Review of Grants to Voluntary Organisations

Main themes identified in consultation

Standardise process – simpler, consistent
Transparency
Fairness
Publicity, communications, information
Monitoring
Support for infrastructure groups
Training, guidance, help to apply for funding
Support for running costs/revenue
Support for new organisations/activities
Allocate funding according to priorities

Theme	Emerging ideas	Comments from Diversity Fora
Standardise processes	Standard application forms, funding agreement and monitoring proportionate to funding bands: • Less than £5,000 • Between £5,000 and £25,000 • More than £25,000	Less than £5,000 should be fast track and light touch. Needs to be a lot simpler, especially for smaller amounts. There appear to be hurdles even for grants of £500. Pots need to be more flexible. Join up the funding for small grants behind the scenes.
	Two stage process for larger grants to prevent unnecessary work for applicant	This would also give groups time to get additional support/put in place policies and safeguarding they may need.
		Concern was expressed about the very short timescales sometimes set by Officers administering new opportunities
Transparency/Fairness	Scoring system - Procurement team could	This is a move in the right direction.

	provide advice.	Current funding to many small community organisations remains a mystery.
	Appraisal Panel – Small Change approach involving voluntary sector representatives	
	List organisations funded and amounts received on website	Agreed Success rates would also be informative.
		Need to provide a level playing field including extra support for some groups. Needs to be more equitable sharing out of funds.
Publicity/Communications/Information	Information/forms in one place on DCC website Promotion through media, libraries, Community Action, Neighbourhood boards, Key forums	Agreed – use existing forums Need a one-stop shop. Newsletters need to be informative and easy to understand. Plain English Need to provide information in other languages. Officers providing outreach, actively seeking out those groups which need extra support. Need to gather feedback from people who know what the issues are.
Monitoring		Need to establish if the organisation is providing value for money.

		Organisations need to meet certain minimum criteria.
		Provide clear outputs for organisations to report back to.
		Consult with communities to gain valuable feedback when monitoring organisations.
		Provide capacity building to help organisations undertake their own evaluations.
Support for Infrastructure groups. *Training, guidance, help to apply for funding*	Provide more funding for one or more infrastructure groups to deliver training: • Community Action • Derby Millennium Network • Derby Racial Equality Council • Business in the Community	Training is key to any organisation's development.
Support for new organisations/activities	Mentoring/buddying Scheme Encourage collaborative working	Should be encouraged at application stage. There is a great deal of competition for funding in the voluntary sector. Need to facilitate partnership working. Mentoring organisations would need to be compensated for their support – is this a project in itself?
	More involvement of Neighbourhood Boards for smaller grants	It is felt that Neighbourhood Boards are very political and not fully representative of

		communities. Some funding is solely agreed by Councillors.
Allocate funding according to priorities	Identify: Key issues across the city Neighbourhood priorities	Funding should be needs led. It's difficult to understand which fund to apply for. An example provided was a theatre group for hearing loss performing in the neighbourhood – Small Arts, Community Grants or Neighbourhood Boards?
	Develop: Funding Strategy Voluntary Sector Strategy	

Other comments

Voluntary and Community organisations would like a level playing field where everyone knows and understands the process.

Existing funding spreads very thinly. Need to reduce duplication

Need to make better use of existing premises and resources available.

Grant funding should not mean greater control by the City Council.