

APPENDIX D

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 3 FEBRUARY 2009

Title:

**WAVERLEY COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP –
APPLICATIONS FOR REVENUE FUNDING 2009/10**

**[Portfolio Holder: Cllr Bryn Morgan]
[Wards Affected: All]**

Summary and purpose:

The purpose of this report is to consider the applications to the Waverley Community Partnership for revenue funding in 2009/10 and to make recommendations on grant levels to the Council.

The Executive is also requested to recommend the amount of contribution the Council makes to the Waverley Voluntary Grants Partnership.

How this report relates to the Council's Corporate Priorities:

The Waverley Community Partnership awards funding towards the running costs of organisations that provide high priority services for the benefit of Waverley residents, in partnership with the Council. The services that the partner organisations deliver cut across all corporate objectives and could fall in any of the 5 priority areas. In addition the Council made a specific commitment in the Corporate Plan to work with the voluntary sector organisations that Waverley supports to ensure that from April 2008, there is a year-on-year increase in the number of people assisted by these services. Waverley's contribution to the Waverley Voluntary Grants Partnership (WVGP) also helps support organisations specifically in the social and welfare area.

Equality and Diversity Implications:

The organisations that Waverley supports under the Waverley Community Partnership provide access to key services in the borough which benefit a wide range of users including the most vulnerable and disadvantaged.

Resource/Value for Money and Legal Implications:

At its meeting on 7 October 2008, the Executive agreed to contribute to the 2009/10 funding round of the Waverley Community Partnership, previously the Sponsored Organisation Scheme (SOS).

Given the current pressures on the Council's Budget, the Executive agreed that existing partner organisations should be notified that the revenue grants pot would not be increased by inflation in 2009/10 and that there was the potential for grant reductions in future years. The total value of funding awarded to partner organisations in the current financial year (2008/09) is £628,926. A table detailing the grants requested by each organisation within this Committee's remit for 2009/10 and grant awards in the previous 2 years are detailed in Annexe 1.

In addition, in the current financial year (2008/09) a £54,000 contribution was made to the WVGP. At its meeting on 7 October 2008, for budget planning purposes, the Executive agreed that the total amount of money for the WVGP for 2009/10 should be frozen at the 2008/09 level. The budget also includes an annual revenue contribution of £4,000 to help facilitate the approved allocation of grants from the WVGP.

Background

1. In October 2008 the Executive agreed to re-launch the Sponsored Organisation Scheme as the Waverley Community Partnership and approved the grant eligibility, criteria and timetable for 2009/10. The principle aim of the Waverley Community Partnership is to 'provide financial support for the on-going revenue costs of voluntary and charitable organisations that are delivering high priority service for the benefit of Waverley residents in partnership with the Council'. A copy of the criteria for the scheme is available if Members would like a copy.
2. The Executive also agreed a number of notable changes to the Council's revenue funding scheme:
 - The evaluation criteria should be updated to measure the extent to which organisations will use the funding to meet Corporate Plan objectives.
 - How partner organisations deliver their promises and provide services should be assessed to ensure they continue to provide high standard, value for money services from the funds that the Council invests.
 - The financial status, including the extent of external funding support, and business plans of applicants should be closely examined to ensure the Council is satisfied with the applicants' efficient, prudent and effective service delivery.
 - A Member evaluation panel should be given an early opportunity to contribute to the evaluation process.
 - Ward Members/Waverley appointed representatives should be invited to submit comments on the relevant applicant organisation to add a local dimension to the assessment process.

Applications

3. A total of 29 applications to the Waverley Community Partnership were received, with 1 being from a new applicant. The total level of funding requested by the organisations for 2009/10 is £667,147. Annexe 1 details all the applications received and the level of grant requested by each one.

