

Thanet District Council

Support for the Community & Voluntary Sector Consultation Draft

September 2008

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Foreword

Thanet District Council has been looking at its process for allocating grants and has now put forward a series of proposals, which if accepted by the voluntary sector, will then go forward for approval by the Council's Cabinet in December.

The proposals would see grants for events considered separately, with support available to voluntary and community groups through Community Partnership Agreements. These agreements would set out what groups could expect from the Council and vice versa. Amongst the support the Council may be offering would be meeting rooms, help with the design and printing of literature, access to a web based grant finding site and an agreed level of support from a nominated officer. Individual cash grants will no longer be made available.

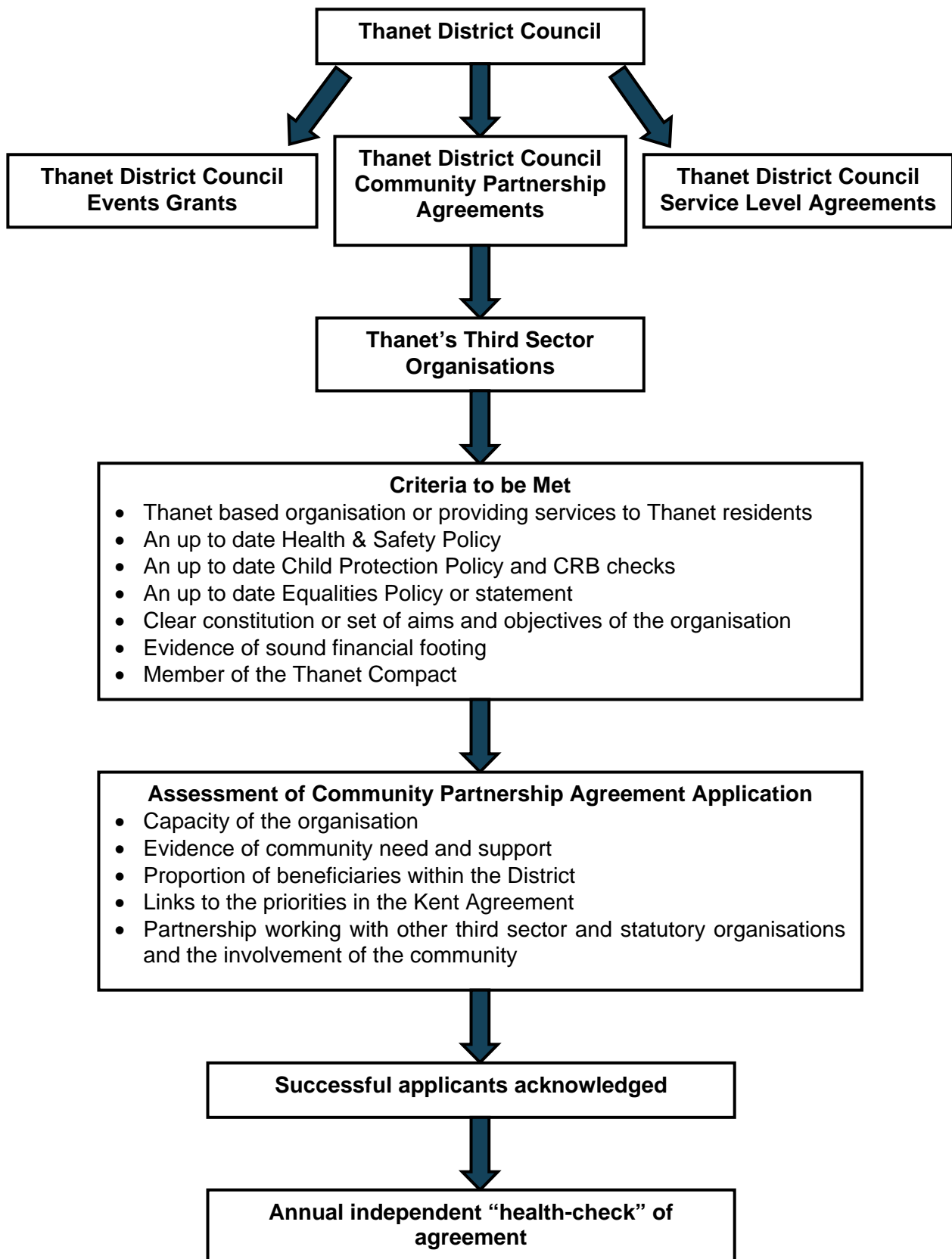
In order to qualify for a Community Partnership Agreement, organisations or consortia would need to have up to date policies for health and safety, child protection and equalities, evidence of sound financial management and support from ward, county or parish councillors. They would also need to be signed up to the Thanet Compact and demonstrate close collaboration with other organisations working in the third sector.

We would like your comments on the proposals so that we are able to shape a fairer and more beneficial system for all. The closing date for consultation is **27th October 2008**.

