



HILLINGDON
LONDON

Impact Assessment

STEP A) Description of what is to be assessed and its relevance to equality

What is being assessed?

Withdrawal of corporate grant funding of £47K to Hillingdon Association of Voluntary Services (HAVS) for 2015/16

Who is accountable? E.g. Head of Service or Corporate Director

Kevin Byrne - Head of Policy and Partnerships
Fran Beasley - Chief Executive

Date assessment completed and approved by accountable person

4th December 2014

Names and job titles of people carrying out the assessment

Sarah Johnstone, Voluntary Sector Development Officer
Vicky Trott, Senior Policy Officer, Equality and Diversity

A.1) What are the main aims and intended benefits of what you are assessing?

Over the past 20 years the Council has committed various amounts of core grant funding to HAVS on an annual basis. The amount awarded last year 2014/15, was £47,000 as a contribution to CEO and Community Operations Manager salaries, and including £2k towards participation activities.

Core grants are awarded to key voluntary sector organisations that contribute to the work of the Council in improving lives of residents. They are an investment into organisations that will assist them in delivering services to residents, drawing down external funding for further services, increase their competitiveness in the market place and maintain their sustainability.

The core grant made to HAVS is to ensure that the Borough's voluntary sector is supported, that volunteering is promoted for the benefit of both volunteer residents and the sector itself and that the Council has a lead partner to engage with the

sector.

A.2) Who are the service users or staff affected by what you are assessing? What is their equality profile?

The primary service users are voluntary sector and community groups in Hillingdon.

The nature of the not for profit sector means that it often addresses inequalities in society and assists and supports minority, disadvantaged and vulnerable client groups. Therefore many groups will have an equality profile.

HAVS has a membership of approximately 400 groups in Hillingdon. The equality profile covered in the membership as taken from the HAVS Directory is:

- Women
- Children and Families
- Faith/Religious groups
- Ethnic minorities
- Older People
- Mental Health
- Disability/Medical conditions
- Carers

HAVS has to date supported the sector in a number of ways. Some examples include:

1. Hillingdon Advice Partnership - HAVS secured £200K funding and lead on the delivery for a joint advice project to strengthen and improve advice in the Borough. Partners include Hillingdon Women's Centre, Hillingdon Carers, Hillingdon MIND, Age UK Hillingdon, Hillingdon CAB and Disability Association Hillingdon. This project includes some of the major equality groups i.e. Age, disability, race and gender.
2. Management of Key House: Current tenants include Hillingdon CAB, Hillingdon Refugee Support Group, Refugees in Effective Action Partnership, and Rethink Carers Mental Health.
3. Running a volunteer centre and supporting development new volunteering roles
In 13-14 : 76 organisations were supported, 128 positions were advertised, 246 volunteer opportunities available and an estimated 39,000 hrs of volunteering were recruited to the sector
4. Support for small groups. In 14-15 so far - 62 groups supported of which 14 were BMER, 1 faith, 4 disability, 1 older, 2 women, young 6 and raised over £300K for the sector. 12 training workshops were delivered. However, this post was funded part of the year by City Bridge Trust which has now ended..
5. Support to Children and Families groups including safeguarding training etc.
6. ICT and funding and development support include a specific focus on reaching BMER groups.

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A.3) Who are the stakeholders in this assessment and what is their interest in it?

Stakeholders	Interest
Leader of the Council	Overall responsibility for grant funding decisions to ensure that the Council is getting value for money and a good standard of service from the grants that it provides
Cabinet Member for Community, Commerce and Regeneration	Responsibility for grant funding decisions to ensure that the Council is getting value for money and a good standard of service from the grants that it provides
Cabinet member for Social Services, Health and Housing	To ensure that the Council is getting value for money and a good standard of service from the grants that it provides
Cabinet member for Education and Children's Services	To ensure that the Council is getting value for money and a good standard of service from the grants that it provides
Children and Families Category Manager	To ensure that the Council is getting value for money and a good standard of service from the grants that it provides
HAVS users and members	To ensure that appropriate support and advice is provided to Hillingdon Community Services
HAVS Community Operations Manager and other staff	Employment: Contribution to their salaries
Hillingdon Advice for Residents Partnership (HARP)	To ensure the continuation of the HARP programme
Key House Trust	To ensure the building is managed appropriately and for the purposes of the voluntary sector
London Councils funded programmes	To ensure that London Councils funded programmes benefit Hillingdon groups and that the information is disseminated to the right people.

A.4) Which protected characteristics or community issues are relevant to the assessment? in the box.

Age		Religion or belief	
Disability		Sex	

Gender reassignment		Sexual Orientation	
Marriage or civil partnership		Community Cohesion	
Pregnancy or maternity		Community Safety	
Race/Ethnicity		Other – please state	

STEP B) Consideration of information; data, research, consultation, engagement

B.1) Consideration of information and data - what have you got and what is it telling you?

The information in section A2 shows that HAVS supports a wide variety of community groups that support people with protected characteristics.

If HAVS no longer receive funding from the Council then this may have a potentially negative impact on these groups of people.

Consultation

B.2) Did you carry out any consultation or engagement as part of this assessment?

Please tick NO

YES

It was not relevant or appropriate to carry out any consultation or engagement as part of this assessment.

