



Chief Executive's Department
Civic Centre
HARTLEPOOL

7 November 2013

Councillors Ainslie, C Akers-Belcher, S Akers-Belcher, Atkinson, Barclay, Beck, Brash, Cook, Cranney, Dawkins, Fisher, Fleet, Gibbon, Griffin, Hall, Hargreaves, Hill, Jackson, James, Lauderdale, A E Lilley, G Lilley, Loynes, Martin-Wells, Dr. Morris, Payne, Richardson, Robinson, Shields, Simmons, Sirs, Tempest and Thompson.

Madam or Sir,

You are hereby summoned to attend an Extraordinary meeting of the COUNCIL to be held on TUESDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2013 AT 7.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool to consider the subjects set out in the attached agenda.

The meeting has been convened in accordance with Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972 and Council Procedure Rule 3 following the receipt of a requisition in the following terms –

'Sadly, given the state of the financial difficulties that Local Government finds itself having to deal with, we recognise that it would be impossible for the voluntary and community sector not to have taken a cut in funding this year, along with many other services we provide. We further acknowledge that regrettably it will probably happen again next year too.

However, given the importance of the voluntary sector to the people of the town, many of whom are depending more and more on their services and support, we have grave concerns about the proposed 100% cut in funding to the sector's only infrastructure body - something which appears not to be the case in the other Tees Valley areas.

The knock-on effect of these cuts on other voluntary sector groups, and the ability of the sector to bring in other much-needed and necessary funds, is of particular concern and Council is therefore requested to discuss these issues and see if there is a way that it can fund the only infrastructure body to some extent.'

Councillor Hargreaves
Councillor Brash
Councillor Dawkins
Councillor Lauderdale

Councillor G Lilley
Councillor Gibbon
Councillor Thompson
Councillor A Lilley

Yours faithfully

D Stubbs
Chief Executive

EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL AGENDA



Tuesday 19 November 2013

at 7.00 pm

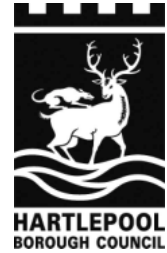
**in the Council Chamber,
Civic Centre, Hartlepool.**

1. To receive apologies from absent members.
2. To receive any declarations of interest from Members.
3. To deal with the business specified in the summons.
4. To receive the Chief Executive's Business Report (*to follow*)



EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL

19 November 2013



Report of: Chief Executive

Subject: Business Report

Community Pool Programme Allocation 2014/15

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The report considered by the Finance and Policy Committee in relation to the 'Community Pool Programme Allocation 2014/15' (**Appendix A**) was one of series of detailed reports being considered by individual Service Committees as part of the 2014/15 budget process. The Finance and Policy Committee report included the following recommendations, which were then reflected in the minutes (**Appendix B**): -
- 1.2
1. Finance and Policy Committee are requested to note the content of the report and progress of the Community Pool Programme to date.
 2. Finance and Policy Committee are requested to consider the following for approval:
 - i) The proposed allocation of budget as set out in Table 1.
 - ii) Changing the Category 2 (Credit Union Support) from a contract to a grant.
 - iii) Maximum level of grants available reduced to £10,000 for Category 4.
 - iv) Change the criteria of Category 4 grants to link directly to the Child Poverty Strategy action plan.
 - v) Allocation of any underspend in Category 5 from the 2013/14 budget should be allocated to Category 5 (A and B) in 2014/15.
 - 3 Seek guidance from Finance and Policy Committee on whether the criteria for Category 4 grants should link to any other strategies in relation to Family Poverty.
- 1.3 In accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework procedures defined in the Constitution all decision on the proposed 2014/15 budget are first considered by the Finance and Policy Committee, prior to final proposals being referred to full Council. The key steps in this process are as follows:

- 20.12.13 – Finance and Policy Committee – consideration of a report providing an update on the impact of the provisional 2014/15 Local Government Finance Settlement on the Council's financial position;
- 31.01.14 – Finance and Policy Committee – consideration of consultation feedback on budget proposals and approval of final 2014/15 budget proposal to be referred to full Council;
- 06.02.14 – Council – consideration of Budget and Policy Proposals for 2014/15 proposed by the Finance and Policy Committee.

1.4 In terms of consideration of the Community Pool Programme Allocation for 2014/15 at tonight's Council meeting Members can either:

- Provide comments for consideration by the Finance and Policy Committee at the meeting on 20th December 2013; or
- Defer commenting on this issue until the Council meeting on 6th February 2013.

1.5 At this stage the Chief Finance Officer has advised that full Council cannot make a determination on the level of funding provided for any services for 2014/15 until the Government have provided the actual grant allocations for 2014/15 and the impact on the budget forecasts has been assessed. Therefore, all decisions on funding allocations for individual services, including the Community Pool, for 2014/15 will be taken as part of the process for considering and approving the 2014/15 Budget and Policy Framework in February 2014.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Council's instructions are requested.

3. CONTACT OFFICER

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FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

18th October 2013



Report of: Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods

Subject: COMMUNITY POOL PROGRAMME ALLOCATION
2014/15

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Key Decision test i and ii applies. Forward Plan Reference No. RN20/13

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To present proposal and seek approval from Finance and Policy Committee on the allocation of the Community Pool Programme Allocation for 2014/15.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Following a complete review of the Community Pool Programme in 2011/12 and agreement from Cabinet on 21st November 2011 the programme for 2012/13 and 2013/14 has been allocated through five specific categories detailed below:

- Category 1 – The provision of universal welfare benefits and advice;
- Category 2 – The provision of universal credit union support;
- Category 3 – Capacity and resource building in the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS);
- Category 4 – The provision of town-wide specialist and support services;
- Category 5 – The provision of development / investment and emergency grants.

3.2 In 2012/13 a formal procurement tendering process was undertaken to award categories 1, 2 and 3 via contracts, the remaining budget was allocated to grants through categories 4 and 5, the value of this was approximately £150,000. The overall budget for Community Pool in 2012/13 was £403,000, this supported the delivery of the three contracts, supported 9 VCS groups with core funding costs (Category 4), supported 3 VCS organisations to deal with emergency situations and enabled a VCS organisation to undertake a development and investment project.

Appendix A

- 3.3 A number of revisions were implemented to the delivery of the Community Pool Programme 2013/14 to reflect lessons learnt in delivering the programme in the previous year, these were agreed by Cabinet on 7th January 2013. The overall budget allocation for this financial year has been in line with the previous year and following positive outcomes closely monitored by performance management frameworks, the 3 contracts were extended in line with the conditions of the original contract awarded. In addition to the continued support of the 3 contract, 11 VCS organisations have been supported with grants towards core costs and 2 grants have been allocated through Category 5 to date. There is a remaining unallocated budget for Category 5 as applications are accepted throughout the year.
- 3.4 Given the extreme financial pressure that the Local Authority is currently facing all budgets are currently under review. The Community Pool budget has been identified as a proposed saving area and it was agreed at Finance and Policy Committee on 23rd August 2013, that a further report would be presented outlining the allocation proposal against a reduced Community Pool budget of £220,000.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 Table 1, details the proposed allocated budget to categories of the Community Pool for the programme delivery in 2014/15, in line with the budget allocation suggested (outlined in section 3.4). Sections 4.2 to 4.6 of this report outline in more detail the changes that are proposed to the current allocation of Community Pool in order to deliver the programme with the reduced available budget.

TABLE 1: Community Pool Proposed Budget Allocation 2014/15

Category	Purpose	Existing Procurement Method	Proposed 2014-15 Budget (£)	Proposed Procurement Method
Category 1	The provision of universal welfare benefits and advice	Contract	110,000	Contract
Category 2	The provision of universal credit union support	Contract	35,000	Grant
Category 3	Capacity and resource building in the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS)	Contract	0	N/A
Category 4	The provision of town-wide specialist and support services	Grants	75,000	Grants
Category 5	The provision of development / investment and emergency grants.	Grants	0	N/A
		Total	220,000	

4.2 Services to be commissioned via contracts in 2014-15

Category 1 – The provision of universal welfare benefits and advice; this service is currently delivered by West View Advice and Resource Centre, who were successful in securing the contract in April 2012. The original term of the contract was 12 months; this was continued for an additional 12 months in line with the terms of the original contract following positive monitoring through performance management framework in place. It should be noted that this existing agreement can not be extended beyond the current term. The provision of this service remains a priority given the ongoing multitude of changes to the Welfare Benefits system and the imminent introduction of Universal Credit. The proposed level of budget for 2014-15 is in line with the current budget allocated to the contract.

