

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Policy and Resources
Date:	10 March 2016
Title:	Annual Grants to Voluntary and Community Organisations
Reference:	7335
Report From:	Director of Transformation and Policy and Governance – Corporate Services

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1. Executive Summary

This report recommends the approval of annual grants in 2016/17 from the Policy and Resources budget to the following organisations:

- Councils for Voluntary Service (CVS)
- Action Hampshire
- Hampshire Association of Local Councils (HALC)
- Relate South Hampshire and the Isle of Wight
- Citizens Advice Hampshire (CitAH)

2. Background

2.1. The proposed awards include support to a range of “infrastructure” organisations whose role is to support and develop the capacity of the voluntary and community sector.

In 2015 the grants for these organisations were more closely aligned to support the Council’s transformation priorities. This included development plans for each organisation containing priority actions and measures relating to the development priorities agreed with the Council.

3. Finance

3.1. The total amount of the grants recommended for approval is £729,742 which can be accommodated within the budget allocation for 2016/17. The proposed allocations for 2016/17 are set out in the table below.

Organisations	Funding in 2015/16	Amount Reduction	Recommended award for 2016/17
Local Councils of Voluntary Services	£487,683	3.5%	£470,614
Action Hampshire	£160,933	50%	£80,496
Relate South West Hampshire and the Isle of Wight	£23,367	5.0%	£22,199
Citizens Advice Hampshire	£90,982	5.0%	£86,432
HALC	£70,000	0%	£70,000
TOTAL	£832,965		£729,742

4. Local Councils for Voluntary Service

- 4.1. Last financial year a two year settlement was agreed with CVSs representing an overall reduction from a total of £505,000 in 2013/14 to £471,000 in 2016/17. This represented a reduction of 3.5% in 2015/16 and a further 3.5% reduction in 2016/17.
- 4.2. At the same time, funding moved away from individual district based CVSs, towards four self-selecting clusters with four lead CVSs accountable for delivery against the respective development plans. These plans reflect priority pieces of support work with the voluntary sector to help manage demand on Adult and Children's social care services.
- 4.3. A mid-year review of the work of the clusters identified that the outcome of the changes and the direction are positive. Development plans for 2016/17 are currently being prepared with the four Cluster leads to ensure that they continue to align with departmental transformation proposals.

5. Action Hampshire

- 5.1. Action Hampshire is a Countywide Council of Voluntary Service. Following a review in 2014 a decision was made to reduce the core funding given to this organisation by 47.5%
- 5.2. Action Hampshire receives additional contributions from the County Council for specific projects/ services, including their role in the consortium delivering the Local HealthWatch contract, the HARA rural housing programme, co-funded with districts. Action Hampshire also receives funding indirectly from Children's Services to deliver the Hampshire Children's Alliance business plan. The organisation was until recently also funded to facilitate the Interfaith Network.

- 5.3. A mid year assessment has been undertaken and further discussions held between the Executive Member for Partnership, Communities and External Affairs with the Chief Executive and Board representative of Action Hampshire.
- 5.4. The Hampshire Children's Alliance is being dissolved and its assets transferred to Action Hampshire. Despite reduced resources, the Children's Services Department wish to see the work of the Alliance continue along with wider support for its transformation priorities through a direct agreement with Action Hampshire under the corporate funding arrangements, building on work undertaken this year.
- 5.5. In terms of Adult Services priorities, the review of grants and wider arrangements on infrastructure support does not include specific actions for Action Hampshire and the Department does not intend to include items in the development plan for 2016/17.
- 5.6. It is recommended that there should be a one year contribution of £50,000 towards continuing and developing the work previously undertaken on behalf of the Hampshire Children's Alliance along with other specific VCS development priorities and a continued one year contribution of £30,000 towards core functions as the organisation revises its own forward business strategy.

6. Relate South West Hampshire and Isle of Wight

- 6.1. RELATE received a 5% reduction in their grant in 2015/16 resulting in an allocation of £23,000.
- 6.2. During 2015/16 the Council has worked with RELATE to develop improved understanding and collaboration around the opportunity to support the Early Help and Troubled Families Programmes.
- 6.3. Almost 2000 face to face sessions have been delivered across the County in the 5 months from April 2015. Within these sessions 306 children have been involved either directly (58) or indirectly (248). Those showing as indirectly involved are the children of couples or individuals who attended for couple relationship support. 86 sessions of Family Counselling have also been delivered.
- 6.4. Throughout the period Relate has referred clients into other agencies, and including GPs, Respect, and Women's Aid.
- 6.5. It is proposed that a further 5% reduction be applied to the grant to RELATE for 2016/17 and continues to support closer working with Early Help Hubs.

7. Citizens Advice Hampshire (CitAH)

- 7.1. CitAH received a 5% reduction in their grant for 2015/16 resulting in an allocation of £91,000.
- 7.2. The agreement focused on collaboration with Adult Services on developing the Information and Advice system to support an effective early help offer and meeting responsibilities under the Care Act, and with corporate services

around Welfare Assistance. Both of these are important continuing areas of work and CitAH is well placed to provide this support given its links to national CAB information and advice developments and its support for the 23 CABs across the County, especially in helping to align their services with those of the Council and other partners moving forward.

- 7.3. It is proposed that a further 5% reduction be applied to the grant to CitAH for 2016/17 and the development plan be further refined to support the Council's transformation of Information and Advice services.

