

22 VOLUNTARY SECTOR: HEALTH CHECK PROPOSAL

The Council Executive considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Area Services seeking approval for the replacement of the current annual monitoring system to a new “Health Check” approach.

The report advised that at the PDSP meeting held in September 2011 it was reported that the current annual monitoring system being used by the council did not adequately highlight potential areas of risk, nor did it effectively monitor performance or identify good practice. It was agreed that a more robust ‘Health Check’ approach should replace the monitoring system and a formal consultation process would be carried out with West Lothian voluntary sector through the West Lothian Compact Working Group. It was also noted that any new monitoring approach would have to be subject to Internal Audit being satisfied that the proposed approach was robust enough to meet the legislative requirements of Following the Public Pound and Best Value.

A consultation process was carried out and the final draft of the ‘Health Check’ proposal was attached as appendix 1 to the report. Internal Audit suggested some minor amendments to the detail of the framework which were incorporated into the final draft, however, they were satisfied with the proposed approach.

Officers also engaged in formal consultation with the West Lothian voluntary sector on the ‘Health Check’ approach, details of which were contained in appendix 2 to the report. This highlighted that the council had already started the consultation process through the sector’s representatives on the West Lothian Compact working Group and with organisations themselves at the 23rd September 2011 meeting of the Voluntary Sector Forum. In addition, the VSGWL had also distributed the September PDSP report on the topic of the Health Check to those attending the September Voluntary Sector Forum meetings.

The report advised that at a meeting of the Compact Working Group held on 14th September 2011, the VSGWL had agreed to circulate the council’s consultation – Health Check Approach (appendix 2) using its e-Bulletin and web site. On 14th October 2011 the council contacted the VSGWL to ask for any responses to the consultation, however, no reply was received from them. On 17th November, 2011 the council was advised by voluntary sector representatives at the Compact Working Group meeting that the consultation had not been issued, but were unable to explain why. Since then, one voluntary sector Compact Working Group representative had offered constructive comment on the Health Check proposal.

It was proposed that the new Health Check approach be piloted with all VOBR-funded organisations in the 2011 annual monitoring cycle, which was due to take place during November and December 2011. However, this was delayed into the start of 2012 until approval was sought from Council Executive.

In conclusion the Council Executive expressed its thanks to the officers involved in the work that was carried out to replace the current annual monitoring system with the new "Health Check" approach.

It was recommended that that the Council Executive approve the Health Check approach.

Decision

To approve the terms of the report.