

Taunton Deane Borough Council

Executive - 7 December 2011

Taunton Deane Borough Council's Voluntary and Community Sector Spending Review

Report of the Strategy Lead Officer

(This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Warmington)

1. Executive Summary

The Strategy Unit has a budget of £235,000 (2011/12) to support the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) in delivering services consistent with our Corporate Priorities.

A recommendation is being made as part of the Budget Review Programme and "Year 1 Savings Plans" – see report to Corporate Scrutiny 24 November 2011 – to reduce this budget by £30,000 in 2012/13. This represents a 12.8% cut in this particular budget, although is only a 4.9% cut in the Councils overall spend on the VCS (as detailed in Appendix 1).

This report recommends that this saving be made as follows:

2012/13: Remove funding to the Priority Areas Strategy (£10k); reduce the small grants fund by £10k; and make small proportionate savings to organisations with Service Level Agreements totalling £10k.

The report further recommends that a 'Grants Panel' should be established in Spring 2012 to invite bids from the VCS and allocate funding within new 3-year Service Level Agreements (SLA) for the period 2013/14 to 2016/17.

The proposed Grants Panel will create a more open, transparent and effective system for the awarding of funding to the VCS. The activities of the Grants Panel will be monitored by Community Scrutiny.

2. Purpose of Report

Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC) provides financial support to a wide range of VCS organisations that help us deliver our corporate priorities consistent with community needs.

TDBC released a total of £615,000 (approx) to the VCS in 2011/2012. Funding is awarded to the VCS through four main service areas:

- Strategy Unit
- Community Development Unit
- Economic Development Unit
- Housing

The detail of the VCS spend within Community Development, Economic Development and Housing is provided at Appendix 1.

All funding is awarded by the relevant Service Area Manager or a Lead Officer through a mix of Service Level Agreements (SLA) or small grants. The relevant portfolio holder is involved in these decisions.

This report will deal with the following

1. Cuts to that element of the Strategy Unit budget that is used to support the VCS, to take effect from 1 April 2012.
2. The establishment of new procedures to allocate funding to the VCS (across all service areas) from 1 April 2013

3. Background

Comprehensive Spending Review, Big Society and Localism

Following the Comprehensive Spending Review, Public Sector budgets have come under severe pressure over the short to medium term. The challenge for TDBC is to find savings relating to 40% of its overall budget over a four year period.

A project was set up called the 'Budget Review Project' to identify options for closing the future budget gap of the council. These were tested with the political group leaders to identify options that could be progressed further and one of these included a reduction to the VCS budget. However, there is a dilemma in that a healthy VCS is seen as a means to alleviate cuts to local authority services. Accordingly, cuts to the VCS have to be carefully considered to minimise impacts. Remaining budgets need to be seen to be delivering efficient support to and from the VCS. The Government is promoting collaborative working with the VCS through Big Society and Localism.

TDBC recognises the vital role the VCS play in providing services and advice to

the community. They engage and empower local people and reach groups and individuals who may be marginalised or disadvantaged.

Communities and Local Government - Best Value Duty

New statutory guidance (2011) on the Best Value Duty sets out some reasonable expectations of the way authorities should work with voluntary and community groups and small businesses when facing difficult funding decisions.

It states that ' Authorities should seek to avoid passing on disproportionate reductions - by not passing on larger reductions to the voluntary and community sector and small businesses as a whole, *than they take on themselves* - and in particular:

- An authority intending to reduce or end funding (where 'funding' means both grant funding and any fixed term contract) or other support to a voluntary and community organisation or small business should give at least three months' notice of the actual reduction to both the organisation involved and the public/service users.
- An authority should actively engage the organisation and service users as early as possible before making a decision on: the future of the service; any knock-on effect on assets used to provide this service; and the wider impact on the local community.

Somerset Compact

The Somerset Compact is a shared commitment by statutory and voluntary organisations to work together, and provides guidelines for working well together.

The Somerset Compact reflects the principles established in the National Compact. These include, but are not limited to: reference to meaningful consultation, commissioning and procurement and managing changes to funding arrangements.

The Somerset Compact funding code of practice states that 'Authorities should offer a consultation period of 3 months before making any reductions in funding under normal circumstances unless different arrangements have been agreed in a contract'.

TDBC Review of Financial Support for the VCS

To assist the Authority in making decisions on future VCS funding options, we have undertaken a review of the VCS spending across the Authority covering the period of 2007-2012. This provided an opportunity to revisit all organisations receiving funding to ensure outcomes support the Council's own priorities. The timing is appropriate in that the majority of SLA arrangements are due to expire on 31 March 2012. The review also enables us to consider more efficient ways of allocating resources.

We have looked at best practice examples from other Somerset Authorities with the aim of introducing a new, more transparent and effective council-wide system of allocating resources within SLA arrangements. This is discussed further at Section 5 below. If supported, this new process will have an impact on the way in which all services in the Authority award funding payments to the VCS from 1 April 2013.

4. Strategy Unit and Financial Support for the VCS

The Strategy Unit has awarded £842,000 (approx) to the VCS since April 2007. The annual budget has increased from £157,000 (2006/2007) to £235,000 (2011/2012).

A summary of currently funded VCS organisations and how their services link to the Council's Corporate Aims can be viewed in Appendix 2.

The Strategy Unit VCS annual budget is currently awarded through a mix of Service Level Agreements and VCS grants i.e. awards of 'small grants' to a maximum of £5k.

From the overall budget, £180,000 is awarded through SLA arrangements. During the current financial year this budget is being used to fund 8 VCS organisations. All SLA agreements are due to expire on 31 March 2012, with the exception of those for North Taunton Partnership and Link Partnership which are due to expire on 31 March 2013. Due to limited staff resources, a number of the SLAs are not currently effectively monitored to ensure expected outcomes are being delivered.

Where appropriate, the Strategy Unit works with other service areas to ensure that support to the VCS is coordinated in a thematic manner. This includes working with Housing to support the Link Partnership and North Taunton Partnership, and with Community Development to support Youth Initiatives.

The annual allowance for small grants during the financial year 2011/12 is £20,000 (approx). This budget has (so far) been used to fund 4 VCS organisations. Applications for funding can be made on an ad hoc basis throughout the financial year to carry out projects that are aligned with the Council's Corporate Priorities. Proposals are considered by the Executive Councillor responsible for Community Leadership' and decisions are advertised in the Weekly Bulletin.

Of the remaining budget, £25k is currently allocated to the Youth Initiatives Fund and £10k is identified to support the Priority Areas Strategy.

