



# STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council Offices, Ebley Mill, Stroud, Gloucestershire, GL5 4UB

## **MEMBERS INFORMATION SHEET**

Grant support for the Voluntary and Community Sector in 2008/09.

**Author:** Karen Toole Strategic Head (Regeneration and Culture) 01453 – 754339

### **Introduction**

1. The Council has £439,400 of general fund revenue resources available to it for general allocation to the voluntary and community sector during 2007/08. The distribution of the money is administered via two routes. Firstly, the Rural and Community Investment Scheme (RCIS), which provides grants for one-off community projects and voluntary organisations seeking a contribution toward their running costs. Secondly, 3-year funding agreements, which again are for running costs and entered into with voluntary sector organisations receiving larger amounts of funding, typically more than £10,000, or who are funded on a county-wide basis. The £439,400 is augmented by a further £28,700 from mainstream regeneration, culture and crime and disorder budgets, which use the RCIS and 3-Year agreement processes to structure funding of a number of specific organisations.

2. Council has delegated authority for agreeing and distributing RCIS, 3-year agreement and VHCBS monies to the Strategic Head (Regeneration and Culture) in consultation with the Cabinet. The decision notice in relation to this, which sets out the detailed grant distribution, was issued on the 21st December 2007. This information sheet provides supporting information and should be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice. Briefing sessions and notes on the decision making process were provided to the Voluntary and Community sectors and elected members in the spring of 2007. Three sessions were organised which were very well attended. This process will continue to be developed and may include additional opportunities for training on issues such as 'grantfinder' and 'writing a good application'.

### **Demand for Grants**

3. In total 87 requests for funding were received via the RCIS and through 3-year agreements, with 28 relating to one-off community projects and 59 bids to support the running or 'core' costs of voluntary organisations. The total value of the requests was £712,689. In all 59 requests (68% of those received) were funded. 8 were referred into other mainstream budget provision.

4. More information on the RCIS, 3-Year Agreements and VHCBS is given below.

### **Rural and Community Investment Scheme (RCIS)**

5. In allocating the limited resources available every attempt was made to support as many projects as possible with meaningful amounts of money. The RCIS criteria clearly set out the levels at which the Council would fund groups and organisations and this was adhered to in the vast majority of cases. Therefore groups and organisations will usually receive no more than 25% of the total costs of their project or organisational income from the Council.

6. Stroud's performance in relation to external funding has improved considerably over the last 3 years with Stroud which demonstrates the shift in how the Council works with external groups to achieve funding and the capabilities of local organisations in terms of successful submissions.

7. 32% of applications were unsuccessful. The most common reasons were:

- Non-compliance with scheme criteria, as set out in the application form;
- Project had already received significant funding from the Council in previous grant rounds;
- Applicant stated clearly that the project was unable to proceed without the full amount requested from the Council;
- Project was a new one and little or no fund raising had yet been carried out. Such projects may be worthy of funding in the future once match funding has been raised by the community;
- The project sought to address an issue, which under normal circumstances would be a matter for another authority to fund (e.g. Parish Council or School).

8. A wide variety of one-off community projects will be funded in 2008/09, including for example small scale internal improvements to village halls, activities for young people and children, play area improvements and sport equipment /facility upgrades.

### 3-Year Agreements

9. The Council granted its first 3-year agreements in 2002. As part of the process of working with voluntary organisations the Council has renegotiated the terms of these arrangements linked to an annually negotiated and reviewed service level agreement. Management of the 3-year agreements is delegated to the Council's Strategic Head (Regeneration and Culture).

10. A schedule of the 3 year agreement and their respective review periods are shown below;

Organisation	2008/09	Other Budgets	Indicative 2009/10	Indicative 2010/11
Gloucestershire Older Persons' Assembly (GOPA) Yr2	£5,000		£5,000	Review at end of 3 year agreement
Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC) Yr3	£10,000		Review at end of 3 year agreement	
Home Start Stroud and Dursley Yr1 new	£14,000		£14,000	£14,000
Stroud and District Citizens Advice Bureau Yr1 new	£128,000		£125,000	£125,000
Volunteer and			Review at end of 3	

Community Action (Stroud District) Yr3	£41,750		year agreement	
Air in G Yr 2	£2,000		£2,000	Review at end of 3 year agreement
Cotswold Canals Trust Yr 3	£18,000		Review at end of 3 year agreement	
Gloucestershire Dance Yr 2	£1,500		£2,000	Review at end of 3 year agreement
Kingshill House Yr 2	£20,000		£20,000	Review at end of 3 year agreement
PREMA Yr 1 new	£10,000		£10,000	£10,000
The SPACE (Reclaim Arts Project) Yr 3	£4,000		Review at end of 3 year agreement	
Stroud Valleys Artspace Yr 3	£12,000		Review at end of 3 year agreement	
Stroudwater Textile Trust Yr 1 new	£4,500		£4,500	£4,500
Woodchester Mansion Trust Yr 2	£18,500		£18,500	Review at end of 3 year agreement
Wotton Arts Project Yr3	£6,000		Review at end of 3 year agreement	
Gloucestershire Drug and Alcohol service (GDAS) Yr 3	£38,000		Review at end of 3 year agreement	
Gloucestershire Racial Equality Council Yr 3	£4,000		Review at end of 3 year agreement	
Stroud Valley's Project Yr 1 new	£24,000		£24,000	£24,000
Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust Yr 1 new	£9,000		Review at end of 3 year agreement	

11. Some of the organisations listed above have now be offered rolling funding agreements, providing the enhanced certainty of an annually agreed 3-year financial planning horizon. This does not prejudice the Council's position as it currently has the right, within the service level agreements signed by grant recipients, to terminate any funding agreement provided it gives 6-months notice.

### Contribution to Council Priorities via RCIS and 3-Year Funding Agreements

12. Table 1 below shows the total numbers of projects and organisations funded by priority along with the total amount invested. It should be noted that Citizen First, includes projects and organisations that exist to support people in particular need. (e.g. CAB, Home Start). This work indirectly supports the Affordable Housing priority.

**Table 1: Investment by Council Priority**

Council Priority	Number of projects or organisations supported		Total amount invested
	Core	Project	
Regeneration	18	0	£108,800
Environment	5	0	£36,950
Community Safety	3	0	£44,000
Healthy Living	0	14	£17,750
Citizens First	18	0	£227,165
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>14</b>	

In addition to the money secured through the grants programme £28,700 has been allocated towards these projects from mainstream budgets or government grants

### Further Information

13. The detailed grant distribution, setting out which organisations were funded and to what levels, is set out in the Decision Notice issued by the Strategic Head of Regeneration and Culture on December 21st 2007. For further information about the grant distribution please contact Chris Coleman or Karen Toole (01453-754303, [chris.coleman@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:chris.coleman@stroud.gov.uk) or [karen.toole@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:karen.toole@stroud.gov.uk)).