Stage 6 – Validation Decision Notice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of policy/proposal etc. and EIA number</th>
<th>Strategic Grant Funding and Programme Grant Funding for the period of 2015 to 2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of assessment</td>
<td>20.01.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job titles of assessors</td>
<td>Policy Officer, HR Business Partner, Commissioning Officers, Commissioning Consultant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consider:

Was discrimination or disadvantage identified?   Yes   No
If so, was this overcome/can this be overcome?   
Is the service promoting equality?               
Could the service be improved in promoting equality?   Yes   No
Were the Initial Assessment / Screening and Scoping exercises satisfactory?   
Is there good evidence/reasoning to support the decisions made?   
Are the customers' needs understood and met?   
If actions have been identified, do they address the main issues raised?   
Does the summary report properly reflect the key findings of the assessment?   

If you have and comments, please note them here:
At this stage there appears to be a reduction in funding to discretionary activity to older people, but the EA states support will be provided to organisations to secure other funding. The application process is closed to all if needs external funding requirements. Ongoing support and dialogue with Award recipients will ensure customer needs are continually understood over the second period.

The decision is to: Validate Yes   Not validate No

If not validated, please explain:

Signed

Designation Cllr (Portfolio Holder)

Date 16/2/15
# Equality Impact Assessment

## Stage 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAGE 1 – Initial Assessment</th>
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### The Assessment

This Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) considers the impact of the proposed allocation of funding, through the new grants process (for the period of 2015 to 2020), on the protected characteristics and other groups, in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010). Where any adverse impact is identified, mitigating actions will be considered.

### Background

An initial equalities assessment was carried out in September 2014, which considered the potential impact of the new grants award scheme structure on the protected characteristics and other groups. This assessment concluded that the proposed new approach for grant awards aims to provide a more transparent and fair system. No negative impacts of the proposals were identified at this stage as the aim was that service provision should remain largely the same. These findings were included in the Cabinet Report ‘Grants Award Scheme’ (28 October 2014 – key decision 888/PF). It was agreed that once applications were received, and as part of the recommendation papers to Cabinet, a further equalities assessment on the proposed portfolio would be required.

This assessment considers the new approach to grant funding, which is to take effect from the financial year 2015/16. This aims to:

- provide a single platform for community and voluntary sector organisations to seek the council’s support, thereby simplifying the process
- create a more transparent and accessible grant application and evaluation process, opening this to new entrants
- more clearly articulate how grant funding meets council plan priorities and Commissioning Outcome Group outcomes
- respond to recommendations put forward by an internal audit

Under the new process there are two strands of funding open to organisations:

**Strategic Grants** – these will only be provided where the provider’s activities are recognised as specialist and are important to delivering and supporting the council’s priorities:

- will provide core funding to an organisation and will not be targeted at specific programmes of work
- minimum of £20,000 per annum, with no maximum limit
Equality Impact Assessment

- can be awarded for up to five years

**Grant Funded Programmes** – these will be focused on specific, relevant and local activities that add value and benefit the borough’s communities:
  - available by programme rather than organisation
  - maximum of £20,000 per annum, with no minimum limit
  - can be awarded for a period of one to three years

Under the new approach, the council will cease to provide core funding to a number of organisations which have previously received on-going annual revenue funding. However, organisations were informed that there has never been a guarantee of indefinite funding from the council. On 30 September 2014 letters were sent to all current core revenue funded organisations advising them that their current funding (2014-15) would cease on 31 March 2015 and giving them details of the new funding arrangements. This ensured that all current core revenue funded organisations had six months’ written notice of the end of their current funding and could plan accordingly.

The grant application process opened on 7 November 2014 and ran until the closing date of 12 December 2014. To ensure that all voluntary and community organisations were aware of the changes to funding arrangements, the new grants process was widely advertised across the sector, to both new and existing recipients. A workshop for all potential applicants was held on 10 November 2014 and its outputs uploaded on the council website. Additionally all potential applicants were offered support from council officers to answer any questions or concerns they had throughout the application process.

The total funding available for Strategic Grant and Grant Funded Programmes in 2015/16 is £2,183,500.

Eight applications were initially received for Strategic Grants. Following the scoring and moderation process a further two organisations were identified as meeting the criteria. It was also recommended that two further organisations be given three year contracts. Therefore a total of ten Strategic Grants and two contracts have been recommended, totalling £1,855,005 in 2015/16.

