

# EXECUTIVE DECISION RECORD SHEET

**Name of Portfolio Holder:** Councillor Andrew Williams

**Portfolio:** Community Leadership

**Date of Report:**

## **Strategic Partner Funding levels and extension to current Strategic Partner Programme**

### **Recommendations made and reasons:**

1. To award funding to the Council's core Strategic Partners for the financial year 2014/15 as follows:

Dacorum Citizens Advice Bureau	£171,890.00
Community Action Dacorum (Including Shopmobility and Domestic Violence Forum)	£146,780.00
Volunteer Centre Dacorum	£56,960.00
Herts Mediation Service	£33,730.00
The Centre in the Park	£34,200.00
DENS (including Dacorum Rent Aid)	£20,500.00
Relate	£48,610.00
Age UK	£40,950.00
Druglink	£63,330.00
Signpost (Urban Access)	£10,600.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£627,550.00</b>

2. To extend the current three year Strategic Partner Programme (which ends in 2014/15) by one further year so as to include the financial year 2015/16.

### **Background**

The Strategic Partner Programme invests in a number of strategic partners who work collaboratively with the council to develop capability and capacity in the voluntary sector. Funding provided through the Strategic Partner Programme contributes to the organisation's core costs and is not intended for investment in specific projects. The organisation commits to deliver certain outcomes or improved services to qualify for the funding and the performance against these outcomes is managed through regular performance review meetings and signed funding agreements.

To be eligible to apply for the strategic partner programme, voluntary sector organisations must comply with the following points:

- Carry out activities that are not for profit and do not include any public or local authority;
- Work in England and provide quantifiable benefit to Dacorum;
- Be a corporate body or have a formal constitution if not incorporated;
- Be registered with the Charity Commission (if the organisation has charitable objects and registration is required); and
- Be able to demonstrate a commitment to equality and diversity, have an Equal

## EXECUTIVE DECISION RECORD SHEET

Opportunities Policy and Health & Safety Policy.

Voluntary sector organisations applying for funding to the Strategic Partner Programme are assessed against the following criteria:

- The extent to which the organisation will contribute to meeting the Council's strategic objectives, including its commitment to equality and diversity;
- The ability to contribute experience and expertise to policy development as a critical friend;
- The ability to advocate and give voice to service users and communities of interest to have their experience and issues articulated at a Borough level;
- The ability to support coherence between organisations in the sector, including support for smaller organisations (ensuring small organisations are able to engage and participate through existing networks and forums or through partnerships with other member organisations);
- The ability to demonstrate delivery against agreed outcomes; and
- The robust governance arrangements and evidence that the organisation is efficient and effective and committed to finding on-going efficiency savings to deliver value for money.

Successful applicants to the Strategic Partner Programme must be able to demonstrate their capability and commitment to;

- Working collaboratively with other organisations in the voluntary sector at local, regional and national level;
- Supporting the development and capacity of organisations in the voluntary sector including small organisations in the borough;
- Working at a strategic level to inform and act as an advocate on behalf of the wider voluntary sector to the Council; and
- Collectively contribute to the management and maintenance of a positive reputation of the Borough as a whole.

All of our current Strategic Partners have been appointed this status via a robust and thorough application process.

In line with Compact principles, we offer Strategic Partner status for a period of three years. Funding levels for each year is decided in accordance with the budget setting process and we advise partners that it should not be assumed to be maintained.

Each organisation has a specific Funding Agreement which sets out conditions of funding and monitoring arrangements. It also includes additional expectations, such as the acknowledgement of the Council's funding in publicity material. In addition, the Council sets specific conditions of the funding, monitoring will focus on the completion of activities, the achievement of agreed outcomes and outputs and on efficiency in the use of the funding and how they have added value across the sector. The Council also interview each strategic partner yearly to understand and monitor their performance, and ensure delivery of their service in line with their original application to the programme.

The current SPP programme started in April 2012. The ten core organisations have SPP status for three years – this covers financial years 12/13, 13/14, 14/15. Therefore, 2014/15 is

## EXECUTIVE DECISION RECORD SHEET

the final year of the current programme.

This report recommends that funding levels are approved and maintained at existing levels for 2014/15 (as outlined in the above recommendation).

This report also recommends, that a one year extension to the current SPP is offered to all 10 organisations within this report. This extension will enable the development of discussions regarding accommodation and leases, particularly in light of the development of the Public Service Quarter. The one year extension will also offer Officers the opportunity to review future funding arrangements and, where necessary devise appropriate future models for commissioning voluntary sector organisations. This will be a great change to the Council funding mechanisms and therefore work will need to begin to shape this approach during 2014. Any future funding models e.g. commissioning will be approved via the appropriate routes and will involve thorough consultation with relevant voluntary sector organisations, as outlined in the Compact.

### **Financial Analysis**

Existing budgets utilised to fund as follows:

Dacorum Citizens Advice Bureau	£171,890.00
Community Action Dacorum (Including Shopmobility)	£146,780.00
Volunteer Centre Dacorum	£56,960.00
Herts Mediation Service	£33,730.00
The Centre in the Park	£34,200.00
DENS (including Dacorum Rent Aid)	£20,500.00
Relate	£48,610.00
Age UK	£40,950.00
Druglink	£63,330.00
Signpost (Urban Access)	£10,600.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£627,550.00</b>

### **Officers / Councillors / Ward Councillors / Stakeholders Consulted:**

Steven Baker, Assistant Director, Chief Executive's Unit

Matthew Rawdon, Group Manager People

Natalie Webb, Community Partnerships Team Leader

Cllr Andrew Williams

Cllr Neil Harden

### **Monitoring Officer/Chief Financial Officer Comments:**

Monitoring Officer: - No further comments.

**Deputy Section 151 Officer:** - No further comments

### **Implications:**

**Risk:** failure to provide funding at the levels outlined in this report would have a significant detrimental impact on the voluntary sector and on the community.

**Value for Money:** the Strategic Partners listed in this report offer value for money by delivering services within the community which are targeted services that the Council is unable to offer. Funding agreements ensure that the Council achieves value for money for residents by ensuring that each partner responds to community need and delivers in line with the councils priorities. By extending the SPP, the Council has the opportunity to maximise

## EXECUTIVE DECISION RECORD SHEET

value for money by preparing for the future and potentially exploring new models of procuring voluntary sector services from 2016/17.

**Options Considered and reasons for rejection:**

To not fund or to change funding levels: This is rejected because there will be a significant detrimental impact on all organisations involved and on local residents.

**Portfolio Holders Signature:**

**Date:**

**Details of any interests declared and any dispensations given by the Standards Committee:**

**For Member Support Officer use only**

Date Decision Record Sheet received from portfolio holder: 28/05/14

Date Decision Published: 29/05/14 Decision No: PH/024/14

Date of Expiry of Call-In Period: 05/06/14

Date any Call-In received or decision implemented: