

Decision by Portfolio Holder



Report reference: CPS-004-2018/19
Date of report: 11 February 2019

**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Community & Partnership Services

Author: Gaby Gold (Ext 4247)

Democratic Services: J Leither

Subject: Grant Aid Service Level Agreements 2019-20 for Citizen Advice Epping Forest District & Voluntary Action Epping Forest

Decision:

That Grant Aid funding be awarded to Citizens Advice Epping Forest District totalling £113,840 and Voluntary Action Epping Forest totalling £39,120 via renewed Service Level Agreements for the period 1st April 2019 – 31st March 2020.

ADVISORY NOTICE: <i>A Portfolio Holder may not take a decision on a matter on which he/she has declared a Pecuniary interest. A Portfolio Holder with a non-pecuniary interest must declare that interest when exercising delegated powers.</i>	
I have read and approve/ do not approve (delete as appropriate) the above decision:	
Comments/further action required:	
Signed: Councillor S Kane	Date: 13 th February 2019
<i>Non-pecuniary interest declared by Portfolio Holder/ conflict of non-pecuniary interest declared by any other consulted Cabinet Member:</i> <p style="text-align: center;">None</p>	<i>Dispensation granted by Standards Committee:</i> Yes/No or n/a <p style="text-align: center;">N/A</p>
Office use only: Call-in period begins: 14 th February 2019	Expiry of Call-in period: 21 st February 2019

**After completion, one copy of this pro forma should be returned to
Democratic Services IMMEDIATELY**

Reason for decision:

Both Voluntary Action Epping Forest (VAEF) and Citizens Advice Epping Forest District (CAEFD) currently receive annual Council Grant Aid funding of £39,120 and £113,840 respectively via Service Level Agreements (SLA's). Both current 3-year SLA's expire on 31st March 2019. Objectives and delivery targets are discussed and agreed with both organisations annually. Quarterly monitoring is undertaken to ensure key agreed objectives are delivered.

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Portfolio Holder:**

The needs of the district's residents are central to the award of Council Grant Aid funding. There is an aspiration to continue to support both VAEF and CAEFD for a further period, however, to ensure best value, it is recognised that enhanced, robust monitoring mechanisms will need to be implemented moving forwards.

A shared performance dashboard encompassing the joint funding objectives of both EFDC and ECC was agreed with VAEF and piloted throughout the period April 2018 – March 2019. This new performance management framework has proved an effective and efficient tool in which to monitor the grant funding awarded by both organisations to VAEF. A full review of the shared dashboard will be undertaken throughout the coming year to ensure the success of future co-commissioning arrangements.

VAEF

VAEF is currently commissioned by EFDC to deliver shared objectives with ECC around community development, social isolation, depression screening, Mental Health First Aid interventions, fall prevention, obesity and warmer homes initiatives.

In addition to EFDC Grant Aid funding of £39,120, VAEF receives £40,000 towards the Gardening Service and £36,000 for the Handy Man Service from the Housing directorate.

CAEFD

CAEFD is currently commissioned by EFDC to deliver a range of objectives including; outreach services in Ongar and at Norway House in North Weald, financial advice for young people and referrals to external organisations via the Frontline social prescribing website.

In addition to EFDC Grant Aid funding of £113,840, CAEFD receives £42,000 to deliver the Limes Farm Debt Mitigation Service from the housing directorate.

Options considered and rejected:

- 1) Not to fund VAEF and CAEFD and issue Grant Aid Service Level Agreements. This was rejected as the Council recognises the services and support both organisations provide to local residents. This would cause major financial concerns for CAEFD which is very reliant on Council funding. Approximately 70% of income receipts to CAEFD is from Epping Forest District Council.
- 2) Re-issue 3-year SLA's to both organisations. This was rejected as the Council is committed to reviewing, agreeing and implementing further improvements to the performance management frameworks for both grants over the coming year.
- 3) Release a percentage of funding at the start of the year and then release further funding on a performance by results basis. This was rejected as this is a very different way of funding organisations and would require detailed research and lengthy negotiations prior to implementation. Whilst this may be considered as part of the coming review, it would not be achievable by 1st April 2019.
- 4) Any of the above, with a reduction of funding (no reduction 2019-20, followed by incremental reduction to ensure organisations can plan appropriately for decrease in funding levels). This was rejected as the Council and Members are committed to supporting local groups and funding such groups meets Corporate objectives in terms of Stronger Communities.

Background Report:

N/A

Resource Implications:

£39,120 set aside for Grant Aid – Voluntary Action Epping Forest in 2019/20
£113,840 set aside for Grant Aid – Citizens Advice Epping Forest District in 2019/20

Legal and Governance Implications:

None specific.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

There are no specific implications in terms of Crime and Disorder or Environmental issues within the District.

Consultation Undertaken:

The Portfolio Holder for Community & Partnership Services has met with both organisations and discussions have taken place with Chief Officers, Chair of Trustees and officers. Additionally conversations have taken place with Essex County Council & West Essex Clinical Commissioning Group partners regarding service needs.

Background Papers:

CVS Performance Report Summary, Specification: Essex Councils for Voluntary Service Delivery for Essex County Council 2018/19 – 2019/20 and monitoring reports

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management:

No formal assessments carried out.

Key Decision Reference (Y/N): N

Equality Analysis:

The Equality Act 2010 requires that the Public Sector Equality Duty is actively applied in decision-making. This means that the equality information provided to accompany this report is essential reading for all members involved in the consideration of this report. The equality information is provided as an Appendix to the report.

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