The Assessment Process

4. The Executive agreed that a Member panel should be formed to assess the applications. The Member assessment panel, made up of the Portfolio Holder for Partnerships and the Chairs of the three Overview & Scrutiny Committees, met to agree priority ratings and initial suggested grant levels and to make any observations and comments on the applications ahead of the Overview & Scrutiny consideration.
5. To assist the Panel's considerations, each application was assessed against the Waverley Community Partnership grant eligibility and criteria by the relevant 'link officer' within each service area. An example of the assessment pro forma is available if Members would like a copy. In addition, Waverley's accountants undertook a financial assessment of each organisation's latest published accounts.
6. Two key factors were taken into account when assessing applications:
 - ▶ When awarding grants for the current year (2008/09) the Council notified organisations of the likely future financial pressures on the revenue funding scheme and indicated that they should identify other sources of income.
 - ▶ At its meeting in October the Executive agreed that when applying for funding in 2009/10, organisations should note that the revenue grants fund would not be increased by inflation as in previous years. Organisations were requested to provide an impact analysis of no grant increase in 2009/10 and of potential grant reductions in future years.
7. For relevant organisations and for those based in a particular ward, Ward Members/Waverley appointed representatives were also invited to submit comments on the service that the organisation provides to add a local dimension to the evaluation process.
8. The Panel was provided with a summary evaluation for each application and copies for each organisation are included at Annexe 2. Each summary shows the key purposes for the requested grant, which was detailed in the organisation's grant application, the key financial information taken from the organisation's accounts and the Waverley link officer's grant recommendation. Members were also provided with information on other financial support that Waverley provides to the partner organisations. A copy of that information is attached in Annexe 3.

The Evaluation Panel's Conclusions

9. The Panel assessed each application and agreed on a priority rating of High, Medium and Low. The Panel agreed that 'High'-rated applications should receive at least the level of grant awarded in the current year, unless it had requested a lower amount. The Panel felt that some applications had a particular importance and that, where the organisation had asked for more

than their current year's grant, it should be awarded an increase. Given the need to accommodate the aggregate grant award for 2009/10 within the current year's amount of £628,926, the Panel allocated the balance across the other organisations on a case-by-case basis, having regard to the medium/low priority assigned, the financial position of each organisation and the link officer's recommendation. The Panel's suggested priority rating and grant levels are included at Annexe 1 and the Executive is requested to consider these proposals and make recommendations to the Council.

Three-Year Intention-to-Fund Agreements

10. The Council agreed the principle of three-year intention-to-fund agreements for larger partner organisations with approved grants of £10,000 and above. The current agreement provides one year approved funding for 2008/09 with two further years intention-to-fund for 2009/10 and 2010/11, dependent on sufficient budget being available and subject to an annual appraisal of the organisation's performance and an up-date of its financial status. In 2008/09 10 partner organisations received a grant of over £10,000.

Partnership Agreements

11. Once a revenue grant is approved and a grant offer made, a partnership agreement is prepared by each organisation and the relevant Waverley service officer, who forms the key link officer during the funding period. The partnership agreement details the key outputs and achievements for the year and is signed by both parties. The partnership agreement enables service officers to monitor each organisation's performance against stated outcomes. In 2009/10, particular emphasis will be placed on the Council's requirement for publicity and visible evidence of Waverley's funding and on the need for the organisation to monitor and report on performance.

Observations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees

12. The Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered this report at its meeting on 12 January and made the following observations:
 - The Committee wished to convey its concern to the Executive about the Panel's recommendations to reduce the amounts bid for by the Day Centres. Members considered the service supplied by these organisations was of great importance to the less advantaged residents in the community, particularly in the present difficult financial climate, and wished to emphasise their support for an increase in funding to the amount requested.
 - The Committee therefore wished to convey to the Executive its view that, due to the economic situation, the Executive should increase the budget provision for the Waverley Community Partnership Fund in order to provide additional resources for Community-themed organisations.
13. The Environment & Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered this report at its meeting on 13 January and made the following observations:

- The Committee felt that particular attention should be given to how organisations helped to achieve council objectives.
- The Committee accepted the Panel's recommendations listed within the report (at Annexe 1) and asked that the budget for ELOS grant funding was protected for those organisations under its remit.
- The Committee would have liked to retain a contingency fund to meet urgent needs throughout the year and suggested that this was achieved in future.
- The Committee endorsed the software being purchased by the Council to help organisations find alternative funding.
- The Committee raised concern about the future of Haslemere Hall. Members suggested that this be considered by the Committee at a future meeting.
- The Committee suggested that Members who were interested in serving on the Sub-Committee to discuss Grant Funding raise their interest with the Portfolio Holder.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Executive:

1. considers the Waverley Community Partnership applications for 2009/10 and the allocations proposed in Annexe 1, having regard to the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees set out in the report;
2. agrees that the level of Waverley's contribution to the Waverley Voluntary Grants Partnership in 2009/10 should be £54,000;

and recommends the Council accordingly.

Background Papers (DCEX)

There are no background papers (as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) relating to this report.

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