2011/12 Budget Allocations Summary

		£
1	Service Level Organisations (8 organisations)	180,000
2	Youth Initiatives Funding	25,000
3	Priority Areas Strategy	10,000
4	Small grants	20,000
	Total	235,000

5. Proposals

A recommendation is being made as part of the Budget Review Programme and “Year 1 Savings Plans” – see report to Corporate Scrutiny 24 November 2011 – to reduce the Strategy Unit VCS budget by £30,000 (12.8%) in 2012/13. This would reduce the VCS budget from the Strategy Unit to £205,000.

It should be noted that this reduction affects only the Strategy Unit VCS budgets and that the reduction on overall spend on VCS spend is around 4.9%, with the full list of spend detailed in Appendix 1.

Year 1 (2012/13)

The proposal below (for Year 1) relates to the Strategy Unit only and does not impact on other service areas.

The following five options have been considered to meet the proposed reduction in budget (£30k):

Option 1	Cease providing small grants, saving £20,000 and reduce all SLA's by a small proportion with the exception of North Taunton Partnership and the Link Partnership which already have a SLA in place to cover the financial year 2012/2013
Option 2	Cease providing small grants, saving £20,000 and remove the Priority Areas Strategy (PAS) contribution of £10,000
Option 3	Cease PAS contribution of £10,000 and reduce small grants fund by £10,000 and make small proportionate cuts to all existing SLAs amounting to a total of £10k. Roll forward existing SLA arrangements to 31 March 2013.
Option 4	Cut Youth Initiatives Fund by £10,000 or less plus variation of the above (options 1,2 or 3)
Option 5	Reduce or remove a combination of the following SLAs: Accessible Transport (currently £10k pa) Citizens Advice Bureau (currently £91,500 pa) Community Council for Somerset (currently £6k pa) Somerset Association of Local Councils (currently £1k pa) Taunton Voluntary Action (currently £26,500 pa) Wiveliscombe Area Partnership including Wivey Link (currently £35k pa)

Recommendation

An impact assessment regarding each of these options can be viewed at Appendix 3.

Option 3 is the preferred option. This option allows currently funded organisations to be awarded slightly reduced funding rather than complete and sudden withdrawal of funding. It also retains some funding (albeit reduced) for small grants (£10k approx) to enable the Council to support small 'ad hoc' projects within the VCS that are aligned with our Corporate Priorities (subject to the existing bidding / scrutiny process). This option complies with the County/National Compact. Organisations will be given 3 months notice of any reduction in funding. This option would allow the Council to continue supporting VCS organisations that support the Council's corporate aims and provide support for those most vulnerable members in the community who rely on their services. Some negative impacts are to VCS organisations and service delivery is unavoidable, but particularly difficult to predict at this stage (refer to Appendix 3 and 5).

It is recommended that existing SLA arrangements are rolled forward for an additional 12 months

Year 2 (2013/14)

By 31 March 2013, all SLA arrangements will have expired. This presents an opportunity to reconsider our support for the VCS in a strategic manner consistent with the Council's Corporate Priorities. The Corporate Strategy is due to be reviewed during Spring 2012 providing a good opportunity to reassess our requirements from VCS grant recipients.

A review of the Borough Council's support to the VCS (across all service areas) was recently undertaken. The findings of the review highlighted that whilst the Council has developed good working relations with the VCS, the current practice does not always follow the guidance set in the Somerset Compact or necessarily provide value for money.

The main findings of the review can be summarised as follows:

- The performance of SLAs are not monitored consistently and lack of resources means that this is difficult to achieve.
- Some SLAs are awarded on an annual basis which is against the recommendation in the Somerset Compact funding code of practice which encourages authorities to invest in long term funding for more than one year
- Shared criteria for eligibility are not established and some SLAs do not have a scoring mechanism in place to monitor spend or/and performance.
- Administration of the VCS Budget and SLA arrangements is time-consuming for the authority and for VCS Organisations applying for repeat funding

- Some SLAs and all grant applications are assessed throughout the year meaning that administering applications is time-consuming and costly and does not allow applications to be judged in comparison to other bids.
- Decision making process is not consistent and not all applications go through member call-in process.
- Few shared SLA agreements exist across service areas but match funding is not encouraged consistently.
- There is no mechanism in place to monitor match funded SLA agreements.

Proposed Grants Panel

To deal with these issues it is recommended that a grants / commissioning panel (comprising a mix of relevant members and officers) be established during Spring 2012 to administer and monitor financial support to the VCS from across the Council i.e. those VCS budgets that are held by Strategy Unit, Community Development, Economic Development and Housing

Aims of the proposed Grants Panel

- To introduce a single, transparent and efficient way of allocating grant aid across the Authority
- To reduce the cost of administration in processing applications
- To align application and award processes across the authority.
- To treat all VCS organisations fairly and equally
- To ensure value for money

Specifics

- To create a grants commissioning panel to record, commission and monitor all grant payments by the Council. The panel will be established in Spring 2012 and is made up of relevant Executive and Shadow Executive Councillors (those responsible for Community Leadership) as well as other relevant councillors and officers. It will decide the allocation of VCS funding for 2013/14 to 2016/17
- In line with national compact and the recommendation from the Policy Commission successful organisations will be required to enter into a SLA with the Council to cover a 3 year period for core funding (2013/14 to 2016/17). Performance will be monitored and appropriate exit mechanisms will be included in the SLA.
- A bidding process be established with criteria consistent with the Council's Corporate Priorities. The bidding timetable for SLAs is limited to once in every 3 years and the awarded SLAs will include specific monitoring arrangements including requirement of a 6 monthly report.
- For those organisations which have received funding in previous years the performance of the organisation will be taken into consideration in determining any future funding.

- In line with the Policy Commission's recommendations and the Compact, performance monitoring will be in line with the size of funding received.
- Short term funding (small grants) is still essential and should be retained although at a reduced amount. This can be used as a 'set up' support that new and/or innovative projects require and provide flexibility to respond to acute community needs.
- The bidding period for small grants is twice in a financial year
- All organisations applying for funding need to use a council wide standard application form and guidance.
- An assessment criterion needs will be set clearly so applications are processed against a system which is, as far as possible, *objective* rather than *subjective*. A matrix weighting system using agreed criteria will form the initial sifting of applications.
- All funded groups will receive at least one monitoring visit each year from a relevant officer from TDBC. The officer will provide advice and support and will be the main point of contact throughout the period of funding.

The process is explained as a flow diagram at Appendix 4

Risks involved

There is a small risk that the process may favour current grant recipients and thereby not distribute funding to new and innovative organisations. However, the recommendation is to proceed with this option whilst encouraging a wide range of bidders following an effective marketing campaign.

