range of rural programmes and continue to work with the Rural Community Council for Sussex to help deliver effective rural support across the South Downs National Park;
- provide information and support to over 200 village halls with purchased consultancy services for over 70;
- support 25 social enterprises including the establishment of 16 new enterprises and continue work with Lloyds Banking Group to secure the financial sustainability of the businesses;
- provide training for 350 learners through 14 sessions and publish a weekly newsletter with a circulation of 1,300 readers;
- work with County Council departments to help ensure the voluntary and community sector are engaged in the shaping of services and policies;
- continue to pursue additional external resources to support the capacity of the sector building on accessing EU rural and community grant programmes;
- represent the Hampshire Voluntary sector in helping to influence national policy.

#### **Hampshire Association of Local Councils (HALC)**

4.7 The Hampshire Association of Local Councils supports and represents the interests of parish and town councils throughout the county. The

organisation currently works for and supports 245 of the 262 parish and town councils (94%) and 21 parish meetings. HALC represent, and pass essential information to, all councils, whether members or not. 40% of HALC's income is from membership fees and 20% from sold services.

4.8 The core aims of the service supported by the County Council funding are:

- to develop and increase the capacity of local councils to lead local communities;
- to promote the efficiency of local councils;
- to support effective service delivery through partnerships between local councils and the County Council and other public services.

4.9 HALC has reviewed its operations and reduced its overheads and has presented an application for funding to the County Council which represents a 7.5% reduction on the award in 2012/13. In order to achieve and sustain the efficiency reductions, and to create the necessary time for a more fundamental transformational review, HALC has sought a fixed settlement at this level for three years.

#### **Winchester and District Relate**

4.10 The annual grant from the County Council contributes to the rental of suitable premises which ensures a safe confidential and secure environment for clients and counsellors. In addition the funding enables the organisation to hire suitable venues in which to see disabled clients.

4.11 Annual funding from this budget is provided only to the Winchester and District service. However, Relate also operate services for North East Hampshire & Borders (NEHAB) branch based in Basingstoke, Solent, and Portsmouth & District.

4.11 Relate provide important services across the county which support a number of the County Council's objectives and programmes. In addition to the annual grant to Winchester and District Relate, the County Council awarded £45,694 in 2012/13 through a range of grants to other Relate Services across the County. From the Children's Services integrated Grant £23,980 was awarded to Relate North East Hampshire and Borders Relate and £18,689 to Portsmouth and District Relate. These awards were to support counselling for disadvantaged young people.

4.12 Through the County Councillor Grants, Winchester & District Relate were awarded £1,000 for outreach services and a further £1,325 as bursary assistance for low income families in Winchester, requiring counselling. £700 was awarded to Relate, North and East Hampshire Borders as bursary assistance for residents in Whitehill and Bordon.

4.13 In terms of other local authority financial support for Relate services, NEHAB have been awarded £29,000 for 2013/14 from Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council and has also received a one off grant of £5,000 from Hart District Council to support Hart residents. Portsmouth and District

Relate (PDR) receive £44,000 from Portsmouth City Council for core funding. £12,000 of this amount is paid back to the authority for accommodation costs. PDR also receives £5,000 from Gosport Borough Council, £3,000 from Havant and £2,000 from Fareham towards core funding for services directed at Hampshire residents.

- 4.14 It is proposed that a one year grant be made to Winchester and District Relate in 2013/14 and that a strategic review be undertaken of the support needs across the county and the options for future support.

#### **Victim Support**

- 4.15 All residents in Hampshire are entitled to access the support offered by the local Victim Support (VS) service. The service provides free and confidential help to victims of crime, witnesses and their families.
- 4.16 The County Council grant goes towards the recruitment, training, retaining and supporting of volunteers who deliver the service. In 2011/12, a total of 37,835 Hampshire residents were supported. Of these, 29,202 were via the community service and 8,633 through the witness service. Projected figures for 2012/13 reveal that there has been an increase of 4.5% in the number of people supported.
- 4.17 The national funding of victim support services is under review with a potential key funding role for the new elected Police and Crime Commissioners beyond 2013/14. The continued funding of this service is a matter which the County Council would wish to explore with the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Police and Crime Commissioner in due course.

#### **Citizens Advice Hampshire (CitAH)**

- 4.18 The Citizens Advice Service provides free and impartial advice to ensure that vulnerable people are aware of their rights and responsibilities. They also run some targeted services for specific marginalised groups. Most local Citizens Advice Bureaux (CABx) receive substantial financial support from their respective district or borough council. The County Council also supported local CABx through Member's devolved grants amounting to just over £6,000 during 2012/13.
- 4.19 Citizens Advice Hampshire (CitAH) is the infrastructure body that provides support to the local bureaux across the county. The County Council grant pays for specialist support and training to local CABx. The core funding will continue to fund these developments and support local CABx to collaborate and operate more effectively and efficiently.
- 4.20 In addition to the application for annual core funding, CitAH have also requested an additional £19,000 to increase their capacity to handle a sharp increase in the demand on the specialist advice input it provides to cases referred by local CABx. 77% of the cases requiring specialist advice are as a direct result of welfare reforms, in particular Employment and

Support Allowance appeals. Nationally there has been an increase of 68% in ESA related issues and an 83% increase in the number of ESA appeals.