4.3 Services to be commissioned via grants in 2014-15

Category 2 – The provision of universal credit union support. The level of funding proposed to support the Credit Union provision in Hartlepool in 2014-15 is a reduction on the level of the current contract with Hartlepool Credit Union. The aim of this service is to increase the financial inclusion of residents of Hartlepool by providing sound financial advice, debt management techniques, and legislative guidance at venues that are accessible across the town, in addition to offering affordable financial services to residents. The products and practical solutions provided through this service complement the advice service which will continue to be delivered through Category 1. This service has been contracted for the last two years, Hartlepool Credit Union are the only provider that is able to deliver this service given the specialist nature of the service specification. It is therefore proposed that the most appropriate way to commission this service is through a grant (proposed level outlined in Table 1) with set conditions and output targets that will be monitored regularly.

4.4 Category 4 - The provision of town-wide specialist and support services. This element of the Community Pool programme has made grants available for VCS organisations to apply for contributions towards the core running costs. Successful grant recipients are required to meet a set criteria and demonstrate how they fit in with key aims of the Community Pool, clearly reflecting the aspirations, aims, objectives and priorities of the Council's Community Strategy, Child Poverty Strategy, Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy as well as the work of the Financial Inclusion Partnership. The proposal for the continuation of the grant programme is to focus the criteria around organisations that specifically deliver services linked to family poverty; and it is proposed that this could be measurable against the Action Plan of the Child Poverty Strategy.

4.5 The suggested budget allocation to these grants is £75,000; this is approximately 50% of the allocation to Category 4 in 2012/13 and 2013/14. A maximum grant amount of £15,000 was implemented in 2013/14 with the intention of enabling the support of more VCS groups through the funding programme; this was achieved with 2 additional grants allocated this year. To maximise the benefit of this limited budget, a further reduction in the maximum grant available could be considered, for example reducing the level of individual grants available to

£10,000 would equate to 8 grants (up to 7 receiving the maximum grant available) being allocated in 2014/15.

- 4.6 Following the reconfiguration of the Community Pool allocation as outlined above the following categories of the Community Pool would cease in 2014/15:
- Category 3 – Capacity and resource building in the Voluntary and Community
 - Category 5 – The provision of development / investment and emergency grants.

5. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- 5.1 The level of reduction proposed to the Community Pool programme will have an impact on the organisations currently supported. All funding arrangements currently in place are due to end on 31st March 2014 and therefore all organisations currently supported from the programme through contracts and grants are aware of the cessation of the current arrangements. Council Officers have been notifying VCS organisations through monitoring and performance management meetings that all budgets are under review in response to the budget pressures that the Council is currently facing and it has been reiterated to VCS groups that there are no guarantees on future funding availability through the Community Pool programme. There are however examples of VCS organisations who have received support year on year through the Community Pool, within the current programme and through the previous format (prior to the review). Impact assessments have been prepared for Categories 2-5, where changes to the allocation of budget has been identified; these are attached as appendices. The key areas of impact are outlined in Sections 5.2 – 5.9.
- 5.2 Category 2 – Discussions with Hartlepool Credit Union at performance management and monitoring meeting suggest that the organisation are positioning themselves to become more sustainable and have/are in the process of developing a number of projects to help them achieve this. From the information provided to monitoring officers, a reduction in the level of support to Hartlepool Credit Union would be manageable from the organisation's perspective. The terms of the service would require negotiation given the proposed reduction in the level of support and change to a grant from existing contract arrangements. Monitoring of the service would continue and terms and conditions will be clearly outlined in the offer letter.
- 5.3 Category 3 – This service has been contracted to HVDA in 2012/13 and 2013/14, the aim of the service is to support and develop the VCS across the Borough and to simplify the Council's relationship with the VCS. The organisation support the VCS in Hartlepool and funding from the current Community Pool programme directly supports the service provision outlined in **Appendix 1**. The funding directly contributes towards the Information Officer Post, delivery of training programme to the sector (sub-contracted to SkillShare), administration salaries and core costs, contributing to the wider running of the service. Potential impacts of the cessation of Community Pool support include:
- HVDA are the conduit to sharing information with the VCS, they manage a database for the sector, which is part of the existing contract.

4. Appendix A

- Reduction in training and capacity building courses available to the VCS.
 - HVDA offer a strategic and independent voice for the sector.
 - Contract directly linked to delivering against the objectives and undertakings of the Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy and risk of breaching commitments within this strategy if service is removed.
 - Reduction in support to VCS groups requiring advice and guidance.
 - Reduction in resources allocated towards capacity building of organisations in the sector.
- 5.4 The Manager of HVDA has met with the Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration & Neighbourhoods to discuss the potential impacts of the 50% reduction to the Community Pool. A response from HVDA is attached as **Appendix 2**.
- 5.5 Category 4 – This Category has been significantly oversubscribed for the last 2 years with a budget of approximately £150,000 per annum. The reduction in the available budget, reduction in the maximum level of grant available and refocus to services linked to family poverty will result in a smaller number of VCS groups being supported by the Community Pool for core costs. Careful consideration was given to the introduction of a maximum grant level in 2013/14, with maximising the benefit to number of groups supported being measured against the impact that can be achieved with the level of grant being offered. The average grant through Category 4 in 2012/13 was £16,836.53, compared to an average grant on £13,462.45 following the introduction of maximum grant level in 2013/14. A further reduction in the maximum grant available will require VCS organisations to seek a higher percentage of match funding to sustain services.
- 5.6 These changes could potentially result in an increase in the number of requests from VCS groups to assist them to look for funding to continue their services. This support is currently sought directly from HVDA or HBC's Community Regeneration and Development Team. Grants are allocated through a competitive commissioning process, the change in criteria may result in some VCS organisations no longer being eligible to apply to the Community Pool for this support, and this could result in some organisations being at risk of closure, **Appendix 3** shows the allocation of Category 4 grants in 2013/14 and demonstrates the diverse nature and remit of the VCS organisations currently supported through this programme.
- 5.7 Category 5 – no budget has been allocated to Category 5 through the budget proposals. Currently Category 5 offers two grants of up to £5,000. These are for Development and Investment Grants, providing an opportunity for VCS groups to develop their organisation focusing towards longer term sustainability and Emergency Grants, which support VCS groups in immediate risk of closure. There will be no facility to offer this kind of support through the proposed 2014/15 allocations.
- 5.8 In addition to the outlined budget in Table 1, there is currently unallocated funding in the budget for Category 5 grants for 2013/14, applications can be accepted at anytime and will be submitted for consideration for approval as received. As there is no proposed allocation to Category 5 in 2013/14, it is proposed that any

remaining unallocated budget at the end of the financial year is used to continue grants available through Categories 5A and 5B in 2014-15. There is the possibility that the budget may be fully allocated by the end of the year, budget availability will be known in March 2014.

- 5.9 As identified in Section 3.2, there will be a requirement to re-tender the contract for the provision of universal welfare benefits and advice for 2014/15. To minimise the impact to service users the procurement process will commence imminently following the approval of the Community Pool allocation by Finance and Policy Committee, this will allow for continuity of service should the successful provider be different from the current provider.

6. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Detailed in Sections 6.2 to 6.4 are the risk implications in revising the current Community Pool programme allocations under the proposed reduced budget of £220,000.
- 6.2 Category 2- The proposal is to reduce the current level of funding by approximately 50% and to commission with the current provider via a grant for the reasons detailed in 4.3. Whilst the organisation has detailed through contract monitoring that they are positioning themselves to mitigate against the impact of a reduction in Local Authority funding with the development of their service through other opportunities, there is the risk that the reduction in the level of the funding available could correlate with a reduction in service. Given this reduction, officers will meet with the service provider to ensure that clear and measurable outputs and outcomes are agreed, these will be set out clearly in the terms of the grant agreement and monitored through regular meetings. It is however anticipated that outputs and outcomes directly attributed to Local Authority investment would be reduced.
- 6.3 Category 3 – The proposal to cease funding for the contract to directly provide capacity/ resource building has potential risk implications for the relationship between the Local Authority and VCS organisations in Hartlepool. The aim of the contract which is currently in place is for the *‘successful provider will play a lead role in enabling sound collaborative and partnership working between the Council and the VCS, which takes into consideration all levels of the VCS including larger service delivery organisations, along with smaller community groups and individual volunteers within the community’*. The detail of the current delivery and potential impacts are presented in 5.3. In addition to the impact that the cessation of the contract will have on the Voluntary and Community Sector, it is a likely outcome of the reduction of grants available to the sector through the proposed Community Pool allocations that additional pressure will be placed upon providers for support and advice as an increasing number of organisations are in search of funding to sustain their service as outlined in 5.5 and 5.6.
- 6.4 Category 4 – The addition of the focus to family poverty could potentially exclude some organisations from being eligible to apply to the Community Pool for grant funding. This could be mitigated through awareness raising with the Voluntary

and Community Sector organisations following the decisions on the allocation of Community Pool funding for 2014/15. In addition, there will be less funding available for core costs on a local level in the VCS, potentially resulting in additional pressures on the VCS and Local Authority as referenced in 5.6, as more VCS organisations approach the same external funding providers for support. There is also the risk that some organisations will be unable to source funding, potentially resulting in a reduction in VCS organisations delivering services in Hartlepool. With the level of funding available, at least 3 less organisations will be supported through this funding programme than in 2013/14.