This grant awarding process was recognised as Best Practice by the Policy Commission in 2007 and fully complies with the County/National Compact and incorporates all Policy Commission recommendations. This process is understood and accepted by local VCS organisations.

6. Mitigation

The Council is actively exploring mitigation measures. Initially this will involve consultation with affected organisations and helping organisations to identify alternative funding / support where possible. In addition, the Council can offer the following:

- The continued provision of Grantfinder and GrantNet on the Council website for the next year to support organisations and individuals identify and apply for alternative funding. The system has proved popular attracting 640 users accessing the TDBC GrantNet / Grantfinder pages in the past 13 months. Grantfinder costs £3,950 per annum and the cost is split equally between Strategy Unit, Community Development Unit and the Economic Development Unit. The Strategy Unit contribution is not taken from the VCS budget.

- The Borough Council, working with Somerset County Council and Mendip District Council, has recently achieved Capital Asset Pathfinder status. This is a Government (Communities and Local Government) led initiative that is seeking to make best use of public assets. All public sector assets (including State sector) have been mapped across Taunton Deane, including details of location, type of service delivery, lease / freehold arrangements, disabled access etc. This will enable a conversation to occur to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of this resource. The needs of the VCS are also being considered. We are committed to mapping VCS assets and including them in dialogue regarding asset management to deliver both improved service delivery and savings. This will occur during 2012.
- In addition, the Taunton Deane Partnership is committed to coordinating bidding activity amongst partners where this is consistent with the priorities of the partnership (these are closely aligned to those of the Borough Council). The Community Council and Taunton Voluntary Action are currently in the process of re-establishing a 'funding network' that will help. The Borough Council will help with supporting relevant bids.

7. Finance Comments

The review of the VCS budgets is integral to the Council's Budget Review Programme, and the need to make significant budget reductions within the current Medium Term Financial Plan period. The proposals within this report comply with the Best Value statutory guidance, with the proposed savings being lower than the proportion of budget reductions the Council is faced with delivering on the non-VCS budgets.

The proposals are robust from a financial perspective. It is advised that the Council should retain the ability to review funding allocations when entering into 3 year funding agreements with VCS organisations. The council itself does not currently have certainty of funding for 3 years plus, therefore there is a (probably small) risk that funding commitments contained in SLAs may not be affordable if the Council's own financial position changes dramatically over the medium term.

8. Legal Comments

There are no legal implications within this report.

9. Links to Corporate Aims

Current funding of the VCS is aligned with the Corporate Strategy and fits closely with 'Tackling Deprivation and Sustainable Community Development'. Cuts to the VCS will inevitably impact on our ability to deliver our corporate priorities. However, the process of review (the results of which will be implemented during 2013/14) should enable us to make closer alignment with the Corporate Strategy and maximise value for money and ensure a robust performance and monitoring regime which is focussed on outcomes.

10. Environmental Implications

This is difficult to judge but I believe it reasonable to assume that there are no obvious environmental implications. There may be secondary implications dependent upon decisions (by those whose grants have been cut) regarding where they invest the remainder of their grant. For example, the Community Council is committed to helping communities to reduce their carbon emissions. The same is true for other organisations. This will only be known following consultation with the affected bodies.

11. Community Safety Implications

As above for Environmental Implications. There may be 'knock-on' effects dependent upon the decisions of those whose grants have been reduced.

12. Equalities Impact

A number of options have been explored to deliver the required savings to the VCS budget during 2011/12. We believe that we have chosen the option with the least impact on equalities groups.

The proposed introduction of a Grants Panel will enable the coordinated distribution of VCS funding across the local authority. This should maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of the funding, so helping to mitigate the impacts of the savings on equalities groups (and the wider community). The TDBC is also committed to other mitigation measures (refer to section 7 above).

An Equality Impact Assessment is included at Appendix 5.

13. Risk Management

TDBC values its good relationship with the VCS. We have sought to reduce the risk to any reputation damage by introducing savings that are consistent with Best Value guidance and by a commitment to support the VCS find additional funding through Grantfinder, supporting bids for funding and helping to make better use of existing assets

14. Partnership Implications

We have good working relations with the VCS. Many sit on the Taunton Deane Partnership or one of its sub groups e.g. Halcon MAG, NT MAG and the Spatial Planning Working Group. This relationship has been influential in developing important work-streams such as the PAS and the Local Development Framework. It is important to maintain these relationships through an open approach to savings within the VCS budget.

A number of our existing SLAs are partnership SLAs with TDP, SCC and the Primary Care Trust. The introduction of a new Grants Panel will need to consider and agree (through consultation) a mechanism to the development of new partnership SLAs.

15. Recommendations

Members are recommended to approve the following:

Strategy Unit: That Option 3 is supported as the way in which to deal with reductions to the VCS budget during 2012/13 by ceasing the £10k contribution to the Priority Areas Strategy; reducing the small grants budget by £10k and making proportionate cuts to the remaining SLAs

Members are requested to provide a steer from Appendix 2 on which of the existing SLAs should be excluded from the proportionate reductions, if any.

Grant Panel (2013/14): That Members support the establishment of a Grant Panel (Spring 2012) to consider the distribution of future funding (from across the Council) to the VCS within new SLA arrangements

Persons to contact

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APPENDIX 1: COUNCIL PAYMENT OF VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR GRANTS

<i>Name of VCS budget:</i>	STRATEGY UNIT: Voluntary and Community Sector SLA's							
<i>Purpose of Budget:</i>	To enable VCS organisations to undertake projects and support sustainability for the benefit of the community in line with our Corporate Aims							
<i>Annual Budget:</i>	£180,000							
<i>Match Funding Attracted:</i>	Unknown							
<i>Budget held by:</i>	Strategy Lead (Mark Leeman)							
<i>Awards Authorised by:</i>	Community Development Portfolio holder							
<i>Application/Award /Monitoring process:</i>	Application via relevant forms, decision follows relevant call in process, some SLA's are monitored to ensure outcomes are being met							
Service Area/Budget	Voluntary Sector Organisation	SLA/Project Funding/Grant/informal agreement	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	Commitments 2011/2012	Commitments 2012/2013
109757	Citizens Advice Bureau	SLA (expires March 2012)	64,000	64,000	81,500	86,500	91,500	
109757	Community Council for Somerset	SLA (expires March 2012)	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	
109757	Accessible Transport (Taunton Deane Community Transport and Slinky)	Rolling agreement	11,000	11,000	13,000	10,000	10,000	
109757	Wivey Link	Expired SLA (now incorporated within SLA for Wiveliscombe Area Partnership)	2,000	2,000	2,000	10,000	10,000	
109757	Slinky (funding merged with Accessible Transport from 09/10)	Rolling agreement	2,000	2,000	**			
109757	Taunton Voluntary Action	Rolling agreement	26,500	26,500	26,500	26,500	26,500	
109757	Relate	Expired SLA	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000		
109757	FEDS	Expired agreement				5,000		
109757	SREC	Expired agreement	4,500	4,500	4,500			