- 4.21 Demand for support is almost certain to increase further as the range of welfare reforms continue to be implemented. The County Council will work closely with CitAH to help ensure that support arrangements are as efficient and effective as they will need to be over the coming year.
- 4.22 Citizen's Advice has an important role to play in the delivery of a number of major programmes led by the County such as the Supporting (Troubled) Families Programme and the community based support for armed forces veterans. The County Council will work with CitAH in its support and development role across the county as well as with the wider advice network to assist in the delivery of the objectives of these programmes.

## **5. Recommendations**

It is recommended:

- 5.1 that the annual grants in 2013/14 from the Policy and Resources budget be awarded to the voluntary and community organisations as set out in section 3 of the report;
- 5.2 that the current three year grant agreements with the Councils of Voluntary Service and Community Action Hampshire which come to an end this year are extended by a further year to enable time for the County Council to consider the findings from the 2012 review and develop a future approach;
- 5.3 that consideration be given to a strategic review of financial support to Relate's services across Hampshire to establish the longer term direction of financial support;
- 5.4 that consideration be given to extending the funding agreement with Hampshire Association of Local Councils for three years from 2013/14 to 2015/16 in return for an immediate and sustained 7.5% funding reduction.
- 5.5 that an additional one-off net uplift of £19,000 be made to Citizens Advice Hampshire to meet a significant increase in demand for specialist advice, at the same time as work is undertaken with local Citizens Advice Bureaux to develop their capacity within existing resources to manage increased demand and complexity of cases.
- 5.6 that in future, funding being awarded to Victim Support should be reviewed in consultation with the Police and Crime Commissioner.

**CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**

**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

<b>Hampshire safer and more secure for all:</b>	Yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
<b>Maximising well-being:</b>	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
<b>Enhancing our quality of place:</b>	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
<b>OR</b>	
<b>This proposal does not link to the Corporate Strategy but, nevertheless, requires a decision because:</b>	

**Other Significant Links**

<b>Links to previous Member decisions:</b>		
<u>Title</u> P & R Executive member decision day	<u>Reference</u> 3537	<u>Date</u> Jan 19 <sup>th</sup> 2012
<b>Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives</b>		
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>	

**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	Corporate Services
Monitoring the Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure bodies	Corporate Services
CVS Review – Web Pages	<a href="http://www3.hants.gov.uk/voluntarysector.htm">http://www3.hants.gov.uk/voluntarysector.htm</a>

## **IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:**

### **6 Equalities Impact Assessment:**

- 6.1 Voluntary & Community Organisations (VCOs) are ideally placed to promote equality and the annual support provided to infrastructure organisations funding is aimed at promoting policies on equality and diversity with front line organisations. It also supports capacity, co-ordination and representation from the sector to better inform public services on a wide range of equality and diversity issues.
- 6.2 The overall reduction in funding to the grant applicants of 2% in 2013-14 is not disproportionate to the general reductions for the County Council and it is recognised that there is scope for collaboration between the infrastructure bodies to achieve efficiencies which should ensure that there is little or no impact on the promotion of equality. If there are very specific areas of work within the sector which require further specific support, there are a range of additional on-going grant opportunities available.
- 6.3 An increased award to CitAH will have a positive impact by supporting vulnerable individuals who will need advice following the welfare reform and changes to the benefits system.

### **7 Impact on Crime and Disorder:**

- 7.1 The grants support capacity within the community to develop resilience and the effectiveness of local voluntary groups to support strong and safe communities, including services for victims of crime such as domestic abuse.

### **8 Climate Change:**

- 8.1 How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

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. CAH deliver an energy advice programme.

- 8.2 How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

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. WACA, in partnership with Winchester Action on Climate Change produce a monthly newsletter.

**District/Borough/County Council Core funding for Councils of Voluntary  
Service and Volunteer Centres 2013/14 Anticipated**

CVS	District / Borough Council Funding		County Council
	Core Proposed	Percentage Difference from 2012/13	Core funding including volunteering element (2% reduction from 2012/13)
Basingstoke Voluntary Services	£115,390	6% reduction	£49,979
Eastleigh – One Community	£78,906	plus inflation 1% reduction	£50,421
Community Action Fareham	£41,836	4% reduction	£44,223
Gosport Voluntary Action	£63,110	maintained	£44,223
Hart Voluntary Action	£40,000	maintained	£44,223
Havant & East Hants Community First	£55,540 (Havant BC) £58,000 (East Hants DC)	10% reduction	£93,767
New Forest Community First	£80,490	maintained	£49,979
Rushmoor Voluntary Services	£69,860	3% increase	£44,223
Test Valley Community Services	£44,024	3% reduction	£44,223
Winchester Area Community Action	£84,500 maximum	5% reduction	£50,421
Community Action Hampshire			£262,748