- 6.5 Category 5 – The allocation of any grants through this Category 5 in 2014/15 is dependent on there being an underspend in 2013/14; the continuation of Category 5 will be determined in March 2014. The nature of the emergency grant allocated through Category 5B currently presents a greater risk for the Council with regard to expenditure. Additional checks and balances were implemented in 2013/14 and the process remains under constant review as part of the management of the fund to ensure that improvements can be made and Council funds are expended in line with the purpose of the grant criteria.
- 6.6 For the continued delivery of contracts and grants through the Community Pool programme the risk implication for Hartlepool Borough Council is minimised as there are checks and monitoring as part of the performance management and verification processes which protect expenditure by ensuring that agreed outcomes are being met and services delivered.

7. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The proposed saving demonstrated through the Community Pool allocation will contribute directly to the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 7.2 To safeguard the Council's investment and minimise risk, it is recommended that where grant aid is approved, the frequency of payments should be determined on a case by case basis dependent on the level of grant and purpose of the funding. In all cases it is proposed that an element of the grant funding is paid in advance to support the projects.
- 7.3 Thorough monitoring and performance management processes are in place for the delivery of contracts and grants to ensure that the projects are performing as expected. The frequency of monitoring and performance management will be determined on a case by case basis, the detail of which will be set out in individual offer letters ensuring that organisations are aware of monitoring requirements from the outset of the project. Contracts will be monitored quarterly; details of the scope of this will be included in any tender specification and subsequent contract conditions.
- 7.4 The overall savings proposals considered by the Finance and Policy Committee on 2 August 2013 totalled £4.376m and substantially funded the forecast 2014/15 budget gap. If this saving is not implemented in 2014/15 alternative savings will need to be identified.

8. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 There are no known direct legal implications at this stage in relation to Community Pool.

9. PROCUREMENT CONSIDERATION

- 9.1 Set procurement processes are required to be undertaken in order to commission services via the Community Pool. Timescales have already been discussed with the Corporate Procurement Team to ensure that upon agreement of the Community Pool allocation by Finance and Policy Committee, commissioning of the categories can commence to guarantee commencement of services by 1st April 2014.
- 9.2 A further report will be presented to Finance and Policy Committee, outlining how the Community Pool Programme will be delivered following approval of the allocations.

10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 10.1 Impact assessments have been prepared for the categories within the Community Pool, where there are proposed changes identified within this report. These are attached as **Appendix 4**.

11. SECTION 17 OF THE CRIME & DISORDER ACT 1998 CONSIDERATIONS

- 11.1 There are no Section 17 implications to this report.

12. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 12.1 There are no known staff implications at this stage in relation to Community Pool.

13. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 13.1 Finance and Policy Committee are requested to note the content of the report and progress of the Community Pool Programme to date.
- 13.2 Finance and Policy Committee are requested to consider the following for approval:
1. The proposed allocation of budget as set out in Table 1.
 2. Changing the Category 2 (Credit Union Support) from a contract to a grant.
 3. Maximum level of grants available reduced to £10,000 for Category 4.
 4. Change the criteria of Category 4 grants to link directly to the Child Poverty Strategy action plan.

5. Allocation of any underspend in Category 5 from the 2013/14 budget should be allocated to Category 5 (A and B) in 2014/15.

- 13.3 Seek guidance from Finance and Policy Committee on whether the criteria for Category 4 grants should link to any other strategies in relation to Family Poverty.

14. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 14.1 Report requested by Finance and Policy Committee on 23rd August 2013.

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 14.1 (i). Item 5.1 from Cabinet on 21st November 2011.
(ii). Minutes from Cabinet on 21st November 2011.
(iii). Item 6.1 from Cabinet on 6th February 2012.
(iv). Minutes from Cabinet on 6th February 2012.
(v). Item 5.1 from Cabinet on 20th February 2012.
(vi). Minutes from Cabinet on 20th February 2012.
(vii) Item 5.12 from Cabinet on 19th March 2012.
(viii) Minutes from Cabinet on 19th March 2012.
(ix) Item 1.2 from Mayor's Portfolio on 21st May 2012.
(x) Minutes from Mayor's Portfolio on 21st May 2012.
(xi) Item 5.1 from Cabinet on 7th January 2013.
(xii) Minutes from Cabinet on 7th January 2013.
(xiii) Item 5.2 from Cabinet on 15th April 2013.
(xiv) Minutes from Cabinet on 15th April 2013.
(xv) Item 4.1 from Finance & Policy Committee on 23rd August 2013.
(xvi) Minutes from Finance & Policy Committee on 23rd August 2013.
(xvii) Item 4.2 from Finance & Policy Committee on 18th September 2013.
(xviii) Minutes from Finance & Policy Committee on 18th September 2013.

16. CONTACT OFFICER

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Appendix A

APPENDIX 1

- Maintain an up to date and accessible list of VCS organisations which includes contact details and information on the services they each provide within Hartlepool;
- Establish and support a framework within which the VCS are able to work together as a sector to:
 - make the best use of resources available;
 - explore opportunities for collaborative working between VCS organisations including consortia approaches as appropriate;
 - share expertise, skills and knowledge within the Sector in Hartlepool.
- Provide support, training and development opportunities and promote grants programmes to VCS groups across the Borough to improve their ability to access national, regional and local funding;
- Ensure that training opportunities are accessible and relevant to the VCS and meet the needs identified by the VCS within Hartlepool. This will include specific training and development work to effectively enable the VCS to tender for areas of service delivery;
- Provide advice and guidance to VCS groups at all stages of development for example book keeping and legal requirements including employment law;
- Arrange elections for VCS representation as required through an open and transparent recruitment process in accordance with the Compact as set out within the VCS Strategy that is currently being developed;
- Provide training and capacity building programmes for both groups of and individual volunteers, increasing professionalism, credibility and accountability;
- Provide advice and guidance to VCS Groups on the recruitment and support of Volunteers;
- Offer a single gateway through which the Local Authority can consult and involve the VCS;
- Understand the needs and concerns of the VCS and be able to champion and promote the vies of the VCS to public sector partners and others locally, regionally and nationally;

Impact of Community Pool 2013/14

1. 3 Groups were given contracts (Hartlepool Credit Union; HVDA; West View Advice & Resource Centre) and 11 groups were given grants (ADDvance; Epilepsy Outlook; Hart Gables; Hartlepool Access Group; Hartlepool Bereavement Service; Hartlepool People Centre; Hartlepool United Community Sports Foundation; Peoples Relief of Pressure; Salaam Community Centre; The Wharton Trust; West View Project).
2. All groups were sent an email requesting the following information:
 - A sentence on each of the key services you deliver and their impact.
 - Any extra funding you bring into Hartlepool to complement the funding you receive via the Council
 - How many different people benefit from your group/service each year?
 - If you work with the following client groups, what proportion of your clients fall into the categories highlighted below:
 - Age of clients 0-18 18-60 60+
 - People With Disabilities
 - BME
 - LGBT
 - How many paid staff do you employ?
 - How many volunteers work for your group?
 - Please give an estimate of their average contribution of each volunteer in hours per month.
 - What would be the impact on your group of a 50% reduction in funding by the Council?
3. This report focuses on 4 points only: the number of beneficiaries; the number of paid staff; the number of volunteers and their average contribution.
4. 11 groups replied (as highlighted above); 9 giving full answers and 2 giving only the total number of paid staff.
5. The total beneficiaries identified were 10,750 (9 groups). Numbers ranged from 200 to 3,500.
6. The total number of paid staff was 57 (11 groups). It was not identified whether these posts were full time or part time.
7. The total number of volunteers working for the group was 111 (9 groups).
8. The total volunteer hours per month were 4,916 (9 groups).
9. If the total volunteer hours were paid at an average of the minimum wage (£6.31; £5.03; £3.72 divided by 3) which is £5.02 this would equate to £24,678.32 per month or £296,139.84 per year.

