

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMMUNITIES and HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD

29 May 2018

Report of the Chief Executive

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 KEY VOLUNTARY SECTOR BODIES – ANNUAL REVIEW OF CORE GRANT SUPPORT

1.1 Background

1.1.1 For many years the Borough Council has provided funding to support a number of key voluntary sector bodies who provide support services to residents within the Borough. As Members will be aware, following the adoption of the Savings and Transformation Strategy, there was a need to identify savings and in 2016, consultation with the voluntary sector bodies took place and it was agreed (with the exception of the CAB) that a 20% reduction be applied. To allow for greater continuity the grants were fixed for three years – from 2016/17 – 2018/19.

1.1.2 We are now into the third year and each grant recipient has been asked to submit a brief summary of progress achieved (Annex 1) against the objectives set out in the Service Level Agreements.

1.2 Requirements of the Service Level Agreements

1.2.1 The services offered by each of the organisations should be well known to the Board. The following however, is a summary of any specific requirements.

Advice Services: The key role of the Citizens Advice North and West Kent (CANWK) is to provide advice services on a range of specialist topics. Advice services are available via walk in appointments, by telephone or via online services. Home visits can also be arranged.

Over the past year CANWK have been able to offer assistance to 1,125 clients from Tonbridge and Malling via the telephone advice line. In addition to this, face to face support has been offered to 1,266 residents at either their main centre (Tonbridge Castle) or via outreach appointments (Aylesford, Larkfield or Snodland). Going forward there will be additional drop in services available at Tonbridge to allow for a greater number of face to face appointments.

Volunteering Services: Imago provide support for volunteers looking for placements and for organisations needing volunteer assistance in addition to a volunteer driving service focussed on the Tonbridge area. Involve provides a similar service for the Malling area.

Over the past year Imago have supported 16 organisations within Tonbridge in areas such as fundraising, volunteer promotion, charitable status and networking events for volunteer co-ordinators. They have also provided community transport services to 267 older residents living in Tonbridge and Malling.

Involve have focused on recruiting volunteers with additional support needs, they have also continued to develop the community transport provision in the Malling area. They currently have 17 registered volunteer drivers in the Malling area, with 745 trips undertaken.

Older People's Services: Age UK Sevenoaks and Tonbridge offer a range of services to support the elderly including transport services, health and day care and information services. The organisation is affiliated to Age UK as part of a national network.

Over the past year Age UK Sevenoaks and Tonbridge have increased their volunteer numbers as their information and advice services are in great demand. As well as sessions at Bradford Street in Tonbridge, home visits are also offered. Befriending is offered, along with support for dementia carers, lunch clubs, foot care and podiatry as well as counselling services.

Age concern Malling provides a similar range of services for Malling but has chosen not to be affiliated to Age UK, the grant they receive supports the transport costs incurred by clients who attend vital services at the Dementia Day Care centre in West Malling. Age Concern Malling also support work of the Local Strategic Partnership, self-neglect issues raised via the Community Safety Partnership as well as involvement in community partnerships.

Mediation Services: West Kent provides services in the Tonbridge area whilst Maidstone covers the Malling area. A range of mediation services are provided including neighbour and family disputes, made either by self-referral or via referrals from partner agencies. They are a key partner in the Community Safety Partnership. A single grant is shared equally between the two schemes.

Over the year they have continued to train volunteers to deal with neighbour disputes and anti-social behaviour within the borough. Their services are offered free to those in the borough who most need it.

1.3 Legal Implications

1.3.1 Addressed via adopted Service Level Agreements

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.4.1 The confirmed grants for the period 2016/17 – 2018/19 are as follows:

CAB - £95,000

Imago - £4000

Involve – £4000

Age UK Sevenoaks and Tonbridge – £8000

Age Concern Malling – £8000

Maidstone and West Kent Mediation Services – £4,800

1.4.2 As we complete the third and final year of the current three year agreement, each of the organisations have made good progress against objectives set out in their respective SLA's.

1.4.3 A further report will be brought to this board early in 2019 as Members will need to make decisions regarding future levels of funding for each of the organisations.

Background papers:

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Nil

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