109757	Local Safeguarding Children Board	Expired agreement			1,538			
109757	Somerset Association of Local Councils	Rolling agreement	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1000	
109757	North Taunton Partnership*	SLA (expires March 2013)				5,000	5000	5000
109757	Taunton East*	SLA (expires March 2013)				5,000	5000	5000
109757	Wiveliscombe Area Partnership	SLA (expires March 2013)	7,500	15,000	25,000	25,000	25000	
109757	Youth initiatives fund contribution	Contribution to other budget				15,000	10,000	

134,500	142,000	171,038	205,000	190,000	10,000
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<i>Name of VCS budget:</i>	STRATEGY UNIT: Voluntary and Community Sector Grants							
<i>Purpose of Budget:</i>	To provide adhoc funding to VCS groups enabling organisations to carry out responsive projects, find match funding and support sustainability for the benefit of the wider community in line with the Councils Corporate Aims							
<i>Annual Budget:</i>	£20,000							
<i>Match Funding Attracted</i>	Unknown							
<i>Budget held by:</i>	Strategy Lead: Mark Leeman							
<i>Awards Authorised by:</i>	Community Leadership Portfolio holder							
<i>Application/Award /Monitoring process:</i>	Application via relevant forms, decision follows relevant call in process, spending or outcomes not monitored							
Service Area/Budget	Voluntary Sector Organisation	SLA/Project Funding/Grant/informal agreement	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	Commitments 2011/2012	Commitments 2012/2013
109757	1st Wellington Scout Group	Voluntary sector grant			500			
109757	Albemarle Centre	Voluntary sector grant		1,000			1,663	
109757	Beyond the Gate	Voluntary sector grant	2,000	2,000				
109757	CAB	Voluntary sector grant		5,000				
109757	Compass Disability Services	Voluntary sector grant		2000	2,612	2,700		

109757	Cruse Bereavement	Voluntary sector grant	1,000	1000	1,000	1,000	
109757	Eco Youth Group	Voluntary sector grant		1050			
109757	Friends of Königslutter Society	Voluntary sector grant		400	400	300	
109757	Friends of Lisieux	Voluntary sector grant	500				
109757	Hamilton Boxing Club	Voluntary sector grant			500		
109757	Home Furniture Trust	Voluntary sector grant	3,000	3,000			
109757	Kiddiewinks	Voluntary sector grant	500				
109757	Lisieux Civic Twinning Link	Voluntary sector grant	2,000		3,000		2,600
109757	Lower Henlade Residents Assoc	Voluntary sector grant		450			
109757	Mind	Voluntary sector grant	1,000	1,000	1,500	1,000	
109757	Neighbourhood Care	Voluntary sector grant	4,000				
109757	North Taunton Partnership	Voluntary sector grant			1,014		
109757	Novas Scarman	Voluntary sector grant					2,000
109757	Reminiscence Learning	Voluntary sector grant					
109757	Romani Gypsy Advisory Group	Voluntary sector grant	500				
109757	Saints Youth Club	Voluntary sector grant			480		
109757	Somerset Community Care Matter	Voluntary sector grant				500	
109757	Somerset Playing Fields Associatio	Voluntary sector grant			600	600	600
109757	St Margaret's Hospice	Voluntary sector grant					
109757	SUCH	Voluntary sector grant	1,500				
109757	Taunton Country Market	Voluntary sector grant			2,000		
109757	Taunton Hospital Radio	Voluntary sector grant	500				
109757	The Open Door (Taunton)	Voluntary sector grant			1,000		
109757	The Polish Association	Voluntary sector grant			1,000		
109757	Turners Allotments	Voluntary sector grant			200		
109757	Victim Support	Voluntary sector grant	1,500				
109757	Vitalise	Voluntary sector grant	1,077	500			
109757	Well Woman Centre	Voluntary sector grant					
109757	Wellington Town Council	Voluntary sector grant				1,000	
109757	Wellinton & District Healthy Living	Voluntary sector grant					
109757	Western Boys	Voluntary sector grant			600		
109757	WHERE	Voluntary sector grant					
109757	YMCA	Voluntary sector grant	3,000			3000	
109757	Taunton Voluntary Action	Voluntary sector grant				660	

109757	Priory Community Association	Voluntary sector grant				500		
109757	Somerset Waterways Development	Voluntary sector grant				2,000		
109757	Blackdown Youth Club	Rural Deprived Area Fund				2,000		
109757	Stawley Rural Community Initiative	Rural Deprived Area Fund				1,400		
109757	Nynehead	Rural Deprived Area Fund				200		
109757	Churchinford General Stores	Rural Deprived Area Fund				1,400		

22,077	17,400	16,406	18,260	6,863	0
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<i>Name of VCS budget:</i>	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: Arts Development Grants
<i>Purpose of Budget:</i>	To enable art groups to provide community art projects
<i>Annual Budget:</i>	£20,000
<i>Match Funding Attracted</i>	Unknown
<i>Budget held by:</i>	Community Development Lead: Scott Weetch
<i>Awards Authorised by:</i>	Community Development Portfolio holder
<i>Application/Award /Monitoring process:</i>	3 year SLA agreements made, due to expire in March 2012.

Service Area/Budget	Voluntary Sector Organisation	SLA/Project Funding/Grant/informal agreement	2007/2008	2008/09	2009/2010	2010/2011	Commitments 2011/2012	Commitments 2012/2013
102188	Take Art	SLA			£7,625	£7,625	£7,625	
102188	Action Track	SLA			£2,500	£2,500	£2,500	
102188	Somerset Art Works	SLA			£1,750	£1,750	£1,750	
102188	Somerset Film	SLA			£3,140	£3,140	£3,140	
102188	Somerset Rural Music School	SLA			£4,000	£4,000	£4,000	
102188	SPAEDA	SLA			£500	£500	£500	
102188	Sport Aid Foundation	Grant		£300				
102188	Bath Place Traders Assoc	Arts Revenue Grant				£700		

102188	Richard Huish College -Rock Festi	Arts Revenue Grant			£1,000			
102188	Superact	Arts Revenue Grant			£100			
102188	10 Parishes Festival	Arts Revenue Grant			£1,500			
102188	Step Change	Arts Revenue Grant			£500			
102188	Landdance - Ella Huhne	Arts Revenue Grant			£500			
102188	Taunton Barbershop Harmony Clu	Arts Revenue Grant			£500			
102188	Public Art Community Engagemen	Arts Revenue Grant			£3,000			
102188	Somerset Music Day	Arts Revenue Grant			£1,000			
102188	Mobile stage equipment Bishops L	Arts Revenue Grant			£750			
102188	Street Jam	Arts Revenue Grant			£3,000			