8. Hampshire Association of Local Councils (HALC)

- 8.1. 2015/16 is the final year of a three year funding agreement with HALC for £70,000 pa.
- 8.2. The HALC supports and represents the interests of Parish and Town Councils throughout the county. The organisation currently works for and supports 242 of the 262 parish and town councils (93%) and 22 parish meetings. 42% of HALC's income is from membership fees and 18% from sold services.
- 8.3. The core aims of the service supported by County Council funding are to:
- Develop and increase the capacity of local councils to lead local communities
 - Representing local Councils at the county, regional and national level
 - Support effective service delivery through partnerships between local councils and the County Council and other public services.
- 8.4. HALC's development programme for local councils in 2015/16 is the biggest ever undertaken, probably the largest in the country with leading development work on workplace pensions and external funding; particularly Crowdfunding.
- 8.5. HALC continues to work closely with a number of County Council services to support joint projects and to provide a helpful engagement and communication channel with its membership.
- 8.6. It is proposed that the grant to HALC remains at £70,000 for 2016/17 pending greater clarity on whether the longer term budget position would enable any further longer term agreement.

9. Consultation and Equalities

- 9.1. All the infrastructure organisations, by the nature of their work, support the development of organisations, local bureaux and community groups that work with vulnerable people.
- 9.2. The reduction in funding has however been focussed to ensure that any direct impact on vulnerable groups will be minimal.
- 9.3. Colleagues in the Adult Services department have been working with the Chief officers of the Councils of Voluntary services to ensure that any funding awarded will be directed towards having a positive impact in terms of supporting vulnerable older people. and helping them to maintain their

independence. The CVS have also been working with the Children's Services department to target support around vulnerable children and families through the early help hubs.

- 9.4. One protected characteristic has been identified as potentially being impacted at a medium level, this is Age. The reason this has been identified is because Action Hampshire will no longer receive core funding to work with Adult Services. This should however be mitigated against as any work that is required will be spot purchased. It should also be noted that there are other organisations, which support older people, that continue to receive financial support from the County Council.
- 9.5. There could also be a potential impact on rural areas with the reduction in the award to Action Hampshire who are the local Rural Council. It should however be recognised that the four cluster areas covered by the local Councils of Voluntary Service will also cover the rural areas and this should mitigate against any negative impact.

10. Recommendation:

It is recommended that:

- a) The annual grants in 2016/17 from the Policy and Resources budget be awarded to the voluntary and community organisations as set out in section 3 of this report.
- b) Further work be undertaken during 2016 to monitor outcomes and understand the opportunities for ongoing joint working and to determine proposed grants for 2017/18 and beyond.

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

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	Yes
Maximising well-being:	yes
Enhancing our quality of place:	yes

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.)

Document

Location

None

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equality Duty

1.1. The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

1.2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

In line with the budget reductions across the County Council there will be comparable reductions in 2016/17 to the Policy and Resources Annual Grants to Voluntary and Community Organisations and further reductions in subsequent years. It is therefore not possible to retain funding to organisations at the current level.

1.3. All the infrastructure organisations, by the nature of their work, support the development of organisations, local bureaux and community groups that work with vulnerable people. The reduction in funding has however been focussed to ensure that any direct impact on vulnerable groups will be minimal. This is reflected in the current grant agreement which states the organisations must "demonstrate proactive support for equality and diversity groups and individuals". One objective was therefore to lessen any impact on vulnerable groups by ensuring that the funding was awarded in the most effective way. It is anticipated that by continuing to improve the way the Councils of Voluntary Services work through sharing resources, making efficiencies and working in consortium they should be able to continue to deliver a high level of service and in many cases improve their delivery by targeting those groups and individuals who most require support.

1.4. Rather than adopting a blanket approach to funding reductions, the grants have been allocated to those infrastructure organisations that demonstrated they were best placed to build capacity in the voluntary sector at a local level. The proposal was to enable voluntary organisations to help deliver the County Council's priorities of supporting vulnerable people (older people and children and families). This should ensure that there are positive outcomes for the protected characteristic categories Age and Disability.

1.5. Colleagues in the Adult Services department have been working with the Chief officers of the Councils of Voluntary services to ensure that any funding awarded will be directed towards having a positive impact in terms of supporting vulnerable older people and helping them to maintain their

independence. The CVS have also been working with the Children's Services department to target support around vulnerable children and families through the early help hubs.

- 1.6. The value of volunteers that work with community groups, in particular marginalised groups, is also recognised. It has been identified that in future years there will be an even greater need to encourage people to participate in volunteering to support these groups and the local CVS have demonstrated, through their proposals, that they are well placed to provide this service. This, together with the fact that they will in future be working together in more efficient consortium,
- 1.7. One protected characteristic has been identified as potentially being impacted at a medium level, this is Age. The reason this has been identified is because Action Hampshire will no longer receive core funding to work with Adult Services. This should however be mitigated against as any work that is required will be spot purchased. It should also be recognised that there are other organisations working with older people to whom the County Council award grants.
- 1.8. There could also be a potential impact on rural areas with the reduction in the award to Action Hampshire who are the local Rural Council. It should however be recognised that the four cluster areas covered by the local Councils of Voluntary Service will also cover the rural areas and this should mitigate against any negative impact.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

- 2.1. The grants support capacity within the community to develop resilience and the effectiveness of local voluntary groups to support strong and safe communities.

3. Climate Change:

- 3.1. 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.
- 3.2. 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.