

Voluntary Sector Grant Aid Strategy 2011 - 2015

Compact Forum Responses

The Compact Forum includes representatives from the voluntary sector, City PCT, Derby City Partnership and grant officers from across the Council. Community Action Derby raised a number of concerns on behalf of the voluntary sector using the Compact breach process. This process has been developed as part of the partnership working arrangements between the Council and the voluntary sector to raise concerns that services, changes or developments have not followed the Compact. The breach raised the following issues.

Issue 1: Compact Checklist has not been completed.

The Compact Checklist was developed jointly between the Council and the Compact Forum. The Checklist provides guidance officers to ensure changes in services and policies that have an impact on the voluntary sector are Compact compliant.

The Council acknowledges that a Compact Checklist was not completed prior to Cabinet report as this was a draft Strategy. A Checklist has been completed as part of this report for the Compact Forum.

Issue 2: The voluntary sector was not involved in the development of the strategy

The 12 week consultation period has provided an opportunity for the voluntary sector to be involved. Appendix 2 provides further details. The Council recognises that additional actions could have been taken to involve voluntary sector groups, however the process followed is appropriate given the timescale and the large target group for the consultation i.e.; all voluntary, community and faith groups, service users, stakeholders and the public.

The Council met with the voluntary sector representatives on the Compact Forum prior to the 14th December Cabinet Report on the Grant Aid Strategy. At the time of these discussions the Council could only share a general view of the impact of the Government's Spending Review and stress the Council's commitment to involving the sector and following the Compact. One of the issues raised in these meetings is reflected in the Grant Aid Strategy, i.e. the timescale for any possible budget reduction being extended into the middle of the next financial year to allow time for voluntary sector providers to adjust to changes in funding.

Issue 3: Grant Aid Strategy did not consider different ways of working with voluntary sector partners, including grants, procurement, loan finance, training, and use of premises or other support.

These options were not specifically mentioned in the strategy. However, they will be considered as part of the commissioning process following the consultation, following the guidance provided in the Commissioning Framework developed in consultation with voluntary sector representatives.

Issue 4. Funding Priorities are not linked to the Derby Plan.

The strategy that went to Cabinet on 14th December 2010 was designed to reflect early draft of the Derby Plan. It is acknowledged that this could have made links between the strategy and the later versions of the Derby Plan unclear. The Voluntary and Community Sector team have circulated a document that clarifies the links between the Derby Plan and Grant Aid Strategy as part of the consultation process. The Council will consider whether links between the voluntary sector grant funding and the Derby Plan can be further clarified.

Issue 5: Outcomes in the strategy are not really outcomes, but Council service priorities.

The consultation process will support the Council to clarify the outcomes required from the Grant Aid Strategy and their links to the Derby Plan, service plans and strategies.

Issue 6: The Consultation process focuses on services to deliver the outcomes, and doesn't provide an opportunity to comment on the Strategy.

The Council acknowledges that a significant part of the consultation questionnaire and the agenda of the consultation events focussed on the outcomes proposed in the strategy. This was necessary to provide an opportunity for people to respond to all the outcomes and issues in the strategy. The consultation questionnaire and the consultation events also provided the opportunity for "any other comments" they may have on the strategy.

Issue 7: It is not clear which part of the Grant Aid Strategy report can be influenced through the consultation process.

The Council was prepared to receive comments about any part of the Grant Aid Strategy; this was made clear in the "Frequently asked Questions" that supported the online questionnaire, and at the consultation events. It is acknowledged that this could have been made clearer in the on line questionnaire and that links to the consultation on the Council's revenue budget could have been clarified.