6. COUNCIL COMMUNITY FUNDING REVIEW

Officers responsible	Author
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The purpose of this report is present the findings of the review of Council community funding streams. This report was considered by the Community and Leisure Committee at its meeting on 5 May 2003.

INTRODUCTION

In 2002 the Christchurch City Council agreed to undertake a review of its community funding streams. Elected members suggested that a funding review could help identify ways of prioritising requests for funding and help evaluate the impact of community funding. Many believed that the lack of funding priorities has contributed to a haphazard and ad hoc approach to funding. Elected members also felt that a review could also address the issues raised by the various requests for the Council to support projects that had traditionally been core government responsibility. The need for this review was reinforced by some community and voluntary groups[1] who had identified a need to simplify the Council's community funding processes.

Terms of reference of the Community Funding Review

The terms of reference for the Community Funding Review were confirmed by the Community and Leisure Committee in April 2002. The aim of this review was to identify and recommend an overall approach for distributing community funding as well as priorities and mechanisms, which would be consistent with policy objectives and good practice guidelines. The objectives of the review were:

- To identify the broad funding context within which Council community funding is distributed (both within the Council and in Christchurch generally);
- To identify the current policy guidelines and administration processes of each of the Council's funding streams within the scope of this review;
- To identify the level of funding currently allocated to achieving specific policy outcomes (including the level of funding specifically allocated to achieving target group policy outcomes);
- To survey community and voluntary groups, funding decision makers and funding administrators about ways in which the Council's funding streams could be better co-ordinated and made more accessible (taking into account both policy and administrative considerations);
- To develop recommendations for each of the targeted funding streams that would improve their policy fit and administrative efficiency;
- To develop recommendations to improve the overall co-ordination of the Council's community funding streams;
- To identify appropriate monitoring and evaluation processes for Council community funding streams.

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The Council determined that this review should include the community funds distributed by the Council; the Community Organisation Loan Scheme, Annual Financial Plan allocation of Grants to Community Organisations (Major Grants), Metropolitan Community Discretionary Funds, Strengthening Community Action Plans, the Social Initiatives Fund, the Community Boards Community Workers funding, and the Community Development Scheme.

REVIEW PROCESS

A wealth of information was collected during the review process. The review process included: consultation with Community Boards; interviews with elected members; workshop with Councillors and Community Board Chairs; survey of staff with administrative or advisory funding roles; written survey with community groups; focus group discussion with community groups; interviews with key external stakeholders; review of other funders and funding models; analysis of government funding trends; analysis of Council funding; review of reports and research on community funding; Committee seminar; consultation with Community Boards, staff and community groups on broad direction from Committee seminar and review of Audit Report 2000.

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[1] The term 'community and voluntary groups' is generally used in this report. While the 'voluntary sector' may be the most accurate description of the sector, most groups refer to themselves as 'community groups', and the Council uses the term 'community funding' to describe funding for the sector.

The Community and Leisure Committee developed broad recommendations at its seminar meeting in September 2002. These were reported to and discussed by Community Boards later that month. They were also sent to community group participants for their comment. The feedback received was taken into account in the development of specific recommendations.

The detailed recommendations were presented to the Community and Leisure Committee and Community Board Chairs in April 2003. This meeting endorsed the recommendations and asked that the full report be presented to the Community and Leisure and the Strategy and Finance Committees in May 2003, for Council endorsement.

The background information that led to the development of the final report is set out in four background reports. These reports provide the background and rationale for the recommendations.

REVIEW FINDINGS

The Summary Report on the Review has been separately circulated to Councillors. The report includes the final recommendations of the Community Funding Review. These recommendations are based on information gathered in the course of the review. Explanatory comments are included with the recommendations to provide the rationale or context for the recommendation.

Several of the recommendations refer to the need for further review or exploration in areas which were not explicitly part of this review, but which are within the scope of the wider community funding picture.

IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of the recommendations will mean a significant revision of the way in which the Council currently delivers its community funding. Behind many of the recommendations is a complex system that will require significant staff effort to change. The importance of keeping community and voluntary groups informed of changes, and of making changes gradually, should also be kept in mind.

For these reasons, it is the view of the Funding Review Team that the Community Relations, Leisure and Policy Units should jointly develop an implementation plan. Each recommendation will need to be time-framed, and the recommendations requiring more work will need to be allocated time in order of priority. Sufficient attention will also need to be given to a communication plan for changes.

Staff
Recommendation: 1.   That the Committee receive the report on the Community Funding Review.

2.   That the Committee adopt the recommendations in the report.

3.   That a staff implementation team be formed to ensure the implementation of the recommendations related to grant administration and management.

The Community and Leisure Committee resolved:

1.   That the staff recommendation be adopted.

2.   That the Community and Leisure Committee meet with other community funders to discuss collaborative funding models.

Chair's
Recommendation: That the recommendation of the Community and Leisure Committee be adopted.