

Key Decision Details

Decision Name VOLUNTARY SECTOR GRANT FUNDING 2016/17 TO 2019/2020

Date of Decision 21 January 2016

Decision maker Cabinet

Describe the Decision taken

- i. That funding is ceased to the Huntingdon Shop Mobility scheme with no further grant award for 2016/17, on the basis that:
 - a) it has not met the performance conditions within the existing grant award in not achieving additional matched external funding; and
 - b) this is not a service that the Council provides across its other major towns.
- ii. That the remaining five funded organisations be informed of continuation of Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) funding for the financial year 2016/17 at the same existing grant level subject to:
 - a) confirmation and funding evidence from each group of its continued financial/operational viability (including identification of other funding streams which that is dependent upon); and
 - b) notification of a fundamental review of HDC Voluntary Sector Grant Funding system during 2016/17 as per the resolution detailed in (iii) below.
- iii. That an HDC led Working Group of appropriate Members and Officers of both the District and County Councils be established to review the Voluntary Sector Grant Funding system, on the principles of:
 - a) tapering funding from 2016/17 in line with the District Councils overall Medium Term Financial Strategy and as detailed in Paragraph 3.1.3 Option 2 of the submitted report;
 - b) a commissioning and outcomes model with funding focused upon infrastructure organisations, taking due account of the National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA) 'Change for Good' report and in particular Recommendation 14 of that report as expressed at Paragraph 3.2.2 Option B of the submitted report; and
 - c) the Working Group to conclude its recommendations direct to the Cabinet no later than end July 2016.
- iv. That the Council expect funded organisations to undertake an efficiency review of their individual business on a 'Lean' or Zero Based Budgeting concept approach, which the Council could assist with and for which support should be sought from the NAVCA and from the Hunts Forum for Voluntary Organisations as representative of voluntary sector organisations.

What were the reasons for taking the Decision?

The Council must consider the need to secure value for money in providing funding to the third sector, alongside the needs to the Council to ensure that any funding is affordable.

What As fully detailed in Paragraphs 3.1 and 3.2 of the submitted report:

alternative options were considered and rejected?

- Option 1: No change to the current level of funding allocated by the Council to the voluntary sector;
- Option 2: Reduce the budget over the term of the current Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), such that in year 4 the reduction of 38% is achieved;
- Option 3: Reduce the budget in year 1, but then providing an equal annual payment equivalent to the same total amount of spend as Option 2;
- Option 4: Reduce the budget to the value of the MTFS in year 4 with immediate effect;
- Option 5: Cease funding the Voluntary Sector with immediate effect.

Option A: Continue to fund all the organisations that the Council currently funds, either at the same budget, or at a budget reduced in line with the decision on the voluntary sector MTFS above.

In making this decision, regard must be had to the financial viability of the organisations and the impact of reductions from other funding streams.

Option B: Reduce the number of organisations funded directly by the Council and seek to engage with umbrella organisations that through their funding support others.

The NAVCA report Change for good – Report of the Independent Commission on the future of local infrastructure, January 2015 made, amongst others, a recommendation that local government should *'act strategically to fund core infrastructure functions at the local level, to act as a multiplier, drawing in other resources and creating social capital'*. The report continues to discuss the need for infrastructure bodies to act collaboratively for the benefit of their communities, and to be vigilant in avoiding duplication of others.

This funding option would stimulate this approach to the local voluntary sector, but working together through an umbrella organisation funding arrangement, all organisations will have to work closer in collaboration to the overall benefit of our local communities.

Option C: Consider the option of developing a joint commissioning approach voluntary sector capacity building and volunteering infrastructure services at a District level with Cambridgeshire County Council.

The County Council are currently consulting on the future funding of Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure Organisations. The County Council currently spend £129,980 across the County and are looking to reduce this to £120,000. It is estimated that Huntingdonshire currently receives £18,857 of this funding.

The options for the allocation of the proposed £120,000 include the development of 5 District wide agreements, one for each District, with the application of a fair funding formula. However, the funding of ACRE for the provision of county wide rural development is distinctive and this will continue separately from the District wide agreements. This means that the total County Council funding for Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure could be c£95,000k and if split equally around £19,000 for Huntingdonshire. All this is subject to County Council budget approval processes.

Whilst the current timetables for commissioning these activities are not fully aligned with this of Huntingdonshire District Council, this option could be future progressed.

This option further supports the recommendations of the NAVCA Change for Good discussed with Option B above.

Conflict of Councillor S Criswell, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Communities and Customers),

interest and dispensation declared a non-statutory disclosable interest by virtue of his appointment as a Non-Executive Director of Hunts Forum for Voluntary Organisations in his capacity as a Cambridgeshire County Councillor.

Is the decision a Key Decision? Yes

Was the decision included in the Forward Plan Yes

Was the decision subject to the urgency proceedings? No

List the background papers to any report considered by the Decision Taker The Cabinet Office, COMPACT - https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/61169/The_20Compact.pdf
NAVCA, Change for Good - <http://www.navca.org.uk/downloads/generate/3878>

Person Making this report Mrs Melanie Sage

Date upon which the Decision will come into force, subject to no call-in 03 February 2016

Accompanying Documents Voluntary Sector Grants
Voluntary Sector Grants - Appendix 1
Voluntary Sector Grants - Appendix 2 Cambs County Council Community Resilience Strategy
Voluntary Sector Grants - Appendix 3