4. Appendix A APPENDIX 3

Hartlepool Peoples Centre

£15,000.00

Hartlepool Peoples Centre was established in 1983 and will celebrate its 30th anniversary this year. It was the first voluntary community centre of its kind in Hartlepool and was set up to provide the community with a base for educational and recreational classes and as a support service for families in Hartlepool devastated by the closure of the steel and shipbuilding industries. The centre is offers a base for a number of VCS groups offering a range of services.

The Wharton Trust

£10,000.00

The Annexe continues to support individuals, groups and their wider community of Hartlepool by supporting people to access employment and training opportunities, promoting healthier lifestyles amongst all ages, engages children and young people in positive activities, offers a collective voice for the community through their role as Local Trusted Organisation for the Dyke House Big Local. Also host the FoodShare project.

Hartlepool United Community Sports Foundation

£15,000.00

Community Pool funding will contribute towards the employment of a Community Support Worker (£17,000) which will help to deliver out reach services in addition to the services Hartlepool United Community Sports Foundation currently provide, which including Computer courses, employment programme specialising in supporting people who have a disability, training programmes to develop confidence and communication skills, children's mentoring programme, and a young carers session for young people aged between 12yrs and 18yrs.

Epilepsy Outlook

£9,459.00

Advice and support service for people with epilepsy, their families and carers, project also provide epilepsy awareness training. The organisation provides a supported environment for volunteers with disabilities and mental health issues (about 70 people benefit from this per year). The Volunteer Development Programme has a specific focus on volunteers who would find it difficult to volunteer elsewhere.

ADDvance

£14,662.00

Project is for the provision of a youth service, including young people with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) attending on a weekly basis, to the organisations centre at Southbrooke farm in Hartlepool.

Hartlepool Access Group

£15,000.00

Mobility equipment loan scheme, assisted shopping and befriending service, disability access audits, disability awareness training, mobility equipment training.

Salaam Community Centre

£15,000.00

The Salaam Centre is the only BME advice and guidance support project within the town. The centre offers an open to all drop in service daily between 10am and 5pm. In addition to this the centre provides training courses and leisure facilities aimed at enhancing the lives of diverse communities across the town. The centre offers free and affordable training to local residents and offers volunteer opportunities to help people gain skills.

West View Project

£14,690.00

The project is to employ a Community Development Worker whose role it will be to specifically develop and extend the services that are operating from Miers Avenue Community Centre; the centre was transferred into the ownership of the organisation and partners from the Council. The employment of the Worker will enable a focused development of links between local residents and the centre and help to support this transfer process.

Hartlepool PROP

£10,000.00

Provide a 'drop in' service open seven days a week at town centre base. Services include meals; refreshments; support in the form of help with form-filling, benefits assistance, emotional help; information; a gymnasium and therapies. The service is focused particularly at people with wellbeing and mental health issues.

4. Appendix A

Hartlepool Bereavement Service

£15,000.00

Hartlepool Bereavement Service is the first point of call for individuals and families following bereavement, when clients first access the agency they are often in a crisis situation with a wide range of complex needs. The service includes emotional, practical and social support.

Hart Gables

£14,276.00

The aim of the organisation is to provide advice, support and guidance to the lesbian, gay, bisexual & transgender (LGBT) community across the Tees-Valley area. The focus is to provide access to services to LGBT people who feel socially isolated, do not know what support is available and often lack family support. The organisation offers an advocacy and support service that informs people of their rights and helps build confidence and self-esteem within 1:2:1 and group sessions.

Appendix A**APPENDIX 4**

Department	Division	Section	Owner/Officer
<i>Regeneration & Neighbourhoods</i>	<i>Neighbourhood Management</i>	<i>Community Regeneration & Development Team</i>	<i>Fiona Stanforth – Community Regeneration Officer Adele Wilson – Community Regeneration & Development Coordinator David Frame – Neighbourhood Manager</i>
Function/Service	<p><i>Community Pool – Category 2 Universal Credit Union Support</i></p> <p><i>This service is currently funded through the Community Pool and commissioned through a contract. The aim of this service is to increase the financial inclusion of residents of Hartlepool by providing sound financial advice, debt management techniques, and legislative guidance at venues that are accessible across the town.</i></p> <p><i>Proposal is to reduce the level of funding to this service to £35,000, and amend the commissioning approach to a grant. This recommendation is due to the overall proposed reduction to the Community Pool budget allocation for 2014/15 to £220,000, approximately 50% of the previous year's allocation. It is also proposed to change to a grant commissioning process; this is due to there only being one provider that is able to deliver this service in Hartlepool.</i></p>		
Information Available	<p><i>As part of the management and monitoring programme for the existing contract, quarterly meetings take place with the current provider. Information is collated on demographics and returned on a quarterly basis, this includes collation of user information in the form of client profiles, including;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Age</i> <i>• Ethnicity</i> <i>• Gender</i> <i>• Marriage & Civil Partnership</i> <i>• Disability</i> <i>• Employment</i> <p><i>Collection of this data helps to monitor who is accessing the service and in turn assess impact in terms of equality and diversity.</i></p> <p><i>The contract specification details the local and national context in relation to financial and credit union services, information included to for the service to be based around outlined the following:</i></p> <p><i>National Context: Given the financial climate, financial exclusion is an increasing issue for people. Unemployment is rising and there are increasing numbers of people considered to be living in poverty or financial hardship. In these austere times it is important that people have access to high quality financial services that are non stigmatising and available in local communities.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• The poorest families in the UK can pay higher prices for</i> 		

Appendix A

	<p>basic necessities like gas, electricity, credit. Recent research highlights that this position is worsening.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The costs that poor families bear for obtaining cash and credit, and for purchasing goods and services can amount to a ‘poverty premium’ of around £1,280 pa – or 9% of the disposable income of the average family. <p>Findings from a recent Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) concluded that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 60% had heard of credit unions but only 26% knew what they do;• Low interest is by far the most important factor for people when deciding on a loan;• Some of societies most vulnerable families do not have access to a bank account;• Similarly, the interest rate or dividend remains the most important factor when people decide on a savings product;• Financially excluded consumers are most likely to want a bill payment service as part of their financial/bank account; <p>Local Context Hartlepool Borough Council, and its partners, are wholly committed to reducing poverty across the borough and have produced strategies to address this issue. These local strategies have the following aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enabling families to break out of inter-generational cycles of deprivation using a family centred approach;• Ensuring all families across the borough have support at the earliest possible stage to prevent families reaching crises. <p>There are currently 31.3 % of children living in poverty in Hartlepool which is a rise from previous years of approximately 1%. This service will contribute to a reduction in child poverty by ensuring that families have access to high quality flexible financial services.</p> <p>In addition, statistics show that in Hartlepool:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4.65% of residents do not have access to banking services;• 47% of all households have a “poor credit” rating;• Applications for debt relief orders and bankruptcies are increasing rapidly;• 5 out of every 9 households fall into groups described as “On the breadline” “Credit Hungry” or “Elderly deprivation.” <p>In addition equality and diversity considerations are integral to the delivery of this service.</p>	
Relevance	Age	
	None	
	Disability	
	None	
	Gender Re-assignment	
	None	
Identify which strands are relevant to the area you are reviewing or changing		

Appendix A

	Race			
	None			
	Religion			
	None			
	Gender			
	None			
	Sexual Orientation			
	None			
	Marriage & Civil Partnership			
	None			
	Pregnancy & Maternity			
	None			
Information Gaps	<p>There are no information gaps. No specific consultation on reduction / changes to contract level. However there has been an ongoing dialogue with current provider discussing the Councils current the financial situation and the organisations sustainability beyond the term of the contract.</p>			
What is the Impact	<p>The impact in the change to the terms in the way that the funding is commissioned and the level of funding proposed towards the service, will potentially affect the level of service that is available to residents, the organisation is positioning themselves to mitigate against this. There is no anticipated detrimental impact to equality and diversity considerations in relation to delivery of the service, this will be monitored as outlined in the actions.</p>			
Addressing the impact	<p>The outcome of the impact assessment may be one or more of the following four outcomes; You must clearly set out your justification for the outcome/s.</p> <p>1. No Impact- No Major Change Proposed changes to the budget will be agreed by Finance and Policy Committee, this is inline with the agreement by Finance and Policy Committee to agree consideration of the Community Pool Programme Allocations with an overall reduced budget of £220,000.</p> <p>As outlined above the potential impact of the changes will be to the scope of the service, equality and diversity considerations will be encompassed within the offer letter . Delivery of the proposals will be monitored closely and there will be a clear commissioning process in place to ensure that there is no impact in relation to the protected characteristics.</p> <p>2. Adjust/Change Policy</p> <p>3. Adverse Impact but Continue</p> <p>4. Stop/Remove Policy/Proposal</p>			
Actions				
<p>It will be useful to record and monitor any actions resulting from your assessment to ensure that they have had the intended effect and that the outcomes have been achieved.</p>				
Action identified	Responsible Officer	By When	How will this be evaluated?	
Equality &	Fiona Stanforth	April 2014	Through quarterly monitoring	

Appendix A

Diversity clearly outlined in the offer letter.			with service provider.
Revisit Impact assessment to review if there has been an impact to service.	Fiona Stanforth	November 2014	Through quarterly monitoring with service provider.

