

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

Committee	EXECUTIVE	Item 12	Page 1
Report Originator	Shirley Plenderleith Head of Public Services	<i>Fwd Plan Ref No:</i> A16/017	
Wards Affected	All	16th November 2016	
Title	VOLUNTARY SECTOR SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS		

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Jan Smith

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To decide on the award of Service Level Agreements for the period 2017 – 2021.

2. INFORMATION

- 2.1 During 2016, the Research & Development committee commissioned a process to decide and set priorities for the funding of services from the Voluntary Sector, through Service Level Agreements for the period 2017 – 2021. A timetable and process was agreed by the committee at its meeting on February 16th 2016.
- 2.2 A Task and Finish Group was set up by the Research & Development Committee. After a process which involved six meetings, to which representatives of the voluntary sector and statutory partners were invited, recommendations of that group were made by the Research & Development committee to the Executive.
- 2.3 Broad outcomes and requirements of specifications and the amount of grant attached to these work streams were agreed. There then followed a commissioning process which lasted from July to September 2016. The specifications were advertised on the Council's website, in the media, and through voluntary sector networks. The application process made it clear the outcomes the Council required, key performance indicators and the assessment criteria.
- 2.4 The timeline for the process as agreed by members at the start of the process is attached at **Appendix A**.
- 2.5 A summary of the list of specifications is available at **Appendix B**. Members should note that whilst some of the titles of the specifications are the same, or very similar to previous years, they have been reviewed to reflect the current climate as advised by organisation(s) who attended the working group.

3. DECISION MAKING PROCESS

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

Committee	EXECUTIVE	Item 12	Page 2
-----------	------------------	------------	--------

- 3.1 Fifteen applications were submitted. Applications were scored at an officer evaluation panel on the 30th September with recommendations going to an Executive sub-group which met on 24th October and 3rd November. This officer evaluation panel was made up of representatives from the Kettering Partnership (the Local Strategic Partnership) and Kettering Borough Council. As in previous SLA arrangements, a comprehensive Scoring System (attached at **Appendix C**) gave applicants the opportunity to score a maximum of 64 points (8 per section). A score of 32 points would indicate that the application had achieved the minimum necessary level to allow the application to go forward for consideration. Any applications falling under the scoring level of 32 would not be considered. Applications were first independently scored by panel members and then agreed as a collective after discussion.
- 3.2 In the event, all the applications met the scoring levels necessary for them to be considered for funding. There were bids made for each one of the categories with five specifications only having one bidder. In these circumstances, all of those applicants were awarded the funding available as they met the required standard.
- 3.3 However, there was competition in five of the categories where more than one organisation submitted bids for the same specification. Scoring levels were considered where competition existed, with the highest bidder being recommended to receive all the funds. This occurred in three of the five categories.
- 3.4 In two of the categories, there were exceptions to this. The officer panel found that under the Independent Living Specification (£40,000) the highest bidder (Vine Community Trust) had only requested half of the funds available for this specification (£20,000). The panel therefore decided to recommend to the Executive sub-group that a pragmatic way forward was to grant Vine Community Trust £20,000 but to give Age UK (the other bidder) the balance of funds of £20,000.
- 3.5 The panel noted that this was a similar arrangement to the one which was employed in the last period where Age UK and Vine Community Trust shared the funding. It was felt that this was a good use of the funds available for this specification as both organisations have separate and complimentary services to offer older people and which fit in with the specification. This recommendation was subsequently accepted by the Executive sub-group
- 3.6 As previously noted, the Executive sub-group, met on 24th October and 3rd November 2016. At the first meeting there was agreement that the decision process previously agreed, had been followed and ratified the scoring of the bids.
- 3.7 It was at this stage that the second category for deviation of the original process was suggested by the members.

