

THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Monday, 15 October 2018

Attendance:

Councillors
Learney (Chairman)

Stallard
Clear
Cunningham

Evans
Gemmell
Tod

Deputy Members:

Councillor Berry (Standing Deputy for Councillor McLean).
Councillor Hiscock (Standing Deputy for Councillor Thompson).
Councillor Mather (Standing Deputy for Councillor Weston).

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillor Humby (Portfolio Holder for Business Partnership).

Apologies

Councillors McLean, Thompson and Weston

1. **DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS**

Councillor Tod declared a personal (but not prejudicial interest) in item 7 (Community and Voluntary Sector Grants Review) as he was a Trustee of the Friends of Dean Garnier Garden (based in Winchester). He was also Chief Executive of the national Men's Health Forum charity - which is a member of the Department of Health's Health and Well-being Alliance. Neither of these bodies had made a request for grant assistance. In addition, as a County Councillor he had rights to give grants (from County funds).

Councillors Hiscock and Stallard both declared a personal (but not prejudicial interest) in item 7 (Community and Voluntary Sector Grants Review) as County Councillors they had rights to give grants from County funds and the County was also a partner in grant giving as well.

Councillor Mather declared a personal (but not prejudicial interest) in item 7 (Community and Voluntary Sector Grants Review) as she was a Council representative on the Trinity Winchester Advisory Board.

2. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman stated that the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 3 September 2018 would be submitted to the Committee's next meeting.

3. **TO NOTE THE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2018/19 (ATTACHED TO REVERSE OF AGENDA) AND THE FORWARD PLAN FOR NOVEMBER 2018**

The Chairman stated that Winchester Markets item had been withdrawn from the Forward Plan to allow further discussion with the officers on how to proceed with matters. Following debate, the Chairman agreed that the discussion with officers be extended to include the Winchester Christmas Market and to involve the expertise of the Winchester Business Improvement District (BID), for example for advice on car parking.

RESOLVED:

That the Scrutiny Work Programme for 2018/19 and Forward Plan for November 2018, be noted.

4. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No comments or questions were made during public participation

5. **COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR GRANTS REVIEW**

(Report OS210 refers)

Councillor Humby introduced the report and the Corporate Head of Engagement provided detail on the report.

During questions and debate, Members raised a number of questions which were responded to accordingly, as summarised below:

- (i) It was explained that the proposals would not take away Winchester Town Forum's input into the decision-making on community and voluntary sector grants. Monies already allocated for grants in the Winchester Town Forum budget would be ring-fenced for town use only. Organisations in the town would also be able to benefit from grants provided to the District as a whole. The proposal would remove the need for applicants to apply twice as there would be a single bid which could receive joint consideration (between members of the Panel and members of the Winchester Town Forum). Matching funding (from the Winchester Town Forum Account) could be provided if required. The Winchester Town Forum Grant Committee could comprise the Panel for grant consideration if required and this point required clarification.
- (ii) The situation referred to in paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2 of the report relating to organisations that occupied Council owned buildings, or buildings that are on the Council owned land was complex and was still being researched.
- (iii) The Council had reviewed the work of the Directory for Social Change and had benchmarked with other local

authorities in its research. It had also worked in association with Community First.

- (iv) The reporting cycle and monitoring of organisations would be in relation and appropriate to the size of grant provided and the risk and nature of the organisation.
- (v) The proposal to provide funding over a three year period would provide more security for organisations.
- (vi) Kayak had now been renamed Unit 12.
- (vii) Deprivation, need and health had been taken into consideration in setting the target figures for objectives and priorities. Issues relating to mental health (including mental health of young people) could be given further consideration.
- (viii) the Council's Strategy and its periodic review would be the mechanism for objectives and priorities to evolve over time. Flexibility would also be retained to respond to new priorities as they emerged.
- (ix) A wider scope and broader view of the voluntary sector was achieved by working with Community First. There was also joint consideration of grants and partnership working between the District Council and the County Council and also by Member representation on the Southern Health Trust. Capturing volunteering (for example through Action Hampshire which oversaw community groups) was also important. It would also be beneficial to achieve joined up working between similar organisations delivering similar outcomes.
- (x) The small grant Local Panel's membership was still to be determined and grants would be provided in tranches, perhaps three times per year, over a trial period. The Panel may include Ward Members that were local to its sitting. There was value in taking the Panel out into the District as it could be active in local decision-making and could bring people together in a local area and avoid duplication between bodies. The Panels would meet in public but could retire to discuss issues in private as required. The meeting places for Panels could also be flexible to include other locations in addition to those suggested in paragraph 11.42.
- (xi) The Crowd Funding of projects would be third party hosted and would consider items such as gift aid and obeying charity laws. It was intended that Crowd Funding would bring groups together. The vetting and questioning of groups would be part of exercising due diligence. The

Council could act to increase leverage for groups, for example by using its Twitter Account to promote a scheme.

- (xii) Training days could be held to provide support and advise on the grant application process for the smallest of grant applicants, such as playgroups or local youth football teams, so that they were included in the grants process. The changes were to make and the grants application process simpler.

In conclusion, the Chairman summarised the significant items to be raised with Cabinet, as set out in the resolution below, and suggested that the Report be submitted to Cabinet for its consideration and then be reconsidered by this Committee for further review. This approach was supported by Councillor Humby.

RESOLVED:

That the following matters of significance be brought to the attention of Cabinet:

- (a) That clarity be sought about how Town Forum funding would be kept accountable and separate from District funding without disadvantaging town area organisations.
- (b) That the approach to organisations leasing property or land from the Council be brought back to Committee.
- (c) That consideration be given to more frequent than annual reporting for larger organisation.
- (d) That detail about how changes to priorities and unforeseen requirement are dealt with be provided.
- (e) That consideration to be given as to how the Council consults with residents whose needs are not met at the current time.
- (f) That in respect of small grants, a map be provided showing areas covered by each centre and that consideration be given to the provision to consider awards in private alongside networking.
- (g) That support and advice be provided to assist smaller organisations and marginalised communities in particular in accessing grants.
- (h) That the Committee recognises the value of Council grants to the local community and the effective way

the Council officers administer the existing programme.

- (i) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee wish to see the paper again prior to the final Cabinet decision.

6. **ANNUAL REPORT: LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN 2017/18**
(Report OS209 refers)

In summary, matters were raised regarding the pattern and trends of complaints and how the level of compensation was calculated when a case was upheld by the Ombudsman.

RESOLVED:

That the Report be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and concluded at 8.25 pm

Chairman