Date sent to Equality Rep for publishing	26.09.2013
Date Published	00/00/00
Date Assessment Carried out	00/00/00

Appendix A

Department	Division	Section	Owner/Officer
Regeneration & Neighbourhoods	Neighbourhood Management	Community Regeneration & Development Team	Fiona Stanforth – Community Regeneration Officer Adele Wilson – Community Regeneration & Development Coordinator David Frame – Neighbourhood Manager
Function/Service	<p>Community Pool – Category 4 Town-wide Specialist & Support Services</p> <p>The current provision through this Category of the Community Pool programme is for core cost grant support for Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations in Hartlepool that deliver town-wide specialist and support services which meet the aims of the Community Pool. Revisions have been made to the terms of the grants in 2013/14 following delivery of the programme in 2012/13, the intention of these revisions was to maximise the number of organisations benefitting from the funding available. £150,000 was available to fund Town-wide Specialist and Support services grants in 2013/14.</p> <p>The aim of the grant in its current form is to provide core costs to services that provide personal support to individuals.</p> <p>With the cuts outlined for the Community Pool programme in 2014/15, revisions are required to the current format of the programme. The proposal which is yet to be considered and agreed by Finance and Policy Committee is to reduce the level of budget available for the allocation of grants for core costs to VCS groups to £75,000. In addition to a reduction in the overall budget, it is proposed that the maximum grant available will be reduced to £10,000; this will allow support of 8 organisations through grants.</p> <p>Under the current terms of the grant programme, projects must fit with the Community Pool objectives, which are to reflect the aspirations, aims, objectives and priorities of the Council's Community Strategy, Child Poverty Strategy, Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy as well as the work of the Financial Inclusion Partnership.</p> <p>The proposal for the delivery of the grant programme in 2014/15 is to refocus towards supporting projects that aim to impact upon Family Poverty, potentially linking projects directly to the Child Poverty Strategy Action Plan.</p>		
Information Available	<p>As part of the management and monitoring programme of the grant programme, terms of the individual offer letters detail clear targets and monitoring requirements. Meetings take place with all of the grant recipients on a regular basis throughout the term of the grant. Monitoring information is collated in relation to outputs and verification takes place to ensure grant spend is as expected. In 2012/13, 9 VCS organisations in Hartlepool received funding through the Community Pool. Following revisions to the grant</p>		

Appendix A

	<p>programme including the introduction of a maximum grant in 2013/14, 11 VCS organisations were supported with grants from this funding stream. A number of actions were put in place to ensure that VCS groups were fully aware of changes to the programme this year; this included mail outs, press releases and a training and information session.</p> <p>All grant recipients are aware that the current funding term is until March 2014, and that there is no guarantee of funding being available beyond this period in the current grant form. Grants are allocated on a competitive basis, and therefore there is no guarantee on receiving funding via this Category of the Community Pool; for example some VCS groups were successful in receiving a grant in 2012/13, were unsuccessful in 2013/14 and vice versa.</p> <p>Information is collated on demographics and returned on a quarterly basis as part of output collation, this helps to monitor who is accessing the service and in turn assess impact in terms of equality and diversity. Monitoring information provided varies between VCS groups.</p>	
Relevance <i>Identify which strands are relevant to the area you are reviewing or changing</i>	Age	✓
	Disability	✓
	Gender Re-assignment	✓
	Race	✓
	Religion	✓
	Gender	✓
	Sexual Orientation	✓
	None	
Information Gaps	Marriage & Civil Partnership	
	None	
	Pregnancy & Maternity	
	None	
<p>There are no information gaps. No specific consultation on reduction / changes to level of funding availability via Category 4 grants. However there has been an ongoing dialogue with current grant recipients discussing the Councils current the financial situation and potential limits to the availability of future funding. Availability of funding for Community Pool grants beyond the current term was also discussed at the information event prior to receiving grant applications this year. Over the last two years a range of services have been supported across Hartlepool, these include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource Centres • Accessibility Services • Services focused towards a specific Health Need • Support services to the LGBT community 		

Appendix A

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support services to the BME community • Support service focuses at specific age groups <p><i>In addition Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency (HVDA) have undertaken an independent assessment on the impact of cuts in the Community Pool on the sector, this demonstrates the current outputs achieved by the organisation who are currently funded via the Community Pool Programme. This information has been presented as an appendix to the Finance and Policy Committee report.</i></p> <p><i>In the grant criteria it is listed that services funded by the Community Pool must be accessible on a town-wide basis and available to any Hartlepool resident that needs to access them.</i></p> <p><i>From the remit of the organisations which have been successful in receiving grant funding over the last two years there are a number that would no longer be eligible to apply for funding support should the criteria be refocused towards Family Poverty. Whilst there is no guarantee of funding and it is dependent on the information provided through the application process this change would mean that some organisations which cater for people in the protected characteristics groups would no longer have the opportunity to apply for this funding.</i></p>
What is the Impact	<p><i>The change in the eligibility criteria for the grants will have a direct impact on groups that don't provide services that are linked to Family Poverty as they will no longer have the opportunity to apply for funding support from the Community Pool, even though there is no guarantee of being successful there has been the opportunity for a greater number of organisations to apply for support previously.</i></p> <p><i>The other main impact of the proposed changes is that less organisations will benefit from the grants available due to the limits to the overall budget. In addition successful applicants will have a requirement to source additional match funding to support core costs to services at the same level as this year due to the reduction in the maximum grant available.</i></p>
Addressing the impact	<p><i>The outcome of the impact assessment may be one or more of the following four outcomes; You must clearly set out your justification for the outcome/s.</i></p> <p>1. No Impact- No Major Change</p> <p>2. Adjust/Change Policy</p> <p>3. Adverse Impact but Continue – <i>Proposed changes to the budget and core costs grant programme will be considered by Finance and Policy Committee, this is inline with the agreement by Finance and Policy Committee to agree consideration of the Community Pool Programme Allocations with an overall reduced budget of £220,000.</i></p> <p><i>The proposal is that there will still be grants available to VCS organisations for core costs although changes to the criteria will affect some organisations eligibility and potentially exclude</i></p>

Appendix A

	<p><i>organisations that specifically provide services for some of the protected characteristics groups.</i></p> <p><i>Impact will be addressed by early notification of any changes to the grant programme as soon as decisions are made. In particular, officers will work with organisations which will be impacted by the changes to the grant funding to support them to seek alternative solutions to sustain their services.</i></p> <p><i>Delivery of the proposals will be monitored closely to ensure that impact in relation to the protected characteristics is minimal.</i></p>
	4. Stop/Remove Policy/Proposal

Actions

It will be useful to record and monitor any actions resulting from your assessment to ensure that they have had the intended effect and that the outcomes have been achieved.

Action identified	Responsible Officer	By When	How will this be evaluated?
Write to all VCS organisations outlining changes to grant provision once agreed.	Fiona Stanforth	November 2013	Responses monitored.
Awareness raising with sector of changes to the grants.	Fiona Stanforth	November 2013 – January 2014	Applications will be monitored.
Revisit impact assessment, post funding decisions on Category 4 in 2014/15.	Fiona Stanforth	June 2014	Information collated via monitoring, analysed against 2013/14 and 2012/13 outputs.

