

Appendix C

Bristol City Council Equality Impact Assessment Form

(Please refer to the Equality Impact Assessment guidance when completing this form)



Name of proposal	Development of Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Grants Prospectus
Directorate and Service Area	Neighbourhoods (& cross-council)
Name of Lead Officer	Jane Houben

Step 1: What is the proposal?

Please explain your proposal in Plain English, avoiding acronyms and jargon. This section should explain how the proposal will impact service users, staff and/or the wider community.

1.1 What is the proposal?

Bristol City Council is changing the way it delivers grant funding to organisations in Bristol. We have worked with colleagues in the voluntary and community sector (VCS) to co-design this new approach to the way we use grant funding. It is called the VCS Grants Prospectus and it will bring £3.4m of the council's grant funds together to improve the lives of disadvantaged people in the city and reduce inequality. The prospectus outlines what we want to achieve and what we expect from grant organisations which is a change from the way previous grants have been delivered.

Historically grant funding within the Council has been delivered through separate funding streams in different directorates, with no single view of how hard that funding is working for the city. By aligning our grant streams through the new prospectus we are able to focus on key priorities and challenges within the city and to be very clear about what we are trying to achieve strategically with this funding.

There are many pressures faced by disadvantaged people in our city and we want to ensure that our investment of public funding into the voluntary and community sector helps to tackle disadvantage and has a positive impact for Bristol citizens. We recognise that although £3.4 million is a significant fund, it is clearly not of a scale to tackle all the factors shaping disadvantage in Bristol.

We have therefore agreed five different 'key challenges' which we want the grants-funded activity to address.

The council currently invests around £18m in grants and concessions annually in supporting VCS organisations. This does not include contract investment whereby the council purchases services from organisations in the voluntary sector.

From our 2015-16 figures, of this £18m:

- £1.5m is the notional value of annual concessionary rents or leases with local VCS organisations
- £8.5m is through mandatory business rate relief to charities
- £7.2m is through revenue grants
- £0.4m is through small annual grants
- £0.3m is through discretionary business rate relief

This proposal will bring £3.4m of the revenue grants together to form the new Bristol Impact Fund. The remaining revenue grant streams will either continue (and information about these is given in the prospectus) or will be used to purchase services through contracts to better meet local need (e.g. e.g. The Care Act has meant that some grant-funded activities will become part of the council's statutory provision and services will have to be commissioned and purchased through contracts).

Organisations will apply for grants to address one or more of the Key Challenges, using their skills and experience and agreeing to our stated 'Ways of Working':

- Giving the right help at the right time
- Helping people to help themselves and each other
- Building on the strengths of people and communities
- Connecting people and organisations within and across communities

They will have to tell us how their work will contribute to our grant impacts: reducing disadvantage and inequality, improving health and wellbeing, increasing resilience of individuals and communities.

The Prospectus will bring significant change to the way VCS organisations apply for, and work with, grant funding from the council. We have designed processes that are proportionate, open and accessible to the diverse range of VCS organisations in the city.

We have worked in a different way to develop this Prospectus, using co-design principles and working alongside colleagues in the VCS who have shaped, informed and guided this work throughout.

We started this work by developing a shared vision, underpinned by a set of working principles for the development of the Prospectus. We 'tested' these principles and vision in July 2016 with a number of groups, including equalities voice and influence organisations.

We have sought the wider sector's views through a three-month consultation. Their comments and suggestions have been collated and shared with the co-design group at two post-consultation meetings where we explored the ideas and concerns raised. The co-design phase ended on May 9th and the VCS group members will not have sight of the document as it is re-redrafted beyond this point. They will also not have any input into or sight of the application processes post consultation.

Step 2: What information do we have?

Decisions must be evidence-based, and involve people with protected characteristics that could be affected. Please use this section to demonstrate understanding of who could be affected by the proposal.

2.1 What data or evidence is there which tells us who is, or could be affected?

The prospectus will focus £3.4m of council revenue grant money on the most disadvantaged people in Bristol. The evidence of disadvantage in the city is set out in the VCS Grants Prospectus Key Challenges which uses data about disadvantage from the following sources:

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) 2015
Fairness Commission Report
Social Isolation Report
Early Intervention Report

We know that people who experience discrimination (because they have one or more protected characteristics) are more likely to experience other factors contributing to disadvantage, thus compounding their experience.

