

# **NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **CABINET**

**28<sup>th</sup> July 2021**

### **Report of the Director of Finance & Corporate Services**

**H. Jenkins**

**Matter for:** Decision

**Wards Affected:** All Wards

### **Extension of Third Sector Grants Application Arrangements to 2022/23**

#### **Purpose of Report**

1. To seek member approval to extend the current Third Sector Grant Scheme arrangements for a further year to 2022/23. The current 3 year scheme ends 31 March 2022 but given the ongoing response to the Covid19 pandemic Members are asked to approve an extension of the current scheme into 2022/23.

#### **Background**

2. The Council co-produced the Third Sector Grant Funding Scheme (attached for reference) currently in operation. The Scheme seeks to align funding decisions with the overall priorities of the Council.
3. In previous years, the Council's Corporate Plan has been the main reference document for applicants to refer to when submitting applications for funding. However, the Covid-19 pandemic has seen the Council over the past 14 months shift its focus to more immediate matters that require attention as part of the Council's emergency response. As members are aware Public consultation

is taking place over the summer to enable the Council to update its Corporate Plan for 2022-23 onwards.

4. Consideration therefore needs to be given as to the basis on which the Council would wish to invite applications for funding in line with the Scheme for the 2022/23 financial year.
5. The grants which have been provided for three years are to partners the Council has identified as Strategic Partners. There are eight Strategic Partners and new three year grants were approved by Cabinet in December 2018 for these organisations covering the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2022.

## **Proposal**

6. The Council's well-being objectives remain relevant in the short term. It is therefore suggested that:
  - Applications are invited for 12 months funding or less and should be specifically focused on activities that will help to further develop community capacity/ collaboration and building from the community action that has supported the response to the Covid-19 pandemic.
  - Those organisations in receipt of multi-year grant agreements be asked to set out in clear terms how they intend to support the further development of community capacity building.
7. It was proposed last year that a fundamental review of the Scheme is undertaken in early 2021-22 to ensure the Scheme remains relevant in subsequent financial years. However due to the ongoing impact of Covid this work has not taken place and it is now proposed that this work be undertaken in early 2022/23.
8. The grant application process will be open for applications from the end of August to 15<sup>th</sup> October 2021 to new applications and updates from Strategic Partners.

## Financial Appraisal

9. One of the principles of the Third Sector Grant Funding Scheme is that the amount of funds available will vary in line with the Local Government Settlement for the preceding financial year. In 2021/22 the final settlement for Neath Port Talbot Council showed a year on year increase of 4.2%. It is therefore proposed in this report that the Third Sector Grant Budget for 2022/23 be increased by 4.2% to £563,300.

**Table 1**

<b>Budget</b>	<b>2022/23</b>
Base Year Budget including one-off grants 2021/22	£540,500
Additional Budget Allocation for 2022/23	£22,700
Total Base Budget 2022/23	£563,200

10. Final decisions on the grant Budget and distribution will be made in December 2021. If members at that time agree an uplift to Strategic Partner Organisations of 4.2% this will allow a budget of circa £200,000 for new applications. This is inclusive of £33,300 carried forward from last year.

## Integrated Impact Assessment

11. This report does not propose any changes to the current Scheme rather it seeks to clarify the short term priorities being pursued by the Council in the absence of a revised corporate plan.

## Valleys Communities Impact

12. The Scheme is open to all eligible organisations across the county borough, including those that operate in valleys communities.

## Workforce Impact

13. There is no workforce impact.

## Legal Impact

14. All successful grant recipients will be required to sign a Grant Agreement.

### **Risk Management**

15. Without clarifying the Council's priorities in the short term, there is a risk that the Council will receive applications for funding that are not aligned with its priorities, leading to frustration on the part of applicants and unnecessarily consuming officer and member time.
16. There is also a risk that the Council will lose an opportunity to encourage community action across the county borough and to strengthen community capacity for the longer term.

### **Consultation**

17. As there are no changes being proposed to the Scheme itself there is no requirement for external consultation on this report.

### **Recommendations**

18. It is recommended that Cabinet
  - a. approves the following as the criteria for inviting bids for funds governed by the Third Sector Grants Scheme in 2022-23:
    - Applications are invited for 12 months funding or less and should be specifically focused on activities that will help to further develop community capacity/ collaboration and building from the community action that has supported the response to the Covid-19 pandemic.
    - Those organisations in receipt of multi-year grant agreements be asked to set out in clear terms how they intend to support the further development of community capacity building
  - b. approves the proposal to undertake a more fundamental review of the Scheme in early 2022-23.

### **Reason for Proposed Decision**

19. To ensure funding decisions made for the 2022-23 financial year in relation to grants awarded under the Third Sector Grants Scheme

are aligned with the Council's overall priorities and reflect the specific circumstances of the Covid-19 emergency response situation.

20. To ensure that there is an opportunity in early 2022-23 to revise the Scheme to reflect the situation at that time, ensuring that the Scheme remains relevant in supporting the Council's priorities.

### **Implementation of Decision**

21. The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period.

### **Appendices**

22. Appendix 1 – The Neath Port Talbot Third Sector Grant Funding Scheme

### **List of Background Papers**

23. None.

### **Officer Contact**

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