B.3) Provide any other information to consider as part of the assessment

About HAVS

The main aims of HAVS are:

- To build the capacity of third sector organisations and provide them with the necessary support, information and services to enable them to pursue or contribute to any charitable purpose
- To promote, organise and facilitate cooperation and partnership working between the third sector, statutory and other relevant bodies

HAVS acts as the local development and infrastructure agency for the voluntary and community sector. It supports voluntary action and aims to maximise the effectiveness and sustainability of the sector.

Activities include:

- Developing partnerships within the sector and between private and public sector stakeholders
- Communicating and information sharing between voluntary sector groups
- Building capacity of voluntary sector groups
- Promoting, co-ordinating and improving volunteer practices and experience
- Providing advice and back office support to groups depending on availability
- Managing Key House as a voluntary sector resource for renting, hire etc

HAVS is a member of Hillingdon Partners Executive, the management structure that oversees the overall work of the Hillingdon Partners.

Background to the decision to withdraw funding

In January 2012, Cabinet agreed a reduction of 50% to the grant award to HAVS (£50,750) for the 2012/13 financial year. This decision was in line with the commitment to prioritising investment in front line voluntary services which directly benefit residents and to withdraw support from organisations offering help to other organisations or “Tier 2” bodies. In taking the decision Cabinet acknowledged that the 'Council particularly valued some of the services HAVS provided and that officers would be looking to work with the HAVS management board and provide support whilst the organisation refocused and transformed to incorporate the change in finance'.

The report later in the year, to Cabinet in December 2012 which considered funding applications for the 2013-14 financial year, noted that 'whilst progress in refocusing and re-evaluating priorities was initially slower than we would have expected, there has been some significant recent progress' and on this basis it was agreed that if the organisation continues to make progress an increase in this level might be merited. It was therefore, also recommended that 'the Cabinet Member for Community Commerce and Regeneration be delegated authority to agree additional funding should the situation warrant and further progress is demonstrated.'

The report to Cabinet in December 2013 for 2014-15 grants offered further encouragement to HAVS to develop a business plan that would deliver the services the Council particularly valued in relation to supporting small groups and increasing volunteering, and again the Cabinet Member for Community Commerce and Regeneration was given delegated authority to agree additional funding should the situation warrant and further progress demonstrated.

It is disappointing to note that despite being given considerable encouragement and offers of support, HAVS failed to produce a credible or viable business plan, upon which future service provision could be planned. Officers were not close to being able to recommend any additional funding despite the commitment from the Council to look at increasing funding if progress warranted it.

Since the submission of the application for the 2015/16 financial year there have been some important changes at HAVS relating to personnel and the organisational structure. The Management Committee has increased and shown itself as taking a

stronger lead. The organisation is also addressing the challenges in relation to performance over the past year.

At this stage, based on the information contained in the 2015/16 application and experiences over the last two years it is not possible to recommend core funding for the 2015/16 financial year. The organisation has failed to meet Council's expectations, has been unable to satisfactorily evidence impact or convinced officers of its financial viability.

However officers will continue to work with HAVS, and if the early signs of improvement in the strategic direction with demonstrable benefits to Hillingdon residents in terms of volunteering and small group support continue, it is suggested that a further report is brought to Cabinet over the coming months.

Legal context

The council has a public duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations (Equality Act 2010) in the decisions that it makes.

C) Assessment

C.1) Describe any **NEGATIVE** impacts (actual or potential):

Equality Groups	Impact on this group and actions you need to take
As outlined in section A2	<p>The impact on HAVS if the grant is not awarded is expected to be negative as HAVS have said in previous years that withdrawal of grant would lead to closure. However, it is not possible to know with certainty whether the organisation would wish to close or whether recent efficiency measures would enable HAVS to continue in some way, given other income and projects.</p> <p>If HAVS no longer receives funding from the Council then this is likely to have a consequential negative impact on member groups as outlined in section A2. However, it is unclear at this time the extent of such an impact.</p> <p>The proposed targets to be delivered in the application for 15/16 and the lack of firm evidence provided and track record of delivery in the past couple of years do not yet provide confidence of impact. The application is also predicated on "growth" in core grant</p> <p>We can project that without the grant from the Council in 15/16, the organisation may well discontinue activities. Potential impacts of this could be the threat of loss of</p>

	premises to 5 organisations, representing disability and ethnic minority groups. An additional impact could be on small groups, often representing groups with protected characteristics, who would not have local development support to further their activities.
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C.2) Describe any **POSITIVE** impacts

Equality Group	Impact on this group and actions you need to take
All	There are no potentially positive impacts of this proposal, other than it would protect best value in providing support for the voluntary sector

D) Conclusions

The purpose of the assessment is to review the impact of HAVS not receiving their core grant for 2015-16.

The withdrawal of core grant to HAVS is likely to lead to reduced activities and potentially closure.

It is not possible at this time to identify the consequential impact that this may have on the groups that support those residents with protected characteristics for a number of reasons. In summary these are:

- Lack of confidence in the targets given in the 15-16 application
- Lack of numerical evidence submitted in monitoring forms,,
- Lack of accounts to verify the financial viability of the organisation with or without the requested grant
- Lack of information relating to other income drawn down.

Officers are therefore committed to monitoring any impact of this decision and to respond appropriately. This could include supporting volunteering or considering alternative support.

Signed and dated:.....

Name and position:.....