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

Committee	EXECUTIVE	Item 12	Page 3
-----------	------------------	------------	--------

- 3.8 The submissions for the Activities for Young People had been scored in the same way as others however, it was such a close score that the sub group felt that a pragmatic approach needed to be made in that the two organisations could be asked to consider working together to deliver the required outcomes.
- 3.9 As a result of this direction from the Executive sub-group, both Groundwork and Youthworks CIC have made a proposal for a joint delivery of the specification that levers in some further monies over time, and which provides for an even better set of outcomes than was originally sought.
- 3.10 The proposal would require the allocation of £13,250 to Groundwork and £13,250 to Youthworks. The members on the Executive sub-group endorsed this approach as a very helpful way forward and thanked both organisations for the mature way they had approached the issue.
- 3.11 In accordance with the above, **Appendix D** contains details of the scoring across the priority areas (as previously agreed by the Executive sub-group) and includes the proposed allocation of grants across the various organisations. The applicants which have scored highest (notwithstanding comments above) and should be offered the Service Level Agreements and grant are shown in bold.

4 DIRECTION SETTING AND MONITORING

- 4.1 The direction setting and monitoring stage of the process will start in January 2017. This will require transition for the new workstreams and further discussion before SLAs are signed to ensure that organisations are clear about the detailed requirements and are putting the capacity in place to deliver to customers.

5 CONSULTATION AND CUSTOMER IMPACT

- 5.1 Consultation on the proposed SLA process began in January 2016 with a presentation to the Voluntary Sector Forum, outlining what was proposed and how it would proceed. This information was also sent out to voluntary sector organisations, using an extensive voluntary sector database.
- 5.2 A Research & Development Task and Finish Group held six meetings between March and May 2016 and invited organisations from the sector and statutory partners to have an input into the new draft specifications. Once initial specifications were decided, these were put to the sector for consultation which was carried out in May and June through the borough council's website and by using the voluntary sector's extensive database. Holders of the current SLAs were also informed of the proposed specifications and a link to the information was also posted on Twitter and Facebook. A press release was also issued.
- 5.3 All comments received were noted and communicated to the Research & Development Task and Finish Group and Committee. These were incorporated

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

Committee	EXECUTIVE	Item 12	Page 4
-----------	------------------	------------	--------

into the recommendations to the Executive meeting, which was held on 15th June. At this meeting, the specifications were confirmed and permission given to commence the process of inviting bids.

- 5.4 All specifications and the associated application packs were made available online in July, with notification being sent to the wider voluntary sector via the database. Other existing networks and media opportunities were utilised to increase the awareness of the funding round. The closing date was 5th September.
- 5.2 An equality impact assessment was carried out on the specifications and this was shared at the executive meeting on 15th June.

6 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Kettering Borough Council continues its commitment to the Voluntary Sector through the continuation of its funding at the same levels as previous years.

7 FINANCIAL RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The proposed service level agreements cover the four-year period 2017 – 2021.
- 7.2 By reference to the durable budget report there is still a level of uncertainty in relation to future national funding levels. Accordingly, although the service level agreements are set up to cover the four-year period, funding can initially only be confirmed for the first two years (2017/18 and 2018/19). The position will then be re-assessed in the light of the council's overall funding and budgetary position at that time.
- 7.3 It should be noted however, notwithstanding the above that by agreeing this expenditure, this council has protected the voluntary sector above other areas of spend.

8 HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Lead officers from the Council will continue to monitor the delivery of workstreams.

9 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial support by way of grants is being offered to organisations to deliver certain services the Council wishes to sponsor. To monitor achievements of outcomes there are specifications and Service Level Agreements.

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

Committee	EXECUTIVE	Item 12	Page 5
------------------	------------------	------------	--------

10 RECOMMENDATION

The Executive:

- I. Award the Service Level Agreements to the organisations as outlined in the report and highlighted in bold at Appendix D
- II. Agree that the funding for Service Level Agreements will initially be confirmed for 2017/18 and 2018/19 only. Funding for 2019/20 and 2020/21 will be assessed in the light of the Council's financial position at that time

Background Papers: Research and Development Committee
Title Report of Voluntary Sector Task and Finish Group
Date 07.06.16
Contact Officer Shirley Plenderleith x 5696
Carole Stephenson x 4289

Executive Working Group
24th October/ 3rd November 2016

Previous Minutes/Reports: Executive Committee
Ref: Minute No. 16.EX.15
Date: 15th June 2016
