

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

28th June 2023

Report of the Chief Finance Officer

H. Jones

Matter for: Decision

Wards Affected: All Wards

Third Sector Grants Application Arrangements - 2024/2025

Purpose of Report

1. To provide Members with an update on the arrangements for the next round of 3rd Sector Grant funding, which will commence April 1st 2024, and for Members to approve the criteria for applications.

Background

2. The council's Third Sector Grant Funding Scheme, which seeks to align funding decisions with our overall priorities, continues following the review during 2021-2022.
3. There was an unprecedented amount of applications received for 2023-2024 with many organisations looking for funding to support local residents impacted by the cost of living crisis and the hike in energy prices.
4. Third sector organisations themselves also demonstrated that they were feeling the impact of price rises and the funding was invaluable to allow them to remain open and carry on providing much needed services and activities.
5. Commitment was made in 2023-2024 to support six strategic partnerships for a 3 year period up to 2025/2026. For the financial year, this report relates to an allocation of £346,784 to those six organisations.

Third Sector Grants Application Arrangements - 2024/2025

6. The Scheme clearly states the council wishes to adopt an outcomes-based approach to the way in which it determines its grant funding arrangements and that applications which demonstrate the following will be particularly welcome:
 1. Contribution to the delivery of key policies and priorities which are contained in the council's Strategic Change Programme 2023-2024 and overall Corporate Plan 2022-2027.
 2. Reducing the demand on council services. For example, promoting and assisting citizens to use the council's digital services; promoting participation in discretionary services to increase footfall; or through early intervention and prevention activities that maintain or improve people's well-being
 3. Levering in of additional resources. Applications that demonstrate how council funding will be used to lever in additional resources in support of council policies and priorities are particularly welcomed.
 4. Financial sustainability. The council will wish to be satisfied that the applicant is not dependent on continuing council funding to achieve financial sustainability.

7. In addition to the above points, applications are welcomed that focus on activities that will help community groups and societies impacted by the cost of living crisis, those still feeling the effect of the pandemic and applications looking to further develop community capacity/collaboration.

8. The Scheme for 2024-2025 will provide organisations with 1 years funding with a view to re-evaluating the funding arrangements in line with a mid-term review of the Corporate Plan.

Third Sector Grants Application Timetable

9. The grant application process will be open for applications from the 7th August to 13th October 2023. Officers will review and assess the applications received and a report setting out the recommended approved applications will be presented to Cabinet on 13th December 2023.

Financial Appraisal

10. The indicative amount of funding available to support the third sector grant scheme in 2024/25 is £586,000. As detailed in paragraph 5 c£347,000 of this amount has already been committed to support the existing strategic partnership arrangements.

This means that the amount of funding available to support new one year applications for 2024/25 is c£239,000.

Integrated Impact Assessment

11. This report does not propose any major changes to the current Scheme rather it seeks to clarify the criteria for applications for the next round of 3rd Grant Funding commencing 2024.

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 criteria where applications are welcomed, 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.

Consultation

16. As there are no fundamental changes to the Scheme there is no requirement for external consultation on this report.

Recommendations

17. It is recommended that Cabinet:

- i. approves the following as the criteria for inviting bids for funds governed by the Third Sector Grants Scheme 2024-25:
 - Contribution to the delivery of key policies and priorities which are contained in the council's Corporate Plan 2023-2027.
 - Reducing the demand on council services. For example, promoting and assisting citizens to use the council's digital services; promoting participation in discretionary services to increase footfall; or through early intervention and prevention activities that maintain or improve people's well-being
 - Levering in of additional resources. Applications that demonstrate how council funding will be used to lever in additional resources in support of council policies and priorities are particularly welcomed.
 - Financial sustainability. The council will wish to be satisfied that the applicant is not dependent on continuing council funding to achieve financial sustainability.
 - In addition to the above, applications are particularly welcome that focus on activities that will help community groups and societies impacted by the cost of living crisis, those still feeling the effect of the pandemic and applications looking to further develop community capacity/collaboration.

Reason for Proposed Decision

18. To ensure funding decisions made for the 2024-25 financial year in relation to grants awarded under the Third Sector Grants Scheme are aligned with the council's overall priorities.

Implementation of Decision

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

Appendices

20. None.

List of Background Papers

21. Neath Port Talbot Third Sector Grant Funding Scheme

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