Date sent to Equality Rep for publishing	00/00/00
Date Published	00/00/00
Date Assessment Carried out	00/00/00

Appendix A

Department	Division	Section	Owner/Officer
Regeneration & Neighbourhoods	Neighbourhood Management	Community Regeneration & Development Team	Fiona Stanforth – Community Regeneration Officer Adele Wilson – Community Regeneration & Development Coordinator David Frame – Neighbourhood Manager
Function/Service	<p>Community Pool – Category 3 The provision of Capacity / Resource Building for VCS organisations.</p> <p>This service is currently funded through the Community Pool and commissioned through a contract. The main objective of this service has been to support and develop the Voluntary and Community Sector in Hartlepool, this has included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain an up to date and accessible list of VCS organisations which includes contact details and information on the services they each provide within Hartlepool; • Establish and support a framework within which the VCS are able to work together as a sector to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. make the best use of resources available; 2. explore opportunities for collaborative working between VCS organisations including consortia approaches as appropriate; 3. share expertise, skills and knowledge within the Sector in Hartlepool. • Provide support, training and development opportunities and promote grants programmes to VCS groups across the Borough to improve their ability to access national, regional and local funding; • Ensure that training opportunities are accessible and relevant to the VCS and meet the needs identified by the VCS within Hartlepool. This will include specific training and development work to effectively enable the VCS to tender for areas of service delivery; • Provide advice and guidance to VCS groups at all stages of development for example book keeping and legal requirements including employment law; • Arrange elections for VCS representation as required through an open and transparent recruitment process in accordance with the Compact as set out within the VCS Strategy that is currently being developed; • Provide training and capacity building programmes for both groups of and individual volunteers, increasing professionalism, credibility and accountability; • Provide advice and guidance to VCS Groups on the recruitment and support of Volunteers; • Offer a single gateway through which the Local Authority can consult and involve the VCS; • Understand the needs and concerns of the VCS and be able to champion and promote the views of the VCS to public sector partners and others locally, regionally and 		

Appendix A

	<p><i>nationally.</i></p> <p><i>With the cuts outlined for the Community Pool programme, the proposal is to cease this service in 2014/15.</i></p>
Information Available	<p><i>As part of the management and monitoring programme for the existing contract, quarterly meetings take place with the current provider. Information is collated on demographics and returned on a quarterly basis, this helps to monitor who is accessing the service and in turn assess impact in terms of equality and diversity.</i></p> <p><i>The contract specification details the local and national context in relation to provision of the service, information included for the service to be based around outlined the following:</i></p> <p>National Context: <i>Since the 2010 election the Coalition Government has put a focus on the development of the Big Society, particularly through the introduction of the Localism Act in 2011, centred around:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Community empowerment: giving local councils and neighbourhoods more power to take decisions and shape their areas.</i> <i>Opening up public services: enabling charities, social enterprises, private companies and employee-owned co-operatives to compete to offer high quality services.</i> <i>Social action: encouraging and enabling people to play a more active part in society.</i> <p><i>A range of policies have been designed to make it easier for community groups to make a real difference to their local areas. These policies include the community right to challenge, the community right to buy local assets and Neighbourhood Plans.</i></p> <p><i>They have also demonstrated their commitment to the VCS by signing up to a renewed National Compact. The Compact is an agreement between the Coalition Government, and their associated Non-Departmental Public Bodies, Arms Length Bodies and Executive Agencies, and civil society organisations (CSOs) in England. The agreement aims to ensure that the Government and CSOs work effectively in partnership to achieve common goals and outcomes for the benefit of communities and citizens in England.</i></p> <p>Local Context: <i>Hartlepool has a large and vibrant VCS with Groups ranging from small and informal to large, Borough-wide service providers. VCS organisations provide services that contribute to improving the quality of life of many residents in areas such as health, social care, sport, leisure, culture and the environment. Many residents give their time freely as volunteers to support local organisations.</i></p> <p><i>Hartlepool Borough Council recognises the importance of localism and has a VCS Strategy in place, which is has 3 aims:</i></p> <p>1) The Voluntary & Community Sector contributes to the development of a shared vision and strategic direction</p>

Appendix A

	<p>for Hartlepool. AIM: Ensure that Voluntary and Community Sector organisations are able to comment on and influence public sector strategies and service delivery plans, in order to develop more reliable and robust policies and strategies that better reflect the community's needs and wishes.</p> <p>2) The Voluntary & Community Sector in Hartlepool is strong and prosperous and contributes to the delivery of good public services. AIM: To improve the relationship between public sector partners and the VCS within Hartlepool in managing and using resources to achieve a strong and prosperous VCS that contributes to the delivery of good public services within the town.</p> <p>3) The Voluntary & Community Sector in Hartlepool strengthens communities and neighbourhoods by promoting inclusion and involvement. AIM: To ensure a strong and diverse VCS that promotes inclusion across the town as well as a clearer understanding of community groups within the sector as a whole. The VCS is able to get involved, grow and develop, strengthening the local communities that they serve.</p> <p><i>In addition equality and diversity considerations have been integral to the delivery of this service, and are monitored.</i></p>	
Relevance <i>Identify which strands are relevant to the area you are reviewing or changing</i>	Age	
	None	
	Disability	
	None	
	Gender Re-assignment	
	None	
	Race	
	None	
	Religion	
	None	
	Gender	
	None	
	Sexual Orientation	
	None	
	Marriage & Civil Partnership	
	None	
	Pregnancy & Maternity	
	None	
Information Gaps	<p><i>There are no information gaps. No specific consultation on reduction / cessation of contract level through contract management, current terms of the existing contract is for the service until March 2014. Consultation undertaken as part of the development of the VCS Strategy support to the sector from the Local Authority is seen as a priority. Manager of the current provider has met with Senior HBC Officers to discuss the impact of the reduction in funding to the overall Community Pool programme.</i></p>	
What is the Impact	<p><i>The potential impact from the cessation of the service is</i></p>	

Appendix A

considerable to the VCS in Hartlepool; this will directly link to a reduction in advice, information and training provision available to the sector and consequently will have a direct impact on the VCS in Hartlepool who wish to access support.

The current provider of the service collates substantial information in relation to outputs, as part of the information collated groups are categorised into the type of service provided. For 2012/13 groups were categorised in the following ways:

- *Arts & Culture – 71 groups*
- *Children Young People & Families – 185*
- *Community Residents Associations – 75*
- *Conservation, Housing and Environment – 56*
- *Counselling Advice Advocacy – Disability Health Care – 109*
- *Employment, education, Training – 82*
- *Faith Group – 52*
- *Friends of Schools – 23*
- *Older people, 50+ - 117*
- *Resource Centres – 33*
- *Social Activities – 188*
- *Sport – 100*

This gives an indication that there are specific groups that cater for people within the protected characteristics list accessing the services provided by this contract. Cessation of the contract will have an impact on all groups which access the service including organisations who specifically focus on members from protected characteristics groups.

Risk associated with the cessation of the service is that there will be an adverse affect for Hartlepool Council continuing to work towards and achieve the aims and objectives of the VCS Strategy, a strategy developed with the sector aimed at improving relationships between the two sectors.

To demonstrate the current level of support to VCS groups, the figure below show some of the final outputs achieved for 2012/13, outputs are continuing to be achieved under the terms of the existing contract.

- *130 groups - receiving specific Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) services*
- *37 VCS Groups assisted to access a total of £194,582 from external sources.*
- *In contact with 588 VCS groups via organisations database, via 52 mail outs to the sector.*
- *88 VCS groups - engaged in training / briefing sessions*
- *46 individual learners taking part in accredited courses, some completed more than one course.*
- *128 Learners from 72 groups accessing unaccredited training.*
- *283 individuals completing un accredited training courses, workshops, briefing sessions.*

Appendix A

Addressing the impact	The outcome of the impact assessment may be one or more of the following four outcomes; You must clearly set out your justification for the outcome/s.		
	1. No Impact- No Major Change		
	2. Adjust/Change Policy		
	3. Adverse Impact but Continue – Proposed changes to the budget will be agreed by Finance and Policy Committee, this is inline with the agreement by Finance and Policy Committee to agree consideration of the Community Pool Programme Allocations with an overall reduced budget of £220,000.		
	Should these be agreed the cessation of this service will take place in April 2014. Whilst there will be a direct impact to the VCS, there will not be an adverse impact in relation to a specific characteristic group as outlined in the equality and diversity guidance, all groups accessing these services will be affected. There is scope through the current performance management framework and monitoring of the existing contract to further work with the current provider to identify any VCS groups particularly at risk through any changes to support to the sector and identify actions to limit / mitigate risk.		
4. Stop/Remove Policy/Proposal			
Actions			
It will be useful to record and monitor any actions resulting from your assessment to ensure that they have had the intended effect and that the outcomes have been achieved.			
Action identified	Responsible Officer	By When	How will this be evaluated?
Work with service provider through current contract to notify VCS of changes to limit impact.	Fiona Stanforth	April 2014	Through quarterly monitoring with service provider.
Work with current providers to review service groups against specific protected characteristics groups to put actions in place to mitigate impact.	Fiona Stanforth	April 2014	Through quarterly monitoring with service provider.
Advertise alternative support available to VCS groups from HBC.	Fiona Stanforth	April 2014	Through Community Regeneration and Development Team meetings.
Revisit Impact assessment.	Fiona Stanforth	November 2014	Survey with VCS groups.
Date sent to Equality Rep for publishing		00/00/00	
Date Published		00/00/00	
Date Assessment Carried out		00/00/00	