Sixty four applications were received for Grant Funded Programmes, from 35 different organisations, totalling £886,317. This included:
  - 17 community and voluntary sector programmes
  - 25 health and wellbeing programmes
  - 14 economic development programmes
  - 5 arts/cultural programme
  - 3 conservation/environment programmes

Of these 21 applications were ineligible for funding consideration - these included:
  - 13 applications that did not reach the minimum scoring threshold for funding as set out in the ‘Guide to Applicants’.
Equality Impact Assessment

Stage 1

- 8 applications which were deemed unsuitable due to their limited scope of impact, high cost per beneficiary, location, not having adequate infrastructure to deliver the programme as described
- A further application was received after the deadline and was not processed

Applications were scored and ranked from the highest to lowest, in line with budget availability. It is proposed to allocate up to £328,445 in Programme Grants in 2015/16.

Assessment Findings

Through the Strategic Grant strand the council has recognised that certain organisations are critical to local provision and that funding levels should be maintained. This includes key voluntary sector organisations which work closely with vulnerable groups, including those with protected characteristics, and maintains much of the provision supported through the previous revenue grants process.

Following the assessment process it is proposed to offer a total of 26 Grant Funded Programme awards to 21 organisations. Of these eight are new applicants. This process has therefore widened the portfolio of organisations which the council is able to support. A number of these programmes specifically support individuals with protected characteristics.

Applicants for Grant Funded Programmes were made aware that this was a competitive process and that not all applications would receive funding, either in part or in full. Applicants were also advised that past success was no guarantee of future funding. Where possible, the council will offer support to unsuccessful organisations to look at working in partnership and/or seek out other funding routes.

All but one of the organisations currently receiving core revenue funding from the council, and who made an application, will be recommended for some funding from 2015/16 onwards.

Justification

This assessment moves to Stage 2 of the EIA, on the basis that the recommendations being made regarding allocation of funding through the new grants process could alter current funding levels and, therefore, may have an impact on different protected characteristics groups.
Stage 5 – Summary Report

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Assessment Summary

This Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) considers the impact of Strategic Grant Funding and Programme Grant Funding for the period of 2015 to 2020 on the protected characteristics and other groups, in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and the Equality Act 2010. Where any adverse impact is identified, mitigating actions have been considered.

A new approach to grant funding was developed, to take effect from the financial year 2015/16. This aimed to provide a single platform for community and voluntary sector organisations to seek the council’s support and create a more transparent and accessible grant application and evaluation process. Under the new process there are two strands of funding open to organisations: Strategic Grants and Grant Funded Programmes.

Under the new approach, the council will cease to provide core funding to a number of organisations which have previously received on-going annual revenue funding. However, organisations were informed that there has never been a guarantee of indefinite funding from the council.

- Details of assessment and key findings

The assessment identified that overall the new process would provide neutral impact on most areas under consideration. It also identified positive outcomes for some protected characteristic groups; this includes young people, those on low incomes, the unemployed, those with mental health issues and those with learning disabilities, as additional/specific programmes will be funded which support these client groups.

However, there could potentially be differentially adverse impacts on some older people, as the funding proposed is slightly less than that provided in support of this group under the previous core revenue grant scheme. At this point it is unclear what impact this will have and discussions have not yet taken place with organisations around capacity for delivery. To mitigate these issues, it is proposed to work with organisations to establish partnerships, including those within the portfolio, signpost to other relevant funding streams, where possible, and more clearly articulate outcomes within funding agreements.
Equality Impact Assessment

Through the Strategic Grant strand the council has recognised that certain organisations are critical to local provision and that funding levels should be maintained. This includes key voluntary sector organisations which work closely with vulnerable groups, including those with protected characteristics.

Through the Programme Grants strand it is proposed to support 26 programmes, from 21 organisations. Of these, eight are new applicants. This process has therefore widened the portfolio of organisations which the council is able to support. Funding will be provided to support specific programmes of work, with clear outcomes, rather than cover core running costs as previously. This will enable the council to measure the benefits of funding more clearly and evidence the impact.

A performance management framework will be built into all funding agreements. All organisations will also need to demonstrate how their Programme will support the council to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Evidence used to draw conclusions and consultation

- To ensure that all voluntary and community organisations were aware of the changes to funding arrangements, the new grants' process was widely advertised across the sector, to both new and existing recipients. Consultation with current and potential grant funded organisations was also carried out through a grants' workshop and individual meetings.

- There has been engagement from staff about the implications for changes to grant processes. Elected members have been involved in the relevant Voluntary Sector Forum and Commissioning Outcome Group meetings and in individual meetings where a member has an interest in the funding of a particular organisation(s).

- A moderation panel of internal (BDBC) and external experts has been involved in the final evaluation of all applications and recommendations for funding.

Recommendations for action

Where relevant, unsuccessful organisations will be signposted to other agencies (including Basingstoke Voluntary Action) and supported to access other appropriate funding streams or relevant training opportunities.

Funding agreements will include the requirement for a performance management framework to identify clear outcomes.

Once changes are in place, monitoring will take place quarterly/six monthly as per funding agreements to ensure outcomes are met and to understand the impacts of any changes.