

16. VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS BEST VALUE REVIEW 2010 CYCLE :
RECOMMENDATIONS

The Council Executive considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Area Services advising of the outcome from the 2010 Best Value Review of services provided by the voluntary and not-for-profit sector and to seek approval to implement the funding streams for the organisations detailed in the report.

The Head of Area Services explained the Best Value Principles and the context within which the council applied those principles. It was also noted that the council had sought to increase the number of Best Value Assessors from three to twelve but this had proven unsuccessful.

The Head of Area Services continued to advise on the organisations that had been identified for the Best Value Review in 2010 and those organisations that had been subject to re-submissions from the 2009 cycle. A summary was then provided for each of those organisations that had been assessed as part of the 2009 cycle.

The report concluded that it was proposed that a formal review to examine if the Best Value Review system was still appropriate or not and other options would be examined such as external quality marks, self-assessment or a combination, details of which would be subject to a report to the PDSP when the topic had been fully researched by officers.

It was recommended that the Council Executive: -

1. The Lothian Autistic Society, which demonstrated Best Value in the 2010 review and achieved the threshold, was awarded a rolling, three-year Funding Agreement to take effect from 1st April 2011. The details of the agreement to be negotiated with the organisation by the designated Link Officer. At the end of the agreement's first year, the organisation would undergo an annual review, prior to the agreement being rolled forward for a further year. This would be subject to the availability of council budgets, continued need and a positive monitoring outcome. The three-year Funding Agreement would give an organisation more long-term security and enable them to make better use of external funding opportunities
2. The Blackburn Family Centre, Breich Valley Information Service, Daisy Drop In and The Regal Community Theatre that had fallen just below the threshold required for a three-year agreement were awarded a one-year agreement with conditions attached, which would compel them to reach the required standard within that year. Provided they reach that standard they would be put forward for the award of a three-year agreement.
3. The Knightsridge Adventure Project was given 6 months funding, which would be reviewed when their portfolio was submitted. The

organisation would be required to submit its portfolio by March 2011.

4. Services facilitated and supported the development by organisations of an action plan that consolidated strengths, addressed areas of weakness and ensured a focus on continuous improvement. Outcomes, outputs and SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-limited) targets would be agreed with the organisation by the designated Link Officer.
5. The qualitative and quantitative information provided by organisations during the review, would be used by services as the basis for further rigorous annual reviews of performance
6. Updated guidance for the support and monitoring of organisations was issued to Link Officers annually to ensure consistency of approach across the sector. It was the Link Officer's responsibility to ensure that this was implemented; and
7. These arrangements were under review in light of the shift from grants to commissioning.

Decision

To approve the terms of the report.