Appendix A

Department	Division	Section	Owner/Officer
Regeneration & Neighbourhoods	Neighbourhood Management	Community Regeneration & Development Team	Fiona Stanforth – Community Regeneration Officer Adele Wilson – Community Regeneration & Development Coordinator David Frame – Neighbourhood Manager
Function/Service	Community Pool – Category 2 Universal Credit Union Support <p>This service is currently funded through the Community Pool and commissioned through a contract. The aim of this service is to increase the financial inclusion of residents of Hartlepool by providing sound financial advice, debt management techniques, and legislative guidance at venues that are accessible across the town.</p> <p>Proposal is to reduce the level of funding to this service to £35,000, and amend the commissioning approach to a grant. This recommendation is due to the overall proposed reduction to the Community Pool budget allocation for 2014/15 to £220,000, approximately 50% of the previous year's allocation. It is also proposed to change to a grant commissioning process; this is due to there only being one provider that is able to deliver this service in Hartlepool.</p>		
Information Available	<p>As part of the management and monitoring programme for the existing contract, quarterly meetings take place with the current provider. Information is collated on demographics and returned on a quarterly basis, this includes collation of user information in the form of client profiles, including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age • Ethnicity • Gender • Marriage & Civil Partnership • Disability • Employment <p>Collection of this data helps to monitor who is accessing the service and in turn assess impact in terms of equality and diversity.</p> <p>The contract specification details the local and national context in relation to financial and credit union services, information included to for the service to be based around outlined the following:</p> <p>National Context: Given the financial climate, financial exclusion is an increasing issue for people. Unemployment is rising and there are increasing numbers of people considered to be living in poverty or financial hardship. In these austere times it is important that people have access to high quality financial services that are non stigmatising and available in local communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The poorest families in the UK can pay higher prices for basic necessities like gas, electricity, credit. Recent 		

Appendix A

	<p>research highlights that this position is worsening.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The costs that poor families bear for obtaining cash and credit, and for purchasing goods and services can amount to a 'poverty premium' of around £1,280 pa – or 9% of the disposable income of the average family. <p>Findings from a recent Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) concluded that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60% had heard of credit unions but only 26% knew what they do; Low interest is by far the most important factor for people when deciding on a loan; Some of societies most vulnerable families do not have access to a bank account; Similarly, the interest rate or dividend remains the most important factor when people decide on a savings product; Financially excluded consumers are most likely to want a bill payment service as part of their financial/bank account; <p>Local Context Hartlepool Borough Council, and its partners, are wholly committed to reducing poverty across the borough and have produced strategies to address this issue. These local strategies have the following aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enabling families to break out of inter-generational cycles of deprivation using a family centred approach; Ensuring all families across the borough have support at the earliest possible stage to prevent families reaching crises. <p>There are currently 31.3 % of children living in poverty in Hartlepool which is a rise from previous years of approximately 1%. This service will contribute to a reduction in child poverty by ensuring that families have access to high quality flexible financial services.</p> <p>In addition, statistics show that in Hartlepool:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.65% of residents do not have access to banking services; 47% of all households have a "poor credit" rating; Applications for debt relief orders and bankruptcies are increasing rapidly; 5 out of every 9 households fall into groups described as "On the breadline" "Credit Hungry" or "Elderly deprivation." <p>In addition equality and diversity considerations are integral to the delivery of this service.</p>														
<p>Relevance</p> <p>Identify which strands are relevant to the area you are reviewing or changing</p>	<table> <tr> <td>Age</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>None</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Disability</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>None</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Gender Re-assignment</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>None</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Race</td><td></td></tr> </table>	Age		None		Disability		None		Gender Re-assignment		None		Race	
Age															
None															
Disability															
None															
Gender Re-assignment															
None															
Race															

Appendix A

	None		
	Religion		
	None		
	Gender		
	None		
	Sexual Orientation		
	None		
	Marriage & Civil Partnership		
	None		
	Pregnancy & Maternity		
	None		
	Information Gaps	There are no information gaps. No specific consultation on reduction / changes to contract level. However there has been an ongoing dialogue with current provider discussing the Councils current the financial situation and the organisations sustainability beyond the term of the contract.	
What is the Impact	The change to the terms in the way that the funding is commissioned and the level of funding proposed towards the service, will potentially affect the level of service that is available to residents, the organisation is positioning themselves to mitigate against this. There is no anticipated detrimental impact to equality and diversity in relation to delivery of the service, this will be monitored as outlined in the actions.		
Addressing the impact	The outcome of the impact assessment may be one or more of the following four outcomes; You must clearly set out your justification for the outcome/s.		
	1. No Impact- No Major Change Proposed changes to the budget will be agreed by Finance and Policy Committee, this is inline with the agreement by Finance and Policy Committee to agree consideration of the Community Pool Programme Allocations with an overall reduced budget of £220,000.		
	As outlined above the potential impact of the changes will be to the scope of the service, equality and diversity considerations will be encompassed within the offer letter. Delivery of the proposals will be monitored closely and there will be a clear commissioning process in place to ensure that there is no impact in relation to the protected characteristics.		
	2. Adjust/Change Policy		
	3. Adverse Impact but Continue		
4. Stop/Remove Policy/Proposal			
Actions			
It will be useful to record and monitor any actions resulting from your assessment to ensure that they have had the intended effect and that the outcomes have been achieved.			
Action identified	Responsible Officer	By When	How will this be evaluated?
Equality & Diversity clearly outlined in the	Fiona Stanforth	April 2014	Through quarterly monitoring with service provider.

offer letter.			
Revisit Impact assessment to review if there has been an impact to service.	Fiona Stanforth	November 2014	Through quarterly monitoring with service provider.

Date sent to Equality Rep for publishing	00/00/00
Date Published	00/00/00
Date Assessment Carried out	00/00/00

Appendix A

Department	Division	Section	Owner/Officer
Regeneration & Neighbourhoods	Neighbourhood Management	Community Regeneration & Development Team	Fiona Stanforth – Community Regeneration Officer Adele Wilson – Community Regeneration & Development Coordinator David Frame – Neighbourhood Manager
Function/Service	<p>Community Pool – Category 5 Development & Investment Grants and Emergency Contributions Fund</p> <p>The current provision through this Category is split into two types of funding support:</p> <p>A) Development & Investment Grants</p> <p>B) Emergency Grants</p> <p>Revisions have been made to the terms of the grants in 2013/14 following delivery of the programme in 2012/13, the intention of these revisions was to maximise the number of organisations benefitting from the funding available. The main changes were a reduction in maximum grant available to £5,000 and revisions to the approval process to ensure that applications are considered as quickly as possible.</p> <p>There was a limited budget for this Category in 2013/14; the intention is that grants are put forward for consideration on first come first served basis until funding is expended. There is no definitive budget split between the two types of category 5 grant, it is dependent on demand.</p> <p>The aim of Development & Investment Grants is to provide support to groups that want to invest and develop in themselves to enable the group to strengthen in the future, putting the group in a stronger position for income generation opportunities and commissioning to deliver services.</p> <p>The aim of the Emergency Funding Grant is to provide organisations that find themselves in temporary difficult financial situations, and is designed as a form of emergency assistance in the following situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To fill a funding gap in the interim where funding has been secured but not yet administered. • To allow groups who are awaiting funding decisions to continue running a project until the outcome of a decision is known. • To allow groups who have been unsuccessful in securing funding time to look for alternative funding options. <p>This not an exhaustive list and all applications will be considered on the information provided. The objective of the funding is not to provide a long term funding solution and applications must clearly outline what has been done and how they are planning to secure additional funding.</p> <p>With the cuts outlined for the Community Pool programme in</p>		

Appendix A

	2014/15, revisions are required to the current format of the programme. The proposal which is yet to be considered and agreed by Finance and Policy Committee is to cease funding available for this category in 2014/15, however should there be any unallocated funding remaining at the end of 2013/14, this should be allocated to Category 5 to continue until available budget is expended.	
Information Available	<p>As part of the management and monitoring programme of the grant programme, terms of the individual offer letters detail clear targets and monitoring requirements. Meetings take place with all of the grant recipients as part of the application process. Monitoring information is collated in relation to outputs and verification takes place to ensure grant spend is as expected.</p> <p>These grants are available to any VCS organisation in Hartlepool, as long as the organisation and application are in line with the set criteria. This will continue should funding be available. Information is collated in the application forms in relation to nature of the organisation and service provided.</p>	
Relevance <i>Identify which strands are relevant to the area you are reviewing or changing</i>	Age	
	None	
	Disability	
	None	
	Gender Re-assignment	
	None	
	Race	
	None	
	Religion	
	None	
	Gender	
	None	
	Sexual Orientation	
	None	
	Marriage & Civil Partnership	
	None	
	Pregnancy & Maternity	
	None	
Information Gaps	<p>There are no information gaps. No specific consultation on cessation of Category 5 grants has been undertaken. As part of the funding support HBC officers work with applicants to discuss alternative solutions to address funding issues (when applying for Emergency Grants).</p> <p>Over the last two years, 2 Investment and Development grants and 5 Emergency Grants have been approved. Due to the nature of the Emergency Grant, expressions of interest are only received when organisations reach crisis point.</p>	
What is the Impact	The impact of the cessation of Category 5 grants will be that organisations facing particular financial challenges will no longer have the opportunity to apply for funding to help sustain them in the short term. It will also be the case that organisations looking	