0.00	£300	£31,365	£20,215	£19,515	£0
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<i>Name of VCS budget:</i>	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: Youth Initiatives Fund							
<i>Purpose of Budget:</i>	To support community organisations to provide projects which seek to improve the lives, health and wellbeing of children and young people within Taunton Deane.							
<i>Annual Budget:</i>	£41,228 (contributions from unparished area fund £15k + General fund £15k + £11,228 carried over)							
<i>Match Funding Attracted</i>	Unknown							
<i>Budget held by:</i>	Community Development Lead: Scott Weetch							
<i>Awards Authorised by:</i>	Community Development Portfolio holder							
<i>Application/Award /Monitoring process:</i>	Application via relevant forms, decision follows relevant call in process, no monitoring of spend.							
Service Area/Budget	Voluntary Sector Organisation	SLA/Project Funding/Grant/informal agreement	2007/2008	2008/09	2009/2010	2010/2011	Commitments 2011/2012	Commitments 2012/2013
Com Development	Tectona	Project funding				£10,800		
Com Development	Beyond the Gate	Project funding				£10,000		
Com Development	Stand Against Violence	Project funding				£30,000		
Com Development	Tectona (revised application)	Project funding				£3,650		
Com Development	YMCA	Project funding				£3,000		

Com Development	FUSE	Project funding				£6,000		
Com Development	Revive Youth Club	Project funding				£5,000		
Com Development	Holway LAT	Project funding				£2,790		
Com Development	Moving Together in Somerset	Project funding				£7,000		
Com Development	Halcon Youth Club	Project funding				£3,174		
			0.00	0.00	0.00	81,413.75	0.00	0

<i>Name of VCS budget:</i>	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: Village Hall/Allotments/Sports Clubs Capital Grants							
<i>Purpose of Budget:</i>	To enable Voluntary Community Groups to make improvements to Community facilities.							
<i>Annual Budget:</i>	£46,000							
<i>Match Funding Attracted</i>	£375,578 awarded since 2003 attracting match funding of £2,544,680							
<i>Budget held by:</i>	Community Development Lead: Scott Weetch							
<i>Awards Authorised by:</i>	Community Development Portfolio holder							
<i>Application/Award /Monitoring process:</i>	Application via relevant forms, decision follows relevant call in process, annual monitoring of how funding has been used.							
Service Area/Budget	Voluntary Sector Organisation	SLA/Project Funding/Grant/informal agreement	2007/2008	2008/09	2009/2010	2010/2011	Commitments 2011/2012	Commitments 2012/2013
10TD08	Langford Budville Village Hall	Capital Grant	£35,000					
10TD08	Creech St Michael Recreation Field	Capital Grant	£561					
10TD08	Bishops Lydeard Village Hall	Capital Grant		£24,405				
10TD08	Wellington Rugby Club	Capital Grant		£35,000				
10TD08	Chipstable Village Hall	Capital Grant		£18,606				
10TD08	Lydeard St Lawrence Village Hall	Capital Grant		£4,938				
10TD08	West Monkton Village Hall	Capital Grant			£35,000			
10TD08	Kingston St Mary Villaga Hall	Capital Grant			£392			
10TD08	Nynehead Village Hall	Capital Grant			£7,125			
10TD08	Fitzhead Tithe Barn	Capital Grant			£6,661			

10TD08	Neroche Parish Hall	Capital Grant			£15,500				
10TD08	West Bagborough - Popham Hall	Capital Grant			£28,750				
10TD08	Ash Priors Village Hall	Capital Grant				£7,500			
10TD08	Bishops Lydeard Village Hall	Capital Grant				£10,000			
10TD08	Trident Youth & Community Centre	Capital Grant				£35,000			
10TD08	Stoke St Mary	Capital Grant					£4,125		
10TD08	Taunton Green playing field	Capital Grant			£50,000				
10TD08	Taunton Bowling Club	Capital Grant					£10,000		
10TD08	Wiveliscombe Rugby Club	Capital Grant					£24,750		
10TD08	Milverton Victoria Rooms	Capital Grant					£3,000		
10TD08	Wiveliscombe Swimming Pool	Capital Grant					£5,494		
10TD08	Wellington Football Club	Capital Grant			£7,500				
					£35,561	£82,949	£150,928	£52,500	£47,369
									£0

<i>Name of VCS budget:</i>	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: Parish Play Area Grant/Replacement Play Equipment Grant							
<i>Purpose of Budget:</i>	To provide funding to Community Groups/Parish Councils and TDBC owned play areas to repair or replace play equipment. Up to 50% of the project costs							
<i>Annual Budget:</i>	£37,000 + £20,000 (TDBC owned)							
<i>Match Funding Attracted</i>	Approx £192,000 since 2007							
<i>Budget held by:</i>	Community Development Lead: Scott Weetch							
<i>Awards Authorised by:</i>	Community Development Portfolio holder							
<i>Application/Award /Monitoring process:</i>	Application via relevant forms, decision follows relevant call in process, annual monitoring of how funding has been used.							
Service Area/Budget	Voluntary Sector Organisation	SLA/Project Funding/Grant/informal agreement	2007/2008	2008/09	2009/2010	2010/2011	Commitments 2011/2012	Commitments 2012/2013
10TD09	Higher Holway	Grant	£60,000					
10TD09	Bishops Hull	Grant	£14,121					
10TD09	Ruishton	Grant		£1,900				

10TD09	Stawley	Grant		£2,175					
10TD09	Bishops Lydeard	Grant		£14,000					
10TD09	Pitminster & Angersleigh	Grant			£3,039				
10TD09	Pitminster & Angersleigh	Grant		£1,860					
10TD09	Bishops Lydeard	Grant			£14,000				
10TD09	Stawley School	Grant			£5,000				
10TD09	Oake Play Area	Grant			£25,000				
10TD09	Norton Fitzwarren BMX	Grant			£768				
10TD09	Corfe	Grant			£5,000				
10TD09	Ruishton	Grant			£3,493				
10TD09	Bishops Lydeard	Grant			£5,000				
10TD09	Wellington - per Andrew Govier	Grant					£25,000		
10TD09	West Monkton - Farriers Green	Grant					£5,000		
10TD09	Otterford	Grant					£2,634		
10TD09	West Buckland	Grant					£3,448		
				£74,121	£19,935	£61,299	£0	£36,082	£0

