

External Grant Funding Review Working Party meeting with Infrastructure and Funding Organisations

External Grant Funding Review Working Party	22 July 2024
By	Charles Hungwe, Deputy Committee Services Manager
Cabinet Portfolio Member	Cllr Yates, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services
Key Decision	No
Decision classification	Unrestricted
Call in status	N/A
Ward:	Thanet Wide

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to provide a framework for the External Grant Funding Review Working Party to engage infrastructure bodies and potential funding organisations in Kent that could support the various work activities of the local voluntary community organisations working in Thanet.

Recommendation(s):

Members could come up with additional questions to the ones that are detailed in this report.

1. Summary of Reasons

- 1.1 The purpose of this meeting is for the working party to engage infrastructure bodies and potential funding organisations in Thanet and those that operate at a Kent County level to gather evidence on how these organisations could support the various work activities of voluntary community organisations working in Thanet.
- 1.2 The working party is trying to address the following key question: “How can the Council maximise small-scale grant funding coming into Thanet?”
- 1.3 The above question could best be addressed through addressing the working party’s terms of reference which are:
 1. Report to focus on smaller external grants (under £100k);
 2. Focus primarily on small & medium voluntary & community organisations and look at how we can best help them to access funding;
 3. Ask them what information & skills they have and identify where the gaps are
 4. Ask how they’ve worked with TDC and canvass ideas for how else we might help;

5. Ask town & parish councils, infrastructure bodies & funders re: their experience of working with Thanet organisations & what might help improve success rates;
6. Outline what's worked, what hasn't and how we might tailor our support in future for greater impact without overburdening officers/ creating significant extra costs.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel set up the External Grant Funding Review Working Party at its meeting on 16 April 2024 to investigate and report on the potential for Thanet District Council to explore opportunities for increasing external grant funding opportunities for the benefit of Thanet District.
- 2.2 It is hoped that when the review is concluded, the working party would come up with recommendations for consideration by the Panel and subsequently Cabinet.

3. Relevant Issues - Collecting evidence for the review

- 3.1 Members need to gather all relevant information from representatives of infrastructure bodies and funding organisations how they could work with Thanet District Council to support local voluntary community organisations in the district. Some of the questions that could assist the working party discussion are as suggested below:
 1. What's your experience of working with TDC to help Thanet groups access funding/ build their skills to do so?
 2. What works well & what doesn't?
 3. How do you work with other Councils?
 4. Do they do things differently? What works well?
 5. How is your role developing?
 6. How can TDC help you maximise the support you offer?
 7. What other ideas do you have for how TDC might help you and local vol orgs to bring more grant funding into Thanet?
- 3.2 Responses to these questions above will provide information that should constitute part of the working party report and would assist in coming up with recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 Members are being asked to consider the above questions for their engagement meeting with infrastructure and funding organisations.
- 4.2 Members could also come up with additional questions to the ones highlighted in para 3.1.

Next Steps

- 4.3 There is another working party meeting with the local community organisations on 29 July. This will be followed by a working session by the working party to collate all information into a report. Once the report has been drafted it will then be shared with senior management before being presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel in September. Below is an indicative timetable for completing the work of the sub group:

July 2024: meeting with infrastructure and funding organisations;

July 2024: Meeting with a select number of voluntary organisations

Aug 2024: review of information and drafting the working party report;

Aug 2024: review of draft report by the working party;

Aug 2024: draft report reviewed by CMT;

Sep 2024: presentation of final report to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 There is no requirement to conduct a consultation on this matter. However as part of the investigations by the working party, if Members feel the need to engage the public they could conduct witnesses sessions as part of evidence gathering exercise before writing up their report.

6. Corporate Implications

6.1 Finance and Resources

- 6.1.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. However any funding sources that are identified would contribute to additional funding sources for Council activities.

6.2 Legal and Constitutional

- 6.2.1 The role of scrutiny is set out in section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000. The council must also have regard to the statutory guidance on Overview and Scrutiny from the ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government when exercising its functions.

6.3 Council Policies and Priorities

- 6.3.1 This report relates to the following corporate priorities: -
- To create a thriving place
 - To work efficiently for you

6.4 Risk

- 6.4.1 There are risks arising directly from this report.

6.5 Climate Change and Biodiversity

- 6.5.1 There are no climate change and biodiversity implications arising directly from this report.

7. Equality, Equity and Diversity Implications

- 7.1 There are no equity, equality and diversity implications arising directly from this report. However the Council needs to retain a strong focus and understanding on issues of diversity amongst the local community and ensure service delivery matches these.
- 7.2 It was important to be aware of the Council's responsibility under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and show evidence that due consideration has been given to the equalities impact that may be brought upon communities by the decisions made by Council.

8. Crime and Disorder Implications and Community impact

- 8.1 There are no crime and disorder implications and community impact arising directly from this report.

9. Subject History

- 9.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel identified a number of scrutiny topics in the 2023/24 municipal year. They prioritised these topics in order to tackle one review at a time. Any topics from the priority list that were not investigated in 2023/24 would be brought forward to 2024/25 subject to the new Panel agreeing the work programme after the Annual Council.

Appendices

None

Background Papers

None

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Report Sign Off

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