Appendix A

				<p><i>for development opportunities will no longer have Category 5A as a funding opportunity, when securing funding for this type of activity is increasingly challenging.</i></p> <p><i>Cessation of this funding could potentially put more pressure on VCS support organisations as increased requests for assistance in securing funding are made.</i></p> <p><i>The proposed changes will not have an affect directed at any organisation which caters for any of the protected characteristic groups specifically, however the cessation of the support opportunity may have an affect if a group requires this support and it is no longer available.</i></p>
Addressing the impact				<p><i>The outcome of the impact assessment may be one or more of the following four outcomes; You must clearly set out your justification for the outcome/s.</i></p> <p>1. No Impact- No Major Change – <i>No known impact in terms of equality and diversity however cessation of grant provision will have an impact on funding opportunities available to the Voluntary and Community Sector.</i></p> <p><i>Delivery of the proposals will be monitored closely to ensure that impact in relation to the protected characteristics is minimal.</i></p>
				2. Adjust/Change Policy
				3. Adverse Impact but Continue
				4. Stop/Remove Policy/Proposal
Actions				
<i>It will be useful to record and monitor any actions resulting from your assessment to ensure that they have had the intended effect and that the outcomes have been achieved.</i>				
Action identified	Responsible Officer	By When	How will this be evaluated?	
Write to all VCS organisations outlining changes to grant provision once agreed.	Fiona Stanforth	November 2013	Responses monitored.	
Awareness raising with sector of changes to the grants and promotion of support available.	Fiona Stanforth	November 2013 – January 2014	Applications will be monitored.	

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FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

18 October 2013

The meeting commenced at 9.30 am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor: Christopher Akers-Belcher (In the Chair)

Councillors: Rob Cook, Alison Lilley, Ray Martin-Wells, Robbie Payne, Carl Richardson, Chris Simmons and Paul Thompson.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 5.2 (ii), Councillor Allan Barclay was in attendance for Councillor Marjorie James, Councillor Kevin Cranney was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Peter Jackson and Councillor Geoff Lilley was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Keith Dawkins.

Also in attendance:

Dr Mark Reilly, Tees Valley Public Health Shared Service
Keith Bayley, Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency
Jackie Gettings, Epilepsy Outlook

Officers: Dave Stubbs, Chief Executive
Andrew Atkin, Assistant Chief Executive
Chris Little, Chief Finance Officer
Alyson Camen, Legal Services Manager
Denise Ogden, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Louise Wallace, Director of Public Health
Sally Robinson, Assistant Director, Children's Services
John Mennear, Assistant Director, Community Services
Graham Frankland, Assistant Director, Resources
Damien Wilson, Assistant Director, Regeneration
Sandra Shears, Head of Finance, Corporate
Kerry Trenchard, Acting Performance and Partnerships Manager
Joan Stevens, Scrutiny Manager
Steve Hilton, Public Relations Officer
Angela Armstrong, Principal Democratic Services Officer

121. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Keith Dawkins, Peter Jackson and Marjorie James.

122. Declarations of Interest

Councillors Christopher Akers-Belcher declared a prejudicial interest in minutes 124 and indicated he would leave the meeting during the consideration of that item.

Councillor Paul Thompson declared a prejudicial interest in minute 127 and indicated he would leave the meeting during the consideration of that item.

Councillors Allan Barclay, Kevin Cranney and Chris Simmons declared a personal interest in minute 124.

Councillors Allan Barclay, Rob Cook, Chris Simmons and Paul Thompson declared personal interests in minute 127.

123. Minutes of the meeting held on 4 October 2013

Received.

Councillor Christopher Akers-Belcher left the meeting at this point due to his earlier declaration of interest.

Councillor Carl Richardson in the Chair.

124. Community Pool Programme Allocation 2014/15
*(Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)***Type of decision**

Key Decision – Test (i) and (ii) applies – Forward Plan Reference RN20/13.

Purpose of report

To present a proposal and seek approval on the allocation of the Community Pool Programme Allocation for 2014/15.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods presented a detailed and comprehensive report which provided the background to the Community Pool Programme along with the proposed allocated budget to categories of the Community Pool for the programme delivery in 2014/15. It was noted that the level of reduction proposed to the Community Pool programme would have an impact on the organisations currently supported and Council Officers had been working with Voluntary and Community

Sector (VCS) organisations through monitoring and performance management meetings and it had been reiterated that there were no guarantees of future funding availability through the Community Pool programme. Impact assessments had been carried out and the key areas of impact were outlined in the report. Also included in the report were the risk implications of revising the current Community Pool programme allocations under the proposed reduced budget of £220,000. It was highlighted that the proposed saving demonstrated through the Community Pool allocation would contribute directly to the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

At this point in the meeting, Councillors Alison Lilley, Geoff Lilley and Carl Richardson declared personal interests in this item.

A number of representatives from the VCS were in attendance and the Chair invited them to address the Committee.

A representative from the Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency (HVDA) commented that whilst he understood the challenges the Local Authority were facing through unprecedented budget reductions, he requested that further consideration be given to the impact of the proposed changes to the criteria, in particular in relation to people with disabilities and disadvantaged groups. A number of concerns were expressed that the proposed reductions would undermine the services provided by volunteers. A letter including further detail on the concerns expressed by the HVDA was provided for Members' consideration.

A representative from Epilepsy Outlook expressed concerns that the reduction in Community Pool funding would result in organisations being ineligible to apply for additional grant funding. A representative from Hartlepool Bereavement Service commented that reducing financial support to the voluntary organisations may put a further strain on the Council's budget due to the inevitable increased demand on the Local Authority's services in those areas.

A discussion ensued during which Members recognised the value of VCS organisations as key partners in providing various services across the town. However, the current budgetary pressures the Council was facing had to be acknowledged. It was suggested that alternative ways of supporting the VCS should be explored, such as the current scheme to provide business rate relief to voluntary organisations.

A Member referred to the letter provided by the HVDA and noted the level of funding secured through external sources to support VCS groups and it was suggested that without the support of the HVDA a lot of these groups would cease to exist. Concern was expressed that the level of cuts to the HVDA was disproportionate and that Category 3 should not be removed from the Community Pool funding programme. In response to a question from a Member, the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods confirmed that the HVDA could still apply for funding from within the

remaining Community Pool programme allocation.

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods acknowledged that a number of very difficult decisions were needed in order to deal with the Council's current budgetary situation. It was noted that the Council had demonstrated its commitment to the priority of reducing family poverty by agreeing a reduced council tax increase of 8.5%, being the first Council to introduce bedroom tax support, implement free swims for children and young people and support the local food bank.

Whilst Members recognised the value of the work undertaken by the HVDA, the level of budget reductions required was unprecedented and would continue into future years. A Member commented that he was ashamed to live in a society that relied on food banks to support needy families adding that family poverty was a real issue in Hartlepool and this should be recognised. The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods commented that as part of the negotiations on the ICT contract, a social value fund of £40k had been agreed and would be reported back to this Committee to consider the future use of that fund.

A representative from Advance, an organisation that worked with children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) commented that the Community and Voluntary Sector were finding it increasingly difficult to secure funding and requested that any cuts imposed should be proportionate. One of the young people in attendance confirmed that he and his family had received a lot of support from this particular organisation.

Decision

- (i) The content of the report and progress of the Community Pool Programme to date was noted.
- (ii) The proposed allocation of budget as set out in Table 1 of the report was approved.
- (iii) That Category 2 (Credit Union Support) be changed from a contract to a grant.
- (iv) That the maximum level of grants available be reduced to £10,000 for Category 4.
- (v) That the criteria for Category 4 grants be changed to link directly to the Child Poverty Strategy Action Plan.
- (vi) That the allocation of any underspend in Category 5 from the 2013/14 budget should be allocated to Category 5 (A and B) in 2014/15.

Councillor Christopher Akers-Belcher rejoined the meeting and returned to the Chair.

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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