

GRANTS TO OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 At its meeting on 10 May this Sub-Committee deferred making a decision on the grant application from the Rayleigh, Rochford and District Association for Voluntary Service (RAVS) pending clarification on a number of points. This report provides responses to the questions posed.

2 RAVS

- 2.1 Members had a number of further questions they wished to have clarification on. The questions posed and the answers from RAVS are at Appendix 1
- 2.2 Accounts for RAVS for the financial year 2006/07 are being issued separately as exempt Appendix 2. Any detailed discussion on the accounts would need to be after the exclusion of the public and press.

3 RAVS FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 RAVS have developed a Business Plan (Appendix 3) for its continuing development over the next three years. The business plan will see RAVS develop its services in line with the sectors best practice and will provide an increasing range of services to the wider community and voluntary sector. The outcomes for Rochford should be an increasingly strong community and voluntary sector that can meet the needs of the community.
- 3.2 The development of RAVS will require increasing and sustainable funding to develop their services in-line with other similar CVS organisations. Rochford District Council currently provides £1,800 to RAVS, similar sized District Councils provide funding in the range of £10,000- £39,000. Those Councils that provide less direct funding also provide accommodation and other in-kind support. Members may wish to consider agreeing to a 3 year Service Level Agreement with increasing funding providing certain mile-stones are reached.

4 RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There is a risk to the Council's reputation in not resourcing a key Community and Voluntary sector body such as RAVS, and a subsequent risk to the service this organisation provides to other Community and Voluntary Groups.
- 4.2 It has long been felt that, given the characteristics of the District, the voluntary and community sector remains under-developed and, certainly, RAVS have a pivotal role to play in addressing this. If the matter is not resolved, then there are risks to any future CPA assessment of the Council, which will look at partnership structures.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Committee has reserved funding from its budget of £6,000 for the financial year 2007/08.
- 5.2 In establishing a three-year Service Level Agreement with funding at suggested levels of £15,000 for 2008/09 and £27,000 for 2009/10 on condition agreed mile-stones are reached.

6 RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 It is proposed that the Sub-Committee **RESOLVES**
- (1) to agree a funding allocation to RAVS for the funding year 2007/08.
 - (2) To agree to the development a 3 year Service Level Agreement and accompanying funding.

Paul Warren
Chief Executive

Background Papers:-

Grants to voluntary organisations 10 May 2007.

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If you would like this report in large print, braille or another language please contact 01702 546366.

APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONS RE. ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL GRANT

1. What services are you currently providing to the cvs sector of Rochford?

Volunteer Centre:-

- information and signposting
- resource centre
- volunteering opportunities directory
- volunteering registration/enquiries
- volunteering listing on 'V-Base' and 'do-it.org' website
- public face of RAVS
- wheelchair loan
- collection point for homeless refuge and women's refuge
- monthly statistics maintained of throughput against 6 category headings

CVS:-

- projects – Laptop; Funding; Young Carers - see Q.8
- members' 1/4ly Newsletter – copies to RDC
(the template is used by the Council for the Community Information packs)
- annual Voluntary and Community Awareness Day – 4 years and all attended by current RDC Chairman
- funding advice – application support to member groups; 'Meet the Funders' day with seminars
- participation in surveys and audits
- consultation conduit for Statutory Bodies
- membership of groups under the LAA:
 - Healthy Communities & Older People (PCT led)
 - Safer & stronger Communities (CDRP)
 - Children and Young People (CYPSP)
 - Community Involvement (Compact).

2. How does this level of service differ from other similar sized cvs organisations across the county?

Each CVS across the County is different and of varying size. All CVSs apart from RAVS employ a Chief Executive Officer whereas RAVS operates only on part-time staff.

The services provided by CVSs will be tailored to their local community. Rochford District is widespread and rural and therefore has many small locally based groups.

We cannot comment on the services provided by others but we are aware from enquiries on funding of other CVS's that the commitment from their local authority is far greater than RDC. The range of Local Authority grant funding across the County to CVS's varies between £10000 and £39000. Many CVS's also receive 'in kind' benefits of office accommodation, telephone, postage etc. The CVS with a £10000 grant also receives free office accommodation; free telephone/postage, included electricity and parking; access to all Council services (including a dedicated officer); and a Councillor is nominated to the committee.

3. How do you intend to develop services in the future to bridge this gap (if any) or to continue to develop existing services?

Development of services and any expansion is very much dependent on finance and resources. Existing services can be managed with current funding but any new services would require additional grants.

If services are provided by another organisation, we would look to work in partnership with them.

See Q.4 below for future plans.

4. Do you have a 2/3 year business plan with agreed milestones and targets for the services you provide or intend to provide?

We have 2 Business Plans formatted as Action Plans covering the next 3 years. There is a plan for the main CVS activity based on the 5 core functions under the National Association for Voluntary and Community Associations (NAVCA) and also for the Volunteer Centre based on the 6 core functions under Volunteering England (VE). RAVS is a member of both national bodies.

