

REPORT FOR DECISION



Agenda Item	
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DECISION OF:	Cabinet
DATE:	19 September 2012
SUBJECT:	Third Sector Commissioning Framework – 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16.
REPORT FROM:	Cabinet Member – Community Development
CONTACT OFFICER:	Head of Communities – David Fowler Project Lead - Liz Saunders
TYPE OF DECISION:	EXECUTIVE - KEY DECISION
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/STATUS:	This paper is within the public domain.
SUMMARY:	This report sets out the proposed management arrangements, assessment criteria and implementation timetable for the Council’s Third Sector Commissioning Framework for 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16.
OPTIONS & RECOMMENDED OPTION	Recommended Option: Cabinet are recommended to endorse the priority criteria set out in paragraph 2.3 as the basis for a Third Sector Commissioning Panel to assess applications and make recommendations to Cabinet.
IMPLICATIONS:	
Corporate Aims/Policy Framework:	Do the proposals accord with the Policy Framework? Yes
Statement by the S151 Officer:	
Financial Implications and Risk Considerations:	Grants will be funded from within existing resources. As with any public spending it is important that the Council can demonstrate value for money and effective monitoring of successful applicants’ performance will be essential. Funding for the independent adviser will need to be found from savings arising from the ending of the

	current arrangements with Forever Manchester. Risk issues are set out in the body of the report.
Statement by Executive Director of Resources:	The Council has prioritised funding for voluntary organisations throughout past budget rounds and this has enabled certainty for grant recipients. However it is essential that applicants appreciate that the high level of uncertainty that surrounds the authority's future resource levels means that allocations cannot be guaranteed. It is also important that successful applicants prepare satisfactory exit strategies and do not rely on the Council to meet any potential wind-up costs should future funding allocations prove to be inadequate.
Equality/Diversity implications:	Yes (see paragraph below)
Considered by Monitoring Officer:	Yes JH
Wards Affected:	All wards
Scrutiny Interest:	Overview and Scrutiny

TRACKING/PROCESS

DIRECTOR: Deputy Chief Executive

Deputy Chief Executive/ Strategic Leadership Team	Cabinet Member/Chair	Ward Members	Partners
3 September 2012	5 September 2012		
Scrutiny Committee	Committee	Council	
	19 September 2012		

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In October 2009 the Council Executive agreed a commissioning framework against which the Council's strategic grant resources would be distributed to the third sector for the period 2010/11, 2011/12 and 2012/13. The strategic grants resource would be referred to as the 'Third Sector Commissioning Fund'.
- 1.2 Within the current funding period the Council Executive agreed to support twelve Third Sector organisations recommended by the Commissioning Fund panel:

- Bury Third Sector Development Agency
- Home-start
- Bury District CAB
- Bury Law Centre
- Victim Support
- Women's Housing Action Group
- Bury & District Disabled Advisory Council.
- Asian Development Association of Bury
- Bury Gateway
- Fairbridge
- The Met
- The Mosses Centre

1.3 The new three year commissioning round commences on 1st April 2013 and this report sets out the proposed management arrangements, assessment criteria and implementation timetable. In discussion with colleagues in the Third Sector the intention is to implement a rigorous process that will give organisations six weeks to complete their applications in line with our agreed 'Working Together' protocol. It is intended that Elected Members' from the Small Grants Panel will meet to consider applications on the 29th November 2012. Panel recommendations will be considered by Cabinet on 19th December 2012 and successful applicants will be notified before the end of the calendar year.

2.0 ISSUES

2.1 The fund is currently managed by Forever Manchester (formerly Community Foundation for Greater Manchester) under a contract with the Council.

2.2 During this financial year the current arrangements have been reviewed and it has been agreed that the Council will bring monitoring and performance elements of the programme back in-house. A one-off independent appraisal of bids and some support will be secured including:

- Offering workshops and advice
- Receiving and processing applications
- Scoring against criteria
- Presenting recommendations to the Commissioning Panel

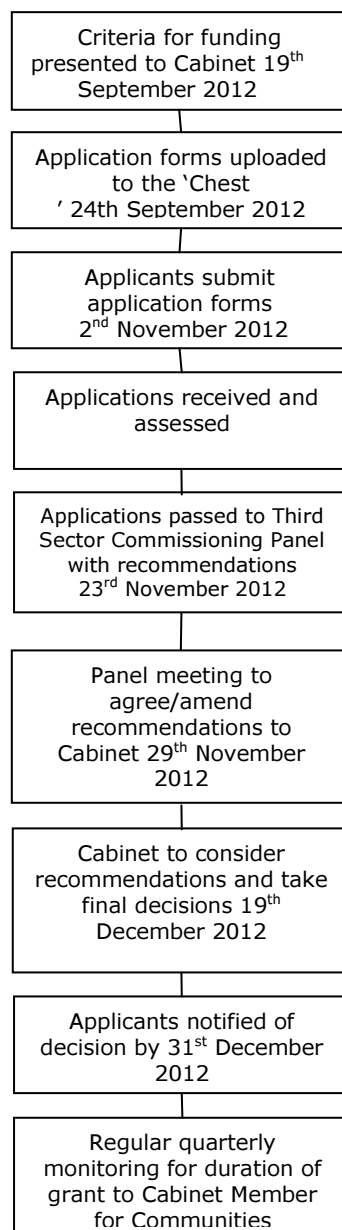
2.3 For the 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16 commissioning round the Third sector organisations applying to the fund will be required to demonstrate that their services/activities contribute towards the achievement of one or more of the Council's outcomes as set out in the Plan for Change which works in unison with the Bury Council Corporate Plan 2012-2015 to secure the outcomes of:

- Reducing poverty and its effects - The effect of the current economic climate and how we need to reduce poverty across households, families and age groups.
- Supporting our most vulnerable residents - We are committed to making a difference for people who need extra support and safeguarding.

- Making Bury a better place to live - We want to work with and empower communities to engage better with the democratic process and shape future services.

2.4 Applicants will be required to consider making collaborative applications, where possible, to maximise resources available to the sector.

2.5 **Proposed Implementation timetable**



2.6 **Risk Management**

The Third sector plays a crucial role in delivering a range of services and activities in support of the Bury Plan. It is essential that the sector as a whole is given appropriate time and support in formulating its proposals for this round of fund commissioning. B3SDA have agreed the timetable and the approach being proposed.

Applicant organisations will be required to provide a statement covering the impact on service provision of their organisation not receiving funding.

If a Voluntary Sector Organisation is unsuccessful in its funding application or experiences a diminution of funds, there is a risk that either limited services are available from the applicant in the future or that the service is discontinued resulting in service users approaching the Council for support.

The Council, in so far as it is possible, is seeking to offer voluntary sector organisations certainty in terms of funding by providing an in-principle three year settlement, subject to annual performance outcomes being achieved and to the availability of Council resources for this purpose on an ongoing basis. There is a risk however that the Council's funding arrangements / financial pressures may change.

2.7 Equality and Diversity

Outcome of ECIA (Stage 1 completed – see appendix 1). When the grants panel has met and formulated its recommendations these will be subjected to a further ECIA

3.0 CONCLUSION

3.1 This report recommends that the Council endorse the priority criteria set out in paragraph 2.3 as the basis for the Third Sector Commissioning Panel to assess applications.

List of Background Papers:

Plan for Change 2012/13 – 2014/15 – Bury Council
Working Together – Bury's Compact

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