

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

23RD JUNE 2011

SUBJECT:	EXTENSION OF VOLUNTARY SECTOR GRANTS
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	CHIEF EXECUTIVE
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	CLLR JEAN STAPLETON
KEY DECISION:	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is to request the approval of Cabinet to extend a number of existing voluntary sector grant arrangements (set out in table 1 below) for the rest of the current financial year. These contracts are currently extended to the end of June 2011 as agreed by Cabinet at its meeting on December 9 2010 (minute 248 refers).

1.2

Service procured	Organisation	Cost for 2011/12
The provision of an infrastructure support service to promote and develop the effectiveness of voluntary and community action in Wirral	Voluntary and Community Action Wirral (VCAW)	£103,000
The provision of a Community Legal Advice service including casework where appropriate	Wirral Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB)	£260,000
The provision of shopmobility services for the Birkenhead and Liscard shopping areas	Wirral Information Resource for Equality and Diversity (WIRED)	£20,000

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet approves the extension of the grant arrangements for these services from July 1st 2011 to 31st March 2012 to ensure continuity of service whilst a wider review of commissioning and grant arrangements with the voluntary, community and faith (VCF) sector is undertaken.

3.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The grant arrangements set out above relate to the core costs of the organisations that provide these services. Any proposed changes to this funding would require a sufficient notice period to enable the organisations to appropriately plan for any impact on service delivery.
- 3.2 The Council is in the process of undertaking a wider review of contracting and commissioning services with the VCF sector. This review will support the development of a VCF commissioning strategy that will lead to consistency and good practice in terms of commissioning across Council departments. The commissioning strategy will be based on a social investment model with an emphasis on outcomes and the impact these commissioned services have on the lives of service-users. A separate report in relation to outcome funding was tabled at the Cabinet meeting on 2nd June (minute 9 refers).

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 Each of the grant arrangements has a relevant funding agreement and service specification. This document sets out the nature of the service procured, key service objectives, payment and monitoring arrangements. Funding agreements are reviewed and updated annually as required.
- 4.2 The grant to Voluntary and Community Action Wirral (VCAW) relates to a contribution to the organisation's core revenue costs. This funding enables VCAW to provide a range of information and support services to voluntary and community groups across the borough.
- 4.2 The Grant to Wirral Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) relates to a contribution to the organisation's core revenue costs. This funding enables Wirral CAB to provide a community legal service which includes information, advice and representation to eligible residents throughout the borough.
- 4.3 The Grant to Wirral Information Resource for Equality and Diversity (WIRED) relates to a contribution to the organisation's core revenue costs. This funding enables WIRED to provide a shopmobility service for the Birkenhead and Liscard areas including the loan of equipment and assistance to enable people with mobility impairments to shop for themselves.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 5.1 Any changes to these funding arrangements would require a sufficient lead-in time to enable the organisations to appropriately plan for any impact on service delivery.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 Consideration was given to re-tendering these services, but this was rejected due to a lack of sufficient time to complete a tendering exercise and the context of the wider review of commissioning being undertaken during the current financial year.

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 Voluntary, community and faith sector organisations make an important contribution to the provision of local services, both in terms of quality and value for money.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

8.1 These grants relate to the core funding of key organisations providing a number of valued services. The extension of funding arrangements for the rest of this financial year will provide continuity of service individuals and groups that benefit from these services.

8.2 The grant that supports VCAW's core costs is in direct support of developing the borough's voluntary, community and faith sector.

9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

9.1 The funds in relation to these grants have been allocated in the Council's Corporate Services budget.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no legal implications in relation to this report.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The funding agreements in relation to these grants require organisations to adhere to the Council's commitment to equal opportunities.

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no carbon reduction implications in relation to this report.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are no planning and community safety implications in relation to this report.

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APPENDICES

None

REFERENCE MATERIAL

None

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
No previous reports	