5. HOW ARE YOU PERFORMING AGAINST YOUR OTHER SLAs WITH ECC AND THE PCT?

ECC and the PCT end of year monitoring reports submitted and accepted against performance indicators (March 2007). Funding for 2007/8 agreed and received against SLAs.

6. How will the money you have asked for be used to develop the external working and what added value will this bring to the district?

RAVS is currently unable to play a full role with external partners e.g. Thames Gateway and Essex Southend Thurrock Infrastructure Consortium as current

resources do not cover costs and time. Even a grant of £6000 is insufficient, hence the original bid application for £10000.

7. Based on your current funds, what would be the result if grant was not approved?

RAVS would need to direct its efforts and resources to those bodies that support us through grant funding. This may mean withdrawing from any partnership working with the Council unless specifically funded to do so.

This would have an impact on the Council's performance against the LAA and could affect its rating against the Corporate Performance Assessment. The Compact, which the Council is supposedly committed to through the LAA process, includes a 'Funding Code' as an essential part of the Compact. The Compact would essentially become defunct.

8. What other projects are you currently running, and could you provide more information on young carers?

Projects:-

- Laptop (PCs for older people)
- Funding Officer (advice, grant finder, completion and submission of project focussed bids).
- Volunteer Centre (see Action Plan)
- Recently completed Needs Assessment of the community and voluntary sector Survey across the District – copy with RDC
- Young Carers (see separate information below).

Rochford Young Carers:-

Rochford Young Carers Scheme is at present supporting 36 Young Carers aged 8 to 18, who live in the Rochford District. They may care, or help care, for a relative with a physical or learning disability, a long term illness (including HIV or AIDS) or substance misuse. The person they care for may be a parent, brother, sister or close friend. They may have help with their caring role from another member of the family or they may be the sole carer.

The Scheme's main funding comes from Essex County Council, which is applied for on an annual basis and we have been successful in achieving funding from the Youth Opportunities Fund and BBC Children in Need. The Scheme meets term time at Fitzwimarc Youth Centre on a Wednesday evening 5.00 pm to 7.00 pm, with additional sessions in school holidays. We have four staff and volunteers at each session. The Scheme provides respite with fun activities including horse riding, karate, street dance but also educational sessions including Bullying Workshop, Mental Health Workshop, and visit to the Library. The Scheme now provides a counselling service to the Young Carer.

Rochford Council have provided a Leadership Skills Course, which was attended by the past Chairman of the Council, Councillor Mavis Webster, and we are planning a presentation evening for later in July. The Council, together with Virgin Active, are also providing each Young Carer with a free swimming pass for Clements Hall.

Referrals can be received from anyone but we do work closely and receive referrals from the Children and Family Team, Coombewood Adult Mental Health Team, Children with Disabilities Team, Extended Schools Coordinator etc. We are part of the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership and the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership.

9. From the accounts you provided for the period to march 2006 could you please explain the following?:-

a) What is the Community Fund and why did it drop by £8K between 2005 and 2006?

a) The Community Fund is both the Lottery Fund and Essex Community Foundation. In 2005 RAVS received £18,313 (final year) from the Lottery Fund for the Laptop project. In 2006, RAVS received £10000 from Essex Community Foundation to continue with the Funding Officer post.

b) Who provides the vehicle fund?

b) Presumably this means the Vehicle Renewal Fund. This is a provision made on a monthly basis by Community Transport against the purchase of new minibuses when necessary. Community Transport is now a stand-alone organisation of Wyvern Community Transport and is therefore no longer part of RAVS finances.

c) Could you provide a breakdown of the salary costs, and explain the increase between the two years?

c) Salaries are a personal and private matter between RAVS Trustees and the staff. However, in general terms the breakdown is:-

Development and Volunteer Bureau	- £13240
Laptop	- £7844
Young Carers	- £5196
Community Transport	- £29041 (now separate as Wyvern CT)
Funding	- £3618

The increase of £2926 between 2005 and 2006 is the start of Young Carers staff being appointed. In fact, the Laptop project salary costs decreased by £1206 through reduced hours.

10. Members would also like more information on the increased costs of:-

a) Cost of travel expenses

a) Travel expenses relate to the roles above. Travel costs between 2005 and 2006 decreased, not increased as stated:

Development and Volunteer Bureau - £505

Laptop - £1560 (catered for in Lottery grant)

Young Carers - £23

Community Transport - £195 (now separate as Wyvern CT)

Funding - NIL

b) The increase of postage

b) Postage cost rises and increased membership of RAVS. Part of the role of RAVS is to keep our member organisations advised and consulted.

c) Vehicle expenses

c) This is Community Transport and now separate under Wyvern CT. However, see 9 (b) above re. Vehicle Renewal Fund as £11000 relates to this. The remaining increase of £2239 is for increased fuel costs and service costs – i.e. more members means more journeys and mileage.

d) Mini-bus hire

d) This is Community Transport and now separate under Wyvern CT. However, when Community Transport needed a bus due the vehicle being off the road, e.g. servicing, a minibus from another charity was 'hired' under the Brokerage arrangement.