

Report title: VCS Grants Prospectus

Wards affected: Citywide

Strategic Director: Alison Comley

Report Author: Jane Houben

RECOMMENDATION for the Mayor's approval:

1. That the content of the VCS Grants Prospectus (attached) is approved as the guide for Bristol City Council grants investment (called the Bristol Impact Fund) for the next 4 years.
2. That the publication of the VCS Grants Prospectus is approved as the launch of the 2017/2021 Grant Application Round.
3. That the process and timings for Grant Applications is approved.

Key background / detail:

a. Purpose of report: The report introduces a new guide to the council's grant funding to the voluntary and community sector (VCS) from 2017 to 2021 (called the VCS Grants Prospectus) and a newly aligned and pooled £3.4m strategic grants fund to reduce disadvantage and inequality (called the Bristol Impact Fund). Both the VCS Grants Prospectus and the Bristol Impact Fund have been co-designed with colleagues from the local voluntary and community sector. The report is seeking approval for the VCS Grants Prospectus, for the Bristol Impact Fund and for the application process and time table as outlined.

b. Key details:

1. The VCS Grants Prospectus and the Bristol Impact Fund have been co-designed with colleagues from the VCS and have also been subject to testing and full consultation with the sector.
2. Not all the council's grant streams are being aligned and pooled to form the new Bristol Impact Fund. Of the council's total £7.7m p.a. revenue grant funding to the VCS, (based on 2015-16 figures), we are pooling £3.4m. If we can demonstrate the success of this new approach we hope to bring other council and non-council grant streams into the fund in future years.
3. Grant Streams are being pooled from four directorates and include monies from Transport, Neighbourhoods and Communities, People Adults and Public Health. There are no children's grant streams in this fund and therefore grant proposals with a sole or primary focus on children will not be considered.
4. The £3.4m p.a. Bristol Impact Fund will focus on three impacts: reducing disadvantage and inequality; improving health and wellbeing; and increasing resilience.

5. Consultation feedback from the sector has shaped the design of the application processes with the aim of making them proportionate and accessible. We have developed the processes, working closely with Mark Hubbard from Voscur, so that they are Compact compliant and reflect best practice whilst being deliverable within available resources. The small grant process (under £10,000 p.a.) moves away from our traditional written application form and instead will be appraised through a discussion format.
6. Our proposed timing of the grant application process takes into account the timings of school holidays, the need for an extended application window to enable collaborative applications, the desire to avoid clashing with the provisional timing of the Community Support Services commissioning process and the implementation of this new Bristol Impact Fund two-stage appraisal and allocations approach.
7. We will provide information about the Prospectus and the Bristol Impact Fund in a number of ways: overview and summary sections available on our webpages, a designed PDF of the full prospectus for people to download and read, and downloadable individual sections/chapters in plain text.