

Gloucester City Council

Meeting:	Cabinet	Date:	9 March 2016
Subject:	Voluntary and Community Sector Funding 2014-16 and proposal for 2016-17 funding		
Report Of:	Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods		
Wards Affected:	All		
Key Decision:	Yes	Budget/Policy Framework:	No
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Appendices:	1. Allocation of funding to community groups 2014-16		
	2. Community grants guidance 2016-17		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To outline how grant funding has been allocated for the period 2014 to 2016 and the proposed approach for 2016 to 2017.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked to **RESOLVE** that:

- (1) The allocation of grant funding for the period to March 2016, as set out in Appendix 1, is noted.
- (2) The process and criteria for the allocation of grant funding, as outlined in appendix 2, be approved for 2016-17
- (3) The grant monies are split as detailed in paragraph 3.8.
- (4) The remaining ABCD (Your Gloucester) budget is carried forward to 2016-17.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 Gloucester City Council's voluntary and community sector grants have provided financial assistance to voluntary and community sector organisations in the city of Gloucester for many years.
- 3.2 A total budget of £592,000 was allocated for community grants for the period: 2014-16. This was split as follows:

	2014-15	2015-16
Grants for community groups	£119,000	£119,000
Service level agreements for advice centres	£192,000	£142,000
Support for asset based community development (ABCD – Your Gloucester)	£20,000	

- 3.3 In addition, the following budgets were allocated in 2014-15 and 2015-16:
- (i) Members Community Fund - £36,000 per annum
 - (ii) Youth grants (funded by Gloucestershire County Council) - £50,000 per annum
- 3.4 To support the Rugby World Cup and Kings House start-up, £15,000 was identified from within existing grants and under spends of member's allocation fund.
- 3.5 It is recommended that the remaining ABCD (Your Gloucester) budget is carried forward to 2016-17 to continue to support asset based community development. This amounts to £14,000 to cover the whole of the city of Gloucester.
- 3.6 Appendix 1 details how funding was allocated to voluntary and community groups and organisations during 2014-16.
- 3.7 For the period: 2016-17, it is proposed that the criteria for awarding grants are as outlined in appendix 2. These are set in accordance with ABCD principles and have been updated to reduce the maximum grant that can be applied for from £15,000 to £10,000 to encourage more and newer groups to apply
- 3.8 It is proposed that the grant monies for the period: 2016-17 are split as follows:
- (i) Funding for additional community builder - £30,000
 - (ii) Members Community fund- £42,000
 - (iii) Community grants - £47,000
- 3.9 The funding for the community builder is to support ABCD priority. A separate report on outcomes for the Kingsway community builder will be available.
- 3.10 The member's community fund above is in addition to the £36,000 already allocated. Therefore, each member will be allocated an increased fund of £2,000 per annum rather than £1,000 per annum. The increase from £36,000 to £42,000 takes into account that there will be three additional members from May 2016.
- 3.11 The reduction in community grants will be offset by an increase in the member's Fund, as well as continued advice and assistance from the partnerships and engagement team.

4.0 Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) Considerations

- 4.1 The criteria for awarding grants have been set in accordance with the ABCD approach. To be successful applications must demonstrate that they use the strengths and assets that they already have, that there is a real desire from a group

or community for the project and that one of the outcomes is that more people are engaged in social action. .

- 4.2 A review of the outcomes and monitoring arrangements of funded organisations will be carried out to assess whether the ABCD approach is being supported in the delivery of social action and that this is value for money.

5.0 Alternative Options Considered

- 5.1 Consideration could be given to cease offering grants. However some groups would not be able to meet and or grow community social action and the council recognises the value grants offer to the voluntary and community sector and the social action this helps to generate.
- 5.2 Grant funding is an investment into communities. These financial investments support associations which reduce social isolation, encourage physical activity and other outcomes. Consideration should be given to aligning the Community Grants with commissioning that also seeks to achieve these outcomes in partnership with Gloucestershire County Council and other partners.
- 5.3 Discussions have been held with grant officers in other Gloucestershire districts to ascertain the direction of travel within their organisations to help inform our proposals.

6.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 6.1 Community grants offer support to a wide number and range of groups that have a positive impact on the well-being of residents within their neighbourhoods.

7.0 Future Work and Conclusions

- 7.1 Reviews of the work done by groups who have been allocated funding during 2015-16 will continue and will help to inform on outcomes and how to deliver grants in future years.
- 7.2 The partnerships and engagement team will continue working with groups and individuals to connect with other funding opportunities and connecting them to others with the same aspirations.
- 7.3 A number of workshops have been held with communities and it is proposed that these will continue into the next financial year. The outcome of the workshops is to identify more groups of people coming together to share their skills and time to do more in their communities for greater well – being. The outcome of this is to reduce the call on services.
- 7.4 The allocation of grant funding will be kept under constant review. If alternative ways of allocating the money to better support the ABCD approach are identified or the sum of money for grants changes significantly then a report will be presented to Cabinet to determine any changes to how the fund is allocated.

8.0 Financial Implications

- 8.1 The tables below show a comparison of the grants allocation during 2015-16 and the proposed allocation for 2016-17:

Gloucester City Council funding:

	2015-16	2016-17
Service level agreement	142,000	142,000
Community grants	119,000	47,000
Community builder	0	30,000
Members Community Fund	36,000	78,000
TOTAL	297,000	297,000

Other sources of funding:

	2015-16	2016-17
Support for ABCD	20,000	15,000 (carried forward from 2015-16)
Youth grants (funded by Gloucestershire County Council)	50,000	50,000 (pending decision of Gloucestershire County Council)
TOTAL	70,000	65,000

- 8.2 The grants awarded for the period 2014-16 are within the budgets agreed by Council for that period. The budget to be set by Council in February 2016 will confirm the grants allocations for the financial year 2016-17.
- 8.3 The reduction in community grants will be mitigated by an increase in the member's community fund, from £1,000 to £2,000 per member during 2016 -17

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

9.0 Legal Implications

- 9.1 The Council has a wide variety of statutory powers to award grants to voluntary and community groups.
- 9.2 The guidance, criteria and process adopted by the Council demonstrates that decisions to award grants are taken in a fair and transparent manner. Also, the written documentation of the award ensures that a successful organisation understands their obligations and the terms upon which the grant has been awarded.

(One Legal have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

10.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

- 10.1 Removing or reducing funding could have an impact on the number of projects delivered and the support that communities need to develop and encourage more social action.

10.2 There are opportunities to use smaller funds that will grow community action through ABCD, for example hiring a venue is relatively low cost but has a high value in assisting groups to meet.

11.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

11.1 People impact assessments will be carried out as part of the application and assessment process.

12.0 Other Corporate Implications

Community Safety

12.1 The work done through community projects can help increase social interactions and add to a feeling of security thus reducing the fear of crime.

Sustainability

12.2 Grant funding does not directly encourage sustainability of groups who are dependent on the income. However, if grants are seen as occasional investments and groups have a plan around this concept; this will create opportunities around a skill sharing economy within the voluntary and community sector.

Staffing & Trade Union

12.3 Not applicable

Background Documents: None