Name of VCS budget:	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT							
Budget held by:	(e.g. Economic Development Lead)							
Awards Authorised by:	Budget Holder (David Evans)							
Purpose of Budget:	3 aims: Stimulating business and growth, ensuring skills and entrepreneurial workforce, creating an attractive business environment							
Annual Budget:	Budget is split into two: Economic Development 103352 and Council's Reserves LABGI							
Budget Amount:	Economic development 70,000 and Council's reserves (LABGI) 40,000 (one of payments normally tied in with planning applications.)							
Application/Award /Monitoring process:	Application form and monitored as part of budget monitoring system on SAP							
Service Area/Budget	Voluntary Sector Organisation	SLA/Project Funding/Grant/informal agreement	2007/2008	2008/09	2009/2010	2010/2011	Commitments 2011/2012	Commitments 2012/2013

Budget is split into two: Economic Development 103352 and Councils Reserves LABGI								
	Brewhouse	Grant (SLA in future)			202,000	152,000	152000	152000
	Young Enterprise + BIS	Grant (SLA in future)			5,000	10000	5000	5000
	Somerset Tourism Partnership	Grant (SLA in future)			25,000		0	0
	Job Clubs	Grant (SLA in future)			10,000			
	Priorswood Resource Centre	SLA			5,000	5,000	4,000	4,000
	The Link Centre	?			5,000	2,000	4,000	4,000
	The WHERE Centre	Contract not SLA			5,000	2,000	4,000	4,000
	10 Parish Arts Festival (guide & festival)	Grant				1,000		
	Wiveliscombe & Wellington Town Council	Grant				20,000	20,000	0
	Churches	Grant				9,500	9,500	0
					257,000	201,500	198,500	169,000

Name of VCS budget:	HOUSING							
Budget held by:	<i>Steven Boland</i>							
Awards Authorised by:	<i>Steven Boland</i>							
Purpose of Budget:	<i>Help tenants (elderly and disabled)</i>							
Application/Award /Monitoring process:	<i>(e.g. application form, lead decides, monitoring of spend on SAP</i>							
Service Area/Budget	Voluntary Sector Organisation	SLA/Project Funding/Grant/informal agreement	2007/2008	2008/09	2009/2010	2010/2011	Commitments 2011/2012	Commitments 2012/2013

108929	Taunton Deane Association for Neighbourhood Care	SLA	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
	Prioswood Recource Centre	SLA	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
	Link Centre	SLA	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
	Tenant Forum	SLA	42,000	42,000	42,000	42,000	42,000	42,000
	Sheltered Housing	SLA	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
			75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000

<i>Name of VCS budget:</i>	Homeless prevention grants							
<i>Purpose of Budget:</i>								
<i>Annual Budget:</i>								
<i>Match Funding Attracted</i>								
<i>Budget held by:</i>	Please note that these grants are paid out of the CLG's Homelessness Grant. The money is not ring fenced to homelessness but there is an expectation from CLG that the Grant will be used for providing services to the homeless and preventing homelessness.							
<i>Awards Authorised by:</i>								
<i>Application/Award /Monitoring process:</i>								
Service Area/Budget	Voluntary Sector Organisation	SLA/Project Funding/Grant/informal agreement	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	Commitments 2011/2012	Commitments 2012/2013
Housing Options	Shelter	SLA					£6,000	
Housing Options	Open Door	SLA					£12,000	
Housing Options	Women's Aid	Informal					£5,000	
Housing Options	CAB	SLA					£6,200	
			0	0	0	0	29,200	0

APPENDIX 2: Strategy Unit SLA's and links to Council's Corporate Priorities

Voluntary and Community Sector Service Level Agreements

Organisation	Service Provided	Alignment to Corporate Priorities	Amount of funding 9/10	Amount of funding 10/11	Amount of funding 11/12	Amount of funding 12/13	Total
Citizens Advice Bureau	Provide an independent generalist advice service to the public	☺ Majority of activity is focussed on residents from urban and rural priority areas	81,500	86,500	91,500		259,500
Community Council for Somerset	Proving support to rural communities in developing priorities and accessing services	☺ Play an important role in tackling disadvantage and improving access to services within the rural areas	6,000	6,000	6,000		18,000
Accessible Transport (Taunton Deane Community Transport and Slinky)	Contract for the Provision of a Community Transport Services including Minibus, Dial a Ride & Social Car Journeys	☹ Transport is no longer a corporate priority. However, this is important in relation to rural deprivation (access to services). No decision yet whether rural transport will be a priority within the Priority Areas Strategy	13,000	13,000	10,000		36,000
Wivey Link	Contract for the Provision of a Community Transport Services	☹ As above	2000	10000	10000		22,000
Taunton Voluntary Action	To develop a high quality, pro-active voluntary sector for the benefit of the residents of the Taunton Deane Borough by positively engaging partners in support of voluntary activity	☺ Critical for developing volunteer capacity within priority areas (urban and rural)	26,500	26,500	26,500		79,500
Relate	Advice service for people suffering relationship problems	☹ Weak links to Corporate Strategy	10,000	10,000			20,000
FEDS / SREC	Helping to develop better understanding engagement with hard to reach groups	☺ Helping to provide a voice to unrepresented groups within urban and rural areas	4,500	4,500			9,000
Somerset Association of Local Councils	Representative body for the local councils in Somerset	☹ Relationship with corporate priorities is unclear	1,000	1,000	1000		3,000
North Taunton Partnership*	Provision of advice services and support to the communities of North Taunton	☺ Supporting the residents of North Taunton		5,000	5000		10,000
Link Partnership*	Provision of advice services and support to the communities of Taunton East	☺ Supporting the residents of East Taunton		5,000	5000		10,000
Wiveliscombe Area Partnership	To enable the provision of services from the Wiveliscombe Community Office	☺ Helping to improve access to services for rural residents	25,000	25,000	25000		75,000
Youth initiatives fund contribution	Providing support to activities designed to engage youth from disadvantaged backgrounds	☺ Majority of activity is focussed on individuals / groups from urban priority areas		15,000	10,000		25,000
Total			169,500	207,500	180,000	0	567,000

