

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMMUNITIES and HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD

03 March 2015

Report of the Chief Executive

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)

1 KEY VOLUNTARY SECTOR BODIES – GRANT SUPPORT

To review the work of those key voluntary sector bodies who receive grant support from the Borough Council at the end of the three year service level agreement and determine arrangements for the future.

1.1 Background

1.1.1 In March 2012, the former Communities Advisory Board agreed revised, three year service level agreements with the following key voluntary sector bodies:

Tonbridge and Malling CAB
Voluntary Action within Kent
Voluntary Action Maidstone
Age UK Sevenoaks and Tonbridge
Age Concern Malling
Maidstone and West Kent Mediation Services

1.1.2 The third and final year of those service level agreements is now nearing completion. Each of the above organisations has been asked to provide a brief written review of their activity over the past year (Appendix 1). All of the reports submitted have demonstrated good progress against 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 listed above should be well known to the Board. The following, however, is a summary of any specific requirements of each service level agreement which will assist the board in reviewing progress.

Advice Services: The key role of the Tonbridge and Malling CAB is to provide advice services on a range of specialist topics. The CAB is located at River Walk in Tonbridge and advice services are available via walk in appointments, by telephone or via on line services. Home visits can also be arranged. In order that

the CAB offers effective services to the whole of the Borough, their service level agreement requires the CAB to provide outreach services in the Malling area. The Tonbridge and Malling CAB is also encouraged to work with Bureaux in adjoining areas to provide mutual assistance and reduce operating costs. Annual grant support from the Council is £111,000.

Volunteering Services: Voluntary Action Within Kent (VAWK) provide support for volunteers looking for placements and for organisations needing volunteer assistance focussed in the Tonbridge area. Voluntary Action Maidstone (VAM) provides similar services for the Malling area. Both organisations provide a volunteer driving scheme for medical appointments etc. Each organisation receives an annual grant of £5,000.

Older People's Services: Age UK Sevenoaks & 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. Age Concern Malling provides a similar range of services for Malling but has chosen not to be affiliated to Age UK. Each organisation receives an annual grant of £10,000.

Mediation Services: West Kent Mediation provides services in the Tonbridge area whilst Maidstone Mediation 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 of £6,000 is given which is shared equally between the two organisations.

1.3 Legal Implications

- 1.3.1 Addressed via adopted service level agreements (Annex 2-7). Whilst we have previously entered into 3 year agreements, it is proposed that a one year agreement for each organisation is offered for 2015/16 to enable a further annual review to be undertaken following the adoption by the Council of a new corporate strategy later in 2015.
- 1.3.2 There is also a potential merger of the Tonbridge and Malling CAB with Sevenoaks and Swanley and Gravesham CABx. Should the merger then take place, we will have the opportunity to develop a revised service level agreement with the new organisation to operate from 2016/17.

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.4.1 Sufficient budgetary provision has been made in the estimates for 2015/16 to provide grant assistance as recommended below. To ensure value for money, where applicable, all voluntary sector bodies supported via a grant will also be expected to assist, where appropriate, with the Council's work on both the welfare reform and the health improvement agendas.

1.5 Risk Assessment

1.5.1 N/A

1.6 Equality Impact Assessment

1.6.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

1.7 Recommendations

1.7.1 That one year Service Level Agreements as set out at Appendices 2 – 7 of this report **BE APPROVED**;

1.7.2 That the following grants **BE CONFIRMED** for 2015/16:

- Tonbridge and Malling CAB - £111,000
- Voluntary Action within Kent - £5,000
- Voluntary Action Maidstone - £5,000
- Age UK Sevenoaks and Tonbridge - £10,000
- Age Concern Malling - £10,000
- Maidstone and West Kent Mediation Services - £6,000

The Chief Executive confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers:

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Nil

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Chief Executive