

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Name of Committee **The Cabinet**
Date of Committee **13th July 2006**
Report Title **Review of the Area Community Education Councils and future funding arrangements**

Summary This report seeks Cabinet approval for the future arrangements for the funds which ACECs allocated. This is related to the Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy.

For further information please contact:

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Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework? [please identify relevant plan/budget provision] No

Background papers

- Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy 2006
- Strategic Review of Services for Young People, Cabinet reports 24.2.05, 21.7.05 and 17.11.05

CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:-

Details to be specified

Other Committees	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	All five Area Committees, May 2006
Local Member(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Elected Members	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CYP&F O&S Spokespersons for information: Cllr Helen McCarthy Cllr Richard Grant – " <i>agree Cabinet consider report</i> " Cllr Jill Dill-Russell



- Cabinet Member Cllr Colin Hayfield
- Other Cabinet Members consulted Cllr Izzi Seccombe – *“approved for Cabinet”*
- Chief Executive
- Legal Victoria Gould – comments incorporated in the report
- Finance David Clarke, Strategic Director of Resources – *“fine”*
- Other Chief Officers
- District Councils
- Health Authority
- Police
- Other Bodies/Individuals

FINAL DECISION **NO**

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:

Details to be specified

- Further consideration by this Committee
- To Council
- To Cabinet Autumn 2006
- To an O & S Committee
- To an Area Committee
- Further Consultation

The Cabinet – 13th July 2006

Review of the Area Community Education Councils and future funding arrangements

Joint Report of the Strategic Directors for Children, Young People & Families and Performance & Development

Recommendations:

- (1) That the proposed funding arrangements following the review of the Area Community Education Councils be approved with effect from April 2007.
- (2) That the funds referred to in para. 2.4 of this report (£32,000) be allocated across the Area Committees using an appropriate formula.
- (3) That the details of the formula be determined in due course following further consultation with the Chairs of the Area Committees.
- (4) That further consideration be given by the Strategic Director of Performance and Development in consultation with the Chairs of the Area Committees to the development of a process to facilitate easy access to small grants by community groups.
- (5) That a further report be brought back to Cabinet by the Strategic Director of Performance and Development in the Autumn of 2006.

1. Introduction and context

- 1.1 Area Community Education Councils (ACECs) were formed in 1992 against a background of the Authority being an enabler and not just a provider of services. All Youth Service funding other than that required to keep premises open (rates, fuels, etc.) and full-time staff (15 in total) were devolved to ACECs. Towards the end of the 1990s, the Authority began to put additional resources into the Youth Service which became a provider as well as an enabler. This also coincided with a government move towards lifelong learning and an increase of resources through the Standards Fund.
- 1.2 The priority growth area required by Members was that full-time staff and the Youth Service grew in its capacity to deliver work. This coincided with an increase of resources available to the voluntary sector through Area Committees and lottery funding. ACECs have since then been funding the

priority bids of the Youth Service to support direct delivery voluntary organisations to deliver youth services, as well as services for young people over 19 and community use of schools.

- 1.3 The establishment of a new Directorate for Children, Young People and Families in April 2006 means that a number of services are reorganising. As a result of the Strategic Review of Services for Young People, the Adult Learning Service and Youth Service, which were part of the Community Education Service, have been operating as discrete services since March 2005. From April 2006 Adult Learning transferred to the Adult, Health and Community Directorate and the Youth Service is now part of the Services for Young People Division of the Children, Young People and Families Directorate.
- 1.4 The Implementation Plan for the Strategic Review of Services for Young People identified the need to keep ACECs until March 2006 as a transitional arrangement. The purpose of this paper is to seek approval for the transfer of part of the funds currently dispersed through ACECs to Area Committees in line with the Council's Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Strategy, in order to ensure that community organisations can continue to access grants.
- 1.5 Cabinet decided that this issue should be taken forward through the governance paper on the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Board. The governance paper covers a range of issues which are a result of the new Children, Young People and Families Directorate with its focus on integrated services to children and young people, and the major transformation of services this will require. At its meeting on 12th May, the Strategic Partnership Board confirmed its governance arrangements with the formation of an Executive Board and wider Forum.

2. Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy

- 2.1 The County Council has been engaged in a thorough and wholesale review of its relations with the VCS. A strategy to guide the Council's relationship with the sector between 2006/11 was approved by Cabinet on 5th May.

The Strategy covers a range of issues including:

- Contracting for Service delivery
 - Supporting the voluntary sector infrastructure
 - Developing effective communication and consultation
 - Working together to ensure good governance.
- 2.2 Under the governance strand, it is suggested that the role of Area Committees as the focal point for allocating small grants should be enhanced. Area Committees are already responsible for allocating the Community Development Fund, the Social Inclusion Fund and the Well-being Fund. Other public bodies (particularly the district councils) also have local funds available for community benefit and it is sensible to avoid duplication and to focus this funding in line with community priorities as defined in Area Business Plans and Community Strategies.

- 2.3 Local arrangements have been developed to do this. These tend to take the form of a group of local officers and voluntary sector representatives screening and evaluating bids for grants and projects and suggesting which might be the most appropriate funding source. In respect of County Council funding, this might then go forward to a sub-committee of the Area Committee for further consideration or direct to the Committee. The VCS Strategy suggests that these arrangements should be developed further in accordance with local wishes and it would seem appropriate for the ACEC funding to be included within these arrangements.
- 2.4 The alternative would be to develop specific arrangements solely for the purpose of dispersing ACEC funding. The total amount of ACEC funding in 2005/06 was £319,000. Of this, £30,000 will be reserved for the extended community use of schools and £257,000 will be allocated direct to voluntary youth service organisations and will form part of the budget of the Children, Young People and Families Directorate. This leaves about £32,000 available for grants to community groups providing services to adults, which is the amount that would remain with ACECs if the current funding arrangements were to continue. At an average of £6,000 per area (ranging from less than £250 in two areas to a maximum of £13,000) this would not appear to justify the continuation of the existing arrangements or the establishment of new separate arrangements to replace them.
- 2.5 It is therefore suggested that through the implementation of the VCS Strategy the £32,000 available for grants to adult community organisations should be transferred to Area Committees to be allocated through the local arrangements established for co-ordinating local grants. It is also suggested that further consideration be given to determine the formula and the process to be used to facilitate easy access to small grants by community groups.
- 2.6 A further report will be brought back to Cabinet by the Strategic Director of Performance and Development in the Autumn of 2006.

3. Views of the Area Committees

Each Area Committee discussed the proposals at its meeting in May. All agreed that the funds referred to (£32,000) be allocated across the Area Committees using an appropriate formula. Moreover, all Area Committees were extremely concerned to ensure that there was an appropriate local mechanism to enable voluntary groups to access relatively small sums of money with minimal bureaucracy.

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4th July 2006