	Current SLA
	Rolling agreement
	Expired SLA

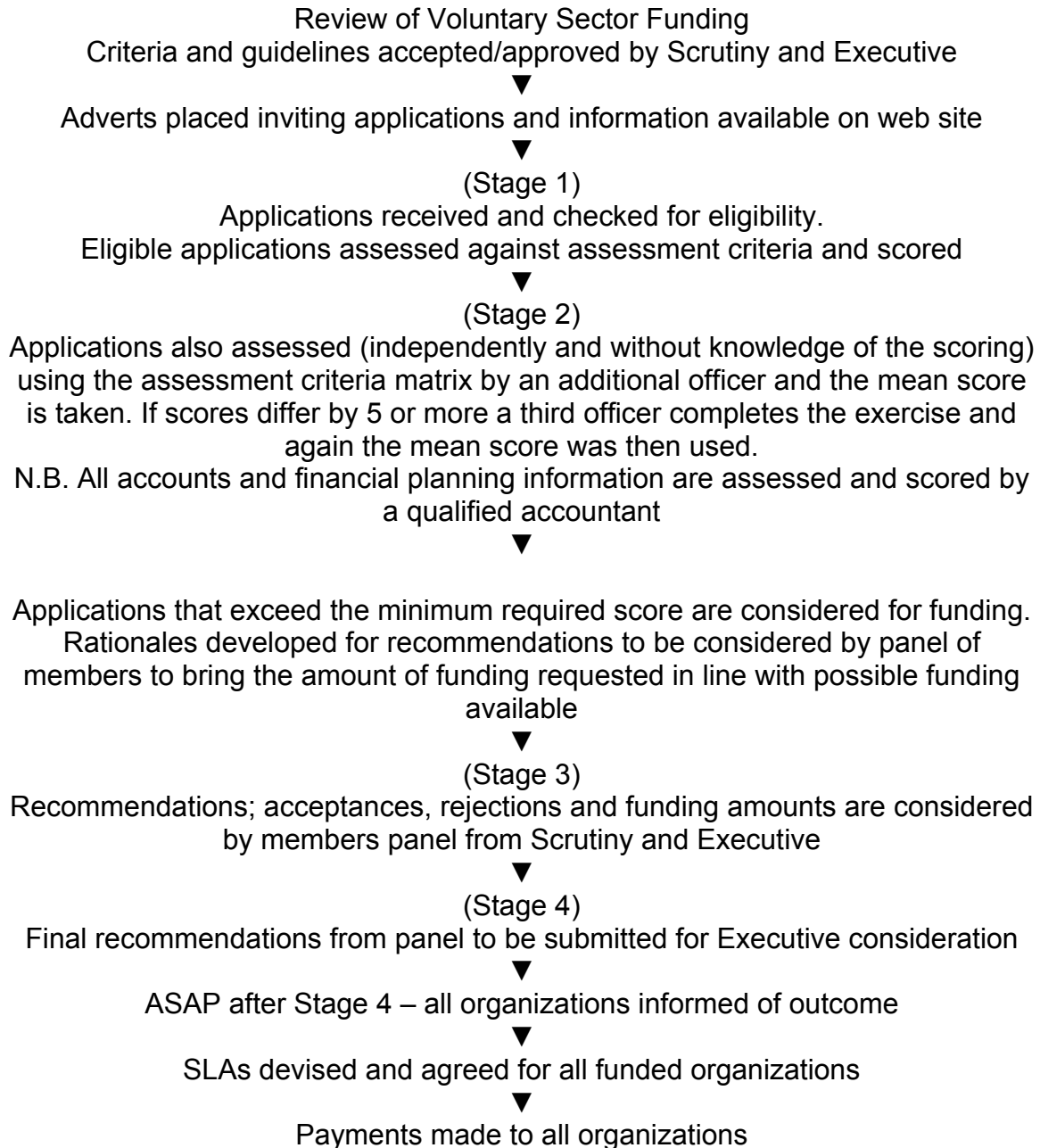
* Additional funding provided by other Council service areas and partners

APPENDIX 3: 2012/13 Budget Reductions - Options Considered

Options 1	Points in favour	Points against	Recommendation
Cease small grants totalling £20,000 and reduce all SLAs by a proportionate amount totalling £10k (except North Taunton Partnership and the Link Centre which already have a SLA agreement in place to cover the financial year 2012/2013).	Short term financial savings for TDBC. Impact on SLA organisations is small and absorbed equally (proportionally) by all.	Ceasing small grants will have negative impacts for VCS organisations and, consequently, some of the most vulnerable members in the community who rely on their services. Small grants funding is still essential and can be used as a 'set up' support that new and/or innovative projects require, ensure sustainability of service delivery and provide flexibility to respond to acute community needs.	Do not proceed
Option 2	Points in favour	Points against	Recommendation
Cease small grants totalling £20,000 and remove the Priority Areas Strategy (PAS) contribution of £10k	Short term financial savings for TDBC Removal of PAS funding is easily absorbed given success of project in generating resources No impact on SLA organisations	See above	Do not proceed
Option 3	Points in favour	Points against	Recommendation
Cease funding for PAS worth £10,000 and reduce small grants by £10,000 and cut all SLAs by a small proportion totalling £10,000	Removal of PAS funding is easily absorbed given success of project in generating resources Impact on SLA organisations is small and distributed equally (proportionally) by all.	Reduction of small grant funding could impact negatively on sustainability of some organisations that provide services to vulnerable groups. Precise impact difficult to quantify given reactive nature of grant. However, an element of the grant is retained to enable the Council to respond to the most pressing cases for assistance.	Proceed and consider mitigation measures such as continued provision of Grantnet / Grantfinder
Option 4	Points in favour	Points against	Recommendation
Cut youth initiatives fund by £10,000 or less +variation of the above.	Short term financial savings for TDBC plus variation of the above	Provision for youth has already been hit hard by withdrawal of services provided by SCC Youth Service. Funding is essential to enable continued provision of facilities and services, particularly for those living in the most disadvantaged communities. Youth diversionary activities is seen as a high priority by the general public (ref Place Survey – 2009)	Do not proceed
Option 5	Points in favour	Points against	Recommendation
Cut completely or lose some of the following SLAs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wivey link • Community Council for Somerset • WAP • SALC • TVA • CAB 	Short term financial savings for TDBC.	Potential significant negative impacts given the important services provided by these organisations to vulnerable people and disadvantaged communities. The future of grant support to these organisations should be considered within a robust bidding process and implemented by a grants panel.	Do not proceed

APPENDIX 4: Voluntary Sector Funding: Assessment Process

Voluntary Sector Funding – Assessment Process



APPENDIX 5

Equality Impact Assessment – Reduction in Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Grants Budget