We know from the above data sources that there is also a spatial dimension to disadvantage in the city, as shown in the JSNA 2015.

People experience more disadvantage in the South (particularly the outer areas) and in the north and west outer areas of the city as well as in the inner eastern areas.

We have provided examples backed up by available data for each of the five Key Challenges in order to give shape to our grant process. These are only examples and do not in any way illustrate or reflect our priorities.

2.2 Who is missing? Are there any gaps in the data?

We know that data about incidence and service take up does not capture LGB or Transgender people because of poor monitoring practice and reluctance/distrust from the LGB and T communities towards completing returns. Therefore our data for LGBT+ people is poor.

We know that we do not have full information about the number of refugees and asylum seekers in the city and we know that the number is going to increase and currently the proportion of grant funding used to support migrants is only 2%. The two currently grant-funded organisations (working with asylum seekers and refugees) have data about demand and use of their services but this cannot be used to predict future need.

We have some data about the diversity of VCS organisations in the city but this is not comprehensive. In terms of equalities-led organisations we know that:

Eighty seven organisations who proactively target one or more equalities groups were funded by the council in 2014/15, twenty four of which are equalities led organisations (i.e over 75% of their management committee are women/disabled people/people from BME communities/LGBT/older).

We recognise that the VCS sector is changing rapidly. This is due to a combination of factors, for example austerity has reduced public funding, charitable donations are decreasing, procurement and commissioning can favour larger organisations and consortiums, organisations may have dissolved due to funding problems or management issues. For example, there are fewer BME led VCS organisations in the city today compared with five years ago, in particular we have seen a reduction in the number of African-Caribbean led organisations. However there are many more BME led social enterprises and

social entrepreneurs who are keen to deliver services to BME communities.

2.3 How have we involved, or will we involve, communities and groups that could be affected?

We have co-designed the grants prospectus with colleagues from the local VCS. We have included two colleagues from local equalities voice and influence organisations in this co-design group and have established links with BEING (Bristol Equalities & Inclusion Networking Group), both through these two members and through engaging with BEING at key points in the process (such as 'testing' the vision and principles). We have engaged with and involved BEING in the consultation and post consultation.

We ran a 13 week consultation from mid-November 2015 to mid-February 2016. Local VCS organisations are our primary stakeholders for the grants prospectus and so we asked Voscur to run the consultation with us. We held seven specific, targeted sessions for equality groups so that issues relevant to protected characteristics could be raised and discussed in a focused and safe space. These were attended by 40 people in total.

Over the period we ran and/or attended a total of 14 consultation sessions and through these we had face-to-face contact with 265 people from 170 VCS organisations in the city and 6 non-VCS organisations. We had survey responses from 22 people, telephone and other meeting contact with 10 people and a further two organisations provided written submissions.

In terms of the spatial factors, we briefed Neighbourhood Partnership Coordinators and provided summary papers for all Neighbourhood Partnerships so that they were aware of the proposal and the consultation process.

In our consultation, equalities-led organisations told us that:

- We need to extend our reach and think about how we publicise the grants available so that they reach small and specialist groups (especially BME led organisations).
- BME groups are underrepresented in the city and support is needed to build capacity in this sector so that they can be part of the Prospectus grant. Targeted support should be in place for communities where there is evidence of very specific need that is not being met, particularly for African Caribbean and Gypsy/Traveller organisations.

- The processes must be accessible for BME organisations.
- Women’s experiences were not sufficiently reflected in the draft Key Challenges examples.
- The consultation proposals were not clear about how the council would fulfil our Public Sector Equality Duties with regard to consultation, voice & influence.
- We need to think about how we can make Care Leavers a consideration in our allocations
- Faith organisations may be disinclined to apply for grants because they feel they will be rejected because of clauses about proselytising.
- Older people or Disabled people might find it difficult to find out about changes to services as a result the old grants ending and new grants starting
- There are large BME communities in South Glos at the boundaries with Bristol. How will the grants work for organisations that might see these people?
- Neighbouring authorities do not fund much LGB provision. How should funded organisations respond to requests from outside Bristol?

We have collated all consultation feedback and have put these into a single ‘you said, we did’ document (Appendix A) that shows how these comments have been addressed.

