

Report to: **Executive**
Date: **Tuesday 21st February 2006**
Report of: **Executive Member for Community and Culture**
Subject: **Council of Voluntary Services for Easington District**
Ward: **All**

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to determine the level of funding for the Council of Voluntary Service for Easington District (ECVS) for the 2005/2006 and 2006/2007 financial years.

2. Consultation

2.1 In preparing this report I have consulted with Management Team and the Senior Regeneration Officer (Finance and Management).

3. Background

3.1 As members will be aware, from the Executive Committee meeting held on Tuesday 3rd February 2004, the Council of Voluntary Services for Easington District was re-launched on 6th August 2003 following a strategic review of the service and a pro rata grant payment of £14,997 was subsequently made for the remainder of the 2003/2004 financial year.

3.2 The Council has previously had a commitment of funding the CVS for the life of each Council and this commitment allowed the CVS to plan ahead. This commitment expired in March 2004 and subsequently in May 2004 the Council agreed to give a further four-year commitment to fund the CVS until March 2008, with the actual level of funding being subject to an annual review.

3.3 At the same time the Council agreed, as there had been no inflationary increases for some time, to increase the level of grant from £22,496 to £30,000 per annum.

3.4 During the 2005/2006 financial year there have been further re-structuring within the management of the ECVS with a new Chief Officer, , being appointed.

3.5 These changes have resulted in a later than normal application resulting in the ECVS having to utilize their reserves to fund their activity. Normal applications are received at the beginning of each financial year and members are therefore being asked in this instance to consider both the 2005/2006 and 2006/2007 simultaneously although separate payments will be made, subject to agreement, in each of the periods stated.

4. Position Statement

4.1 Legal Status

4.1.1 The Voluntary Service for Easington District (known as Easington CVS) was an unincorporated registered charity. It was governed by a constitution adopted in 1966 and amended in June 1975 and March 1987.

4.1.2 On 16th May 2005 the net assets and charitable activities of the charity were transferred to a new charitable company, Easington Council of Voluntary Services. The company was incorporated on 29th April 2004 and is limited by guarantee.

4.2 Objectives

4.2.1 “The aim of the charity is to promote any charitable purposes for the benefit of the community in the local government district of Easington and its neighbourhood (hereinafter called “the area of benefit”) and in particular the advancement of education, the protection of health and the relief of poverty, distress and sickness. The charity also aims to promote and organize co-operation in the achievement of the above purposes and to that end bring together in council representatives of the voluntary organizations and statutory authorities within the area of benefit.”

4.3 During 2005 a new management board was elected and staff appointed which has resulted in a change of focus. Services have been realigned to be offered predominantly on an outreach basis. Wherever possible ECVS staff visit client group premises to provide consultation, mentoring and advice at the point of need. Client groups are often, though not exclusively, located within community buildings and reinforcing these links along with building more robust networks of support is viewed by ECVS as an important element in their supporting role.

4.4 Similarly ECVS has refocused its training provision by giving an increased emphasis to similar sized training groups of 6 - 15 people. Sessions are more interactive rather than formal presentations. The aim is a more bespoke response to the needs of the voluntary sector particularly in the areas of greatest need.

4.5 ECVS continue to maximise wherever possible, numerous external funding sources. Historically the district funding is used to support the core activity of the service i.e. towards management and administration costs.

5. Implications

5.1 Financial

5.1.1 This report is seeking to confirm the level of support for the ECVS for the 2005/2006 and 2006/2007 financial years. At present there is a budget provision of £30,000 for 2005/2006 and the same amount has been requested for 2006/2007.

5.2 Legal

5.2.1 It is not considered that there are any legal implications.

5.3 Policy

5.3.1 Previous Council policy has been to fund the CVS for the life of each Council and it is recommended to maintain this commitment. It is further recommended to maintain an annual review of the actual level of grant awarded.

5.3.2 As the new management structure is now in place it is proposed to formalize, over the next financial year, a service level agreement between the Council and ECVS in order that this agreement can be used as a basis to assess performance.

5.4 Risk

5.4.1 A risk assessment has been completed and the necessary actions required to manage the identified risks have been/will be implemented.

5.5 Communications

5.5.1 The ECVS will be informed as to the outcome of this request and publicity will be sought regarding the handover of grant and an appropriate press statement made. In addition the District Council will ask to be recognised on any publication produced by the ECVS.

5.6 **Corporate**

5.6.1 The role of the ECVS fits in with the corporate plan by working in partnership to give support to local community group that deliver services and facilities which improve the health of residents, develop locally based learning opportunities and builds capacity.

5.7 **Equality and Diversity**

5.7.1 It is not considered that there are any Equality and Diversity implications.

5.8 **E-Government**

5.8.1 It is not considered that there are any E-Government implications.

5.9 **Procurement**

5.9.1 It is not considered that there are any procurement implications.

5.10 **Social Inclusion**

5.10.1 Core funding of the ECVS will give further support to community/voluntary group operating throughout the district who offer a wide range of facilities/services to the community some of which are located in areas of greatest need.

6. **Recommendation**

6.1 It is recommended that in accordance with the approved policy to support the Easington Council of Voluntary Service a grant of £30,000 be awarded for 2005/2006 and a similar grant awarded in 2006/2007, subject to the outcome of the 2006/2007 budget process.

Background Papers/Documents Referred to in Preparing this Report:-

District of Easington Risk Assessment

Letter of request from the ECVS

Copy of ECVS Annual Report

CVS for Easington District Financial Statement for the year ended 31st March 2005

J. Goodwin Executive Member for Community and Culture