Responsible person	Simon Lewis	Job Title: Strategy Manager
Why are you completing the Equality Impact Assessment? (Please mark as appropriate)	Proposed new policy or service	
	Change to Policy or Service	
	Budget/Financial decision – MTFP	Yes
	Part of timetable	
What are you completing the Equality Impact Assessment on (which policy, service, MTFP proposal)	The Council needs to identify a 40% reduction in its budget over 4 years. As a contribution to this, it is seeking to reduce the Voluntary and Community Sector Grants budget from the Strategy Unit by £30k (12.8%). It should be noted that this equates to a 4.9% reduction in the Councils overall payments to the VCS.	
Section One – Scope of the assessment		
What are the main purposes/aims of the policy?	<p>The budget allows the Council to support VCS organisations that support the Council’s corporate aims and provide services that help vulnerable communities. The VCS provides services, facilities, advice and activities for many people in the wider community and TDBC service users</p> <p>The aim of the budget cut is to reduce the grant budget by 12.8% which will equate to a £30k cut in 2012/13. Furthermore, there is a proposal to revisit all organisations receiving funding in Spring 2012 and ensure outcomes supports the Councils own objectives and provides value for money.</p> <p>The proposal falls within the ‘Best Value’ guidance provided by Eric Pickles that cuts should be proportionate and reasonable to the Council’s own budget cuts.</p>	

<p>Which protected groups are targeted by the policy?</p>	<p>The VCS budget funds organisations that support people that fall in the following protected groups: Age, Disability, Race, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Transgender.</p> <p>Cuts in funding could potentially affect one or more of these groups.</p>
<p>What evidence has been used in the assessment - data, engagement undertaken – please list each source that has been used</p> <p>The information can be found on....</p>	<p>We have data on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Characteristics of the district – clear numbers involved for each category 2. Number of small grant applications made by each group over last 3 years 3. Reason for each application – clear idea of why organisations are applying for grants <p>The Council has a range of reports and evidence that identifies needs of different protected groups such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Women’s Equality Network in Somerset research report – 2011 2. Somerset Black Development Agency research report – 2011 3. Quality of life survey (Disabled people) 4. SDC Disabled consultation - May 2010 5. Priority Areas Strategy – public consultations in North Taunton and Taunton East - 2011 <p>Further work will be required to engage and consult with grant recipients to understand the full impact of funding cuts. This will take place if the Executive supports the proposals report on 7th December 2011.</p>
<p>Section two – Conclusion drawn about the impact of service/policy/function/change on different groups highlighting negative impact, unequal outcomes or missed opportunities for promoting equality</p>	
<p>The proposal is to make savings of £30k in 2012/13 and a number of options have been assessed. The detail of the options (x 5) and the reasons for and against each of them are provided at Appendix 3.</p> <p>Option 3 has been assessed as having the least impact across the VCS and the community as a whole, consistent with the Council’s Corporate Priorities. The proposal involves the following:</p> <p>Priority Areas Strategy: Remove £10k contribution</p> <p>Small grants: Reduce funding by £10k</p> <p>Service Level Agreements x 8: Proportionate cuts totalling £10k</p>	

The equalities impacts are as follows:

PAS: The PAS contribution was introduced last year. It has yet to be spent, waiting the approval of the Action Plan for North Taunton and Taunton East (expected April 2012). The removal of this funding therefore has no negative effect on the current situation. The momentum of the PAS (multi-agency project) has been successful in attracting external resources (staff and finances) to support disadvantaged groups in North Taunton, Taunton East and the rural areas. We expect this project to attract more funding once the Action Plan is approved.

Small grants: Reducing the small grants budget by 50% will have negative impacts on equality groups. It is difficult to be precise (i.e. which groups will be impacted) as this money is available to enable the Council to react to different needs within the community, as they arise. Last year the money was used to support a variety of organisations such as Mind, Cruse, YMCA, Priory Community Association, Compass Disability etc. In the future, not all such organisations can be supported. The Council will need to make sure that remaining monies are targeted very specifically to initiatives that are closely aligned with our corporate priorities. Budget savings have the ability to affect the sustainability of organisations. It also influences the organisations ability to attract match funding.

Longer term mitigation measures are discussed below (Action Planning).

SLAs: The proposal is to reduce the SLA budget from £180k to £170k, and to spread this saving proportionally across all SLAs. Excluding the SLAs for North Taunton and Taunton East (which do not expire until 31 March 2011) this is effectively a 5.8% cut in funding for each organisation. Ultimately, this will have an impact on equality groups, but it is hoped that this will be marginal. The alternative is to make a bigger cut to one or more SLA organisations. This would have a bigger negative impact on individual equality groups.

I have concluded that there is/should be:

No major change - no adverse equality impact identified	
Adjust the policy	
Continue with the policy	There are potential negative impacts, but the authority has sought to reduce these by considering a variety of options (Appendix 3) and choosing the one that it believes to have the least impact. The Council has ensured that the percentage saving on the VCS budget is significantly less than that the overall saving to the TDBC budget (40%). The introduction of a grants panel will enable the Council to maximise the effectiveness of the remaining budget from 2013/14.
Stop and remove the policy	

Reasons and documentation to support conclusions

The grant reduction has to take place in order to meet the budget deficit and the mitigation actions (see action planning below) will be put in place to limit the impact as much as possible

Section four – Implementation – timescale for implementation

Recommendation on budget saving to Community Scrutiny 6th December 2011
Decision required on organisations affected by savings in 2012/13 to be made by The Executive – 7th December 2011
Engagement with affected organisations Jan to March 2012
Development of temporary SLAs (existing rolled forward) and allocation of grants for 2012/13: Jan to March 2012
Development of new SLAs and allocation of VCS budget for 2013/14 (councillor / officer commissioning group): July 2012.

Section Five – Sign off

Responsible officer: Simon Lewis Date: 24/11/11	Management Team Date
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Section six – Publication and monitoring

Published on

Next review date	Date logged on Covalent
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Action Planning

The table should be completed with all actions identified to mitigate the effects concluded.

Actions table						
Service area	STRATEGY			Date	November 2011	
Identified issue drawn from your conclusions	Actions needed	Who is responsible?	By when?	How will this be monitored?	Expected outcomes from carrying out actions	
	Work with all groups to identify additional funding sources they could utilise.	VCS Groups / Strategy Unit	March 2012	Officer / Councillor VCS Group	Alternative funding may potentially be available (see action below)	
	Continue to provide Grantfinder and GrantNet to support organisations and individuals identify and apply for alternative grants.	Strategy Unit	Funded from Dec 2011 to Dec 2012 and then will review again	Usage statistics and feedback from users	Understand how useful this tool is and whether it helps groups attract funding	
	Consider other means of supporting VCS organisations such as facilitating dialogue between public sector and VCS regarding more efficient use of assets	Strategy Lead & VCS organisations	March 2012	Officer / Councillor VCS group	To be considered as part of Customer Access 'Capital Asset Pathfinder' work (Total Somerset)	
	Any other specific actions following consideration by Community Scrutiny and Executive)	Strategy Unit (+ others?)	?	?	?	