The council also commissioned a piece of facilitated work with some leaders from local BME voluntary sector organisations to look at the issues faced by BME-led organisations and some of the solutions. This work considered possible solutions from BCC, the VCS generally and from the organisations themselves. The BCC solutions matrix has provided us with possible solutions to a number of concerns and we have used these to help us develop the final Prospectus and processes (see Appendix B).

Step 3: Who might the proposal impact?

Analysis of impacts on people with protected characteristics must be rigorous. Please demonstrate your analysis of any impacts in this section, referring to all of the equalities groups as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

3.1 Does the proposal have any potentially adverse impacts on people with

protected characteristics?

The focus of the prospectus is to reduce disadvantage and inequality. However we will need to ensure that grant funding is used in a way that gives us the right distribution and balance of provision in terms of factors that contribute to disadvantage, communities of interest and geographic communities and that our use of grant-funding does not counter our stated vision and principles approach to increase understanding and respect between different people.

Tackling discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations are fundamental principles and the intention is that people with protected characteristics will benefit from the new arrangements.

We have identified potentially adverse impacts on people with protected characteristics if we do not successfully fulfil our Public Sector Duty under the Equality Act 2010. Having considered the feedback received from grant-funded equalities voice and influence organisations and having considered the current and future needs of the council we realise that will we need to engage with people from equalities communities (people with Protected Characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010) in ways that are appropriate to the changing nature of the local authority and we will use a tender process (not through this prospectus) to specify and purchase a service to enable us to fulfil this duty.

This £3.4m pooled fund is a new grant approach that is open to local VCS organisations whether or not they are currently funded. VCS organisations wanting to apply for grant will need to demonstrate how they will work with disadvantaged people to create change and meet our expectations regarding the Ways of Working to address one or more of the key challenges in order to reduce disadvantage and inequality, improve health and wellbeing and increase resilience. It is highly likely that some currently funded organisations will not be grant-funded from April 2017.

Local VCS organisations will therefore be affected by the prospectus, particularly those that are currently grant-funded by the council. There is a diverse range of VCS organisations in the city in terms of size, specialisation, structure and the diversity of governing body and staff, with some organisations being equality-led.

If a prospectus grant application from a currently-funded organisation is not successful and their perception is that funding appears to be reallocated

towards another user group, for example an increase in funding to support new migrants to the city, this could arouse resentment. Therefore ensuring groups understand the Key Challenges and our Allocations Matrix will be very important and our communication about this needs to be undertaken before, during and after the allocations process has been completed to minimise community tensions.

Organisations run by and for equalities communities could potentially lose funding. Publicity needs to be very clear that the prospectus is not a process for organisations to bid for the same activities they are currently doing; if they wish to apply for a grant every group, including equalities-led organisations, needs to review its current activities and to think about how it can best contribute to the Prospectus objectives.

There could also potentially be an impact on people who use the services of grant funded organisations, if the organisation is unsuccessful at getting a grant. The prospectus and the way the grants are allocated should ensure that those organisations who receive funding focus on the needs of communities to tackle disadvantage, but it is possible that some gaps in service provision may appear following the new round of grant allocations. We will be using a new approach to grant allocation that builds in consideration and impact assessment in order to identify potential gaps and allocate funds across beneficiary groups. See 3.2.

3.2 Can these impacts be mitigated or justified? If so, how?

- We have looked carefully at the consultation feedback received about the application processes and have worked to design a very different, new application process for the small grant.
- We are developing a communications plan so that we target our media and launch of the prospectus and we will use design to make it easier to navigate.
- In light of the feedback from BEING and in order to mitigate the risks they have highlighted, we intend to commission activities to enable us to fulfil our Public Sector Duties under the Equality Act 2010.
- We will provide short guidance to faith organisations about proselytising in the application forms.
- We have made it clear from the outset that we will need a balance of provision across the city and that we are designing a grants process that makes this possible (i.e. not based on scoring). We have developed an allocations matrix which shows the impact assessments we will make

(considering the mix of allocations geographically, across the range of beneficiaries and across Key Challenges).

- We will undertake an EqIA on our initial allocation proposals to make sure that these do not have an adverse impact on people with protected characteristics.
- We are working with Voscur, our local VCS support provider to identify support needed by organisations to help them apply under the new prospectus grants process and have identified priorities for support.
- We will use our Bristol Compact agreed Withdrawal of Grant Protocol and meet with organisations that lose grant funding in order to understand and plan to mitigate the impacts of funding loss and to plan communications with them for their service users.
- We understand that communities span council boundaries. However these are Bristol City Council funds and we have agreed that they should be used to benefit residents of Bristol.

