

19 June 2017

Community, Health and Housing Committee

Funding Strategy 2017-2020

Report of: *Kim Anderson, Partnership, Leisure and Funding Manager*

Wards Affected: *All Brentwood Borough Wards*

This report is: *Public report*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The Funding Strategy (Appendix A) sets out the Council's strategic priorities and future funding plans for supporting the local voluntary and community sector through a variety of funding schemes. With reductions to funding across the public sector, Brentwood Borough Council needs to ensure that any funding it gives to organisations is targeted, supports the Council's priorities and provides effective support for the local community.
- 1.2. The Strategy also sets out a statement of principles in relation to future funding, includes the proposed governance arrangements that will be implemented to review and report funding and the timescales within which these will occur.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Members agree to the revised Funding Strategy and Action Plan as set out in Appendix A**

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1. In 2013 as part of the work of the Funding Strategy 2013-2016 a review of the level of support to the Voluntary and Community Sector was undertaken. This was estimated at over £600,000 annually. The funding /support was provided in a number of ways:
 - a) Direct core funding to support day to day running costs
 - b) Provision of accommodation and/or preferential rent or lease arrangements
 - c) Awarding of grant payments such as the Brentwood Community Fund
 - d) Parking permits
 - e) Free use of meeting rooms

- f) Discretionary Rate relief
- g) Parish Council Discretionary Grants
- h) Officer support for funding applications and community development initiatives

- 3.2. The 2013-16 Funding Strategy reviewed four key areas of support, Parish Council Discretionary Grants, Discretionary Rate Relief, Grants to larger organisations and in-kind support.
- 3.3. It was agreed by Members (date) to agree the Discretionary Rate Relief Policy and Procedures, adopt a Commissioning Prospectus for grants to larger organisations and review some of the in-kind support that it provided.
- 3.4. The Commissioning Prospectus currently supports Brentwood Citizen's Advice Bureau, Brentwood Community Transport and Brentwood Council for Voluntary Services.

4. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 4.1. The Funding Strategy for 2017-2020 will review the following areas as set out in the Action Plan:
 - a) Commissioning Prospectus
 - b) Small discretionary grants programme (Brentwood Community Fund)
 - c) In kind support
 - d) External funding principles
 - e) Funding, support, advice and guidance
 - f) Governance arrangements
- 4.2. The Council will adopt the following set of principles for future funding:
 - a) The funding will help the Council deliver its priorities as set out in the Vision for Brentwood 2016-19
 - b) Support the creation of the Town Hall Community Hub of Voluntary and Community Organisations within the Town Hall
 - c) Recipients of funding/support acknowledge the support from the Council
- 4.3. It is proposed to undertake a consultation with the Voluntary and Community sector to ascertain and identify the priority areas for funding and to include those are included in the specifications for the Commissioning Prospectus.
- 4.4. Not all organisations will be able to participate in the Commissioning Prospectus therefore it is proposed to continue with the small discretionary grants programme with the Brentwood Community Fund

(Subject to annual budget setting). The criteria and outcomes for this funding is reviewed on an annual basis.

- 4.5. The Council needs to ensure that when considering any preferential lease arrangements, it takes into consideration the social value that an organisation provides to the wider community.
- 4.6. The Council needs to ensure that any external funding activity supports the delivery of the Council's priorities. Through improved sharing of information and intelligence, a framework for bidding and monitoring of funding across the organisation will ensure that resources are appropriately allocated to avoid duplication and maximise officer input. It is envisioned that cross service collaboration on projects will increase and that targeted bid applications will be undertaken to successfully secure external funding opportunities.
- 4.7. The governance and monitoring of funding will be consolidated in an annual report to members.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 The Funding Strategy will ensure that the funding the Council allocates is targeted in the appropriate areas to support those most in need. The Council also needs to ensure that resources are allocated appropriately when looking to maximise external funding opportunities.

6. References to Council Priorities

The Funding Strategy sits across a number of corporate priorities to ensure that public money is targeted to support the most vulnerable in our community, that we have a strong and resilient third sector, and that the Council explores all avenues to support services and projects by bidding for external funding when appropriate.

7. Implications

Financial Implications

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- 7.1 The table set out the current financial implications for the Council in respect of funding to the voluntary and Community Sector. These are currently funded from a number of service areas across the Council. There is also additional support through Discretionary Rate Relief and Rural Rate Relief.

Type of funding	Amount
Brentwood Community Fund – Small grants programme	£16,300
Commissioning Prospectus	£95,600
Parish Council Discretionary Grants	£38,640
TOTAL	£150,540

The funding of £150,540 is currently provided for in the Council's 2017/18 base budget . £3,000 of the Commissioning Prospectus is funded from the Housing Revenue Account. The remaining balance of the Total is funded from the General Fund.

Legal Implications

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- 7.2 Any existing commitments that the Council has entered into with regard to any voluntary or community organisation will need to be examined before any changes could be implemented.

Other Implications (where significant) – i.e. Health and Safety, Asset Management, Equality and Diversity, Risk Management, Section 17 – Crime & Disorder, Sustainability, ICT.

- 7.3 None.

8. **Background Papers** (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright)

- 8.1 None.

9. Appendices to this report

- 9.1 Appendix A – Revised Funding Strategy and Action Plan

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