3.3 Does the proposal create any benefits for people with protected characteristics?

Yes. The new approach to the grants Prospectus is to ensure that disadvantaged people with protected characteristics benefit from public funding into the VCS and that the funding has a positive impact for Bristol citizens.

The new grants funding will be awarded to organisations who can demonstrate that they will work to tackle the key challenges in the city.

People with protected characteristics will benefit by VCS organisations working to reduce disadvantage and inequality, improve health and wellbeing and increase resilience by:

- Supporting people to be able to make the most of the resources they have.
- Tackling some of the complex issues that lead to unemployment and underemployment.
- Improving disadvantaged people's access to information, services and opportunities. Helping people to understand their rights, stand against discrimination and inequality.
- Enabling people to know what is available to them and to be able to get around the city so they can benefit from all it offers.
- Supporting holistic approaches to wellbeing, community engagement and social life.
- Enabling people to use their voices to influence the things that matter to

them in their community, at neighbourhood level, city level through participation and representation

- Supporting groups at risk of and affected by exclusion and isolation, including those who are the victims of hate crime.
- Developing or building on existing local social networks within individual communities.

3.4 Can they be maximised? If so, how?

The benefits can be maximised by ensuring VCS organisations applying for grants understand the picture of disadvantage within the city so that they can align their work to focus on the key challenges in the city. The Key Challenges document will be available as part of the Grants Prospectus to all organisations applying for grants.

By ensuring that all grant-funded organisations have fit-for-purpose equalities policies in place and that these are meaningfully implemented – we will do this by checking their policies at grant allocation stage and by requiring them to provide us with annual equalities monitoring information and evidence of how they use this information to address gaps and increase understanding.

Step 4: So what?

The Equality Impact Assessment must be able to influence the proposal and decision. This section asks how your understanding of impacts on people with protected characteristics has influenced your proposal, and how the findings of your Equality Impact Assessment can be measured going forward.

4.1 How has the equality impact assessment informed or changed the proposal?

This EqIA

- (a) Informed our approach to consultation, particularly in identifying the support needs of equality-led organisations to prepare for the new grants process. This included questions to organisations about their support needs to access the new grants process.
- (b) Resulted in us running 7 equalities –specific consultation sessions and collating feedback from these to inform us about intended and unintended impacts for different equalities groups. This led to the commissioning of a piece of work with a number of BME-led organisations, one strand of which was looking at how the Prospectus

<p>can be developed to support BME organisations.</p> <p>(c) Changed and informed our approach to how we intend to facilitate our Public Sector Equalities Duty.</p> <p>(d) Led to the planned inclusion of a further EqIA at our grant allocation stage.</p> <p>(e) Changed and informed our approach to the application processes, particularly for the small grant.</p> <p>(f) Raised awareness of the need to proactively manage the ‘messages’ about grant allocation</p>
<p>4.2 What actions have been identified going forward?</p> <p>(a) EqIA has been planned at allocation stage</p> <p>(b) We will ensure that monitoring processes are proportionate but still include equalities monitoring of service users.</p>
<p>4.3 How will the impact of your proposal and actions be measured moving forward?</p> <p>All the consultation feedback has been collated in a ‘We asked -You Said – We Did’ format and made available, with Voscur’s report about their consultation sessions, on the council’s website.</p> <p>Organisations funded through the Prospectus pooled grant will be asked to suggest measures for the changes they expect to create. These measures must relate to the stated impacts (reduce disadvantage and inequality, improve health and wellbeing, increase resilience). We will work with organisations to develop a shared ‘basket’ of indicators through the life of the grant. This will enable us to measure the impact of the Prospectus pooled grant.</p> <p>All funded organisations will be required to undertake equalities monitoring for their service users and report this collated information to us annually so that we can see the overall impact of the fund. They will also be asked to tell us how they have used this information, what gaps they have identified in their uptake/provision and how they will address these in the following year.</p>

Appendices:

Appendix A: VCS Grants Prospectus Consultation Feedback

Appendix B: Solutions Matrix BCC

Service Director Sign-Off:	Equalities Officer Sign Off: Anneke van Eijkern
Date:	Date: 25 May 2016