Cllr Jo Gideon

Portfolio Holder for Safe Neighbourhoods and Healthy Communities

Process Overview



Introduction, Background & Aims

- The purpose of Thanet District Council's Community Partnership Agreements Policy is to give clear guidelines and principles to all of those in the third sector who wish to apply for partnership working. It contains details of criteria that need to be met by applicants and our priorities as a Council which we would wish to be reflected in successful applications. It is for the benefit of the third sector within Thanet, Thanet District Council and the residents of Thanet by setting out criteria for the application of Community Partnership Agreements, for officers and members to clearly understand the principles of allocating resources to third sector organisations and to give the residents of Thanet the knowledge Thanet District Council is working with the third sector to provide the services that they need.
- Following a review of Thanet District Council's current procedure, this policy has been revised to create a fairer more beneficial system.
- The third sector is becoming an ever increasing influence within our communities, which are now hugely diverse in their nature to make them sustainable and give the sector greater independence.
- This proposal has been designed with reference to Thanet Compact in which Thanet District Council are active champions. Thanet District Council believes that this proposal embodies the values of the Compact.
- There are several hundred third sector organisations active in Thanet today, all of which are of different sizes, scopes and financial prosperity. Many of these organisations play a key role in the community, such as resident advice, social care, and leisure and recreation. There are 310 charitable organisations registered with the Charities Commission in the Thanet area out of 4884 registered throughout Kent, but there are many who are not yet registered.
- Grant funding is currently categorised in four ways:
 - Events
 - Community projects
 - Small grants
 - Rentals

The aims of Thanet District Council's Community Partnership Agreement Policy are:

- To show our commitment to Thanet's third sector and recognise their value as equal partners.
- To champion greater cohesion within the sector.
- To strengthen the Council's commitment to vulnerable groups.
- To give greater sustainability to the third sector in Thanet.
- To give clarity to the third sector in relation to the criteria that need to be met when applying for a community partnership agreement.
- To align with the principles of the Thanet Compact.
- To operate a fair criteria based process based upon logical, transparent methodology.

Proposals

Thanet District Council is proposing the following changes to their current grants system:

- For all events grants to have a separate budget.
- Maintain funding to those involved in three year Service Level Agreements.
- Replace the existing Community Grants Scheme by supplying funding "in kind" to those who have a Community Partnership Agreement with Thanet District Council.
- Take into account the need for all Community Partners to have high standards of governance and conduct (as set out in the criteria) and to provide documentary evidence where necessary.

- Phase out existing concessionary grants.
- Work directly with organisations such as CASE Kent and Thanet Voluntary and Community Sector Forum in creating the new model environment.
- Provide access to resources to our community partners:
 - Access to funding support and advice through Grant Net via the Thanet District Council website, with technical advice available and the option of demonstrations and training courses to help find funding and sponsorship.
 - To provide meeting room space and use of necessary equipment.
 - Letters of support for organisations applying for funding from external organisations.
 - Help from in house teams with design, printing and publishing services.
 - A named Thanet District Council officer for a half day per month (but this is not for secretarial support, e.g. minute taking).
 - An annual conference for all community partners.
- Community Partnership Agreements will not be available to medical establishments, schools or religious groups for their primary purposes.
- Organisations that have a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Thanet District Council will not be eligible to apply for a Community Partnership Agreement.

Criteria to be met

- Based within Thanet providing services and activities to Thanet residents *or* be from outside of Thanet but delivering services and activities to Thanet residents.
- An up to date Health and Safety Policy
- Organisations who are involved with children, or hold events to which children may attend must have an up to date Child Protection Policy and all members, associates, employees or volunteers *must* be CRB checked.¹
- An up to date Equalities Policy or statement.
- A clear constitution or set of rules showing their aims and objectives.
- Be of sound financial footing and show their last financial year of accounts.
- Be a signatory to Thanet Compact.
- There must be support from a County, District or Parish Councillor.

Assessment of Community Partnership Agreement Applications

Thanet District Council will look at the following to assess eligibility:

- The capacity of the organisation.
- Evidence of community need and support.
- The number of residents that will benefit from the project.
- Your partnership working with other third sector and statutory organisations and the involvement of the community.
- Whether all documentary evidence has been presented (please see *Criteria to be met*).

¹ If the organisation does not have a Child Protection Policy of their own, the applicant shall comply with the terms of the Council's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy current at the time and shall cause its group members, associates, employees and assistants to do likewise, throughout the duration of the project and funding period. Our current Child Protection Policy includes (without limitation) a requirement for applicants to undertake CRB checks of all of those who are likely to come into contact with children or young people. CRB checks are expected to be paid for by the organisation.

Terms & Conditions

- Thanet District Council's logo/Community Partnership Agreement logo *must* be used in all publicity materials related to their projects or events (this may be waived at officer discretion).
- Thanet District Council will not be held responsible to third parties for any debts or liabilities incurred by the applicant.
- The community partner is wholly responsible for obtaining all relevant insurances, licenses and permissions that are necessary by law and will produce them to the authority upon request.

Equalities & Diversity

Thanet District Council is committed to supporting social inclusion and ensuring that everyone within our community is treated equally. This means that everyone has the same opportunity to access and receive services and opportunities. They can participate in all aspects of community life regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or beliefs. We are aiming to:

- Promote equality of opportunity
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Promote participation in community life
- Promote good relations between people from different backgrounds.

Key terms/glossary

Anchor Organisations – Organisations that are independent and community-led with multi-purpose functions which provide a focal point for community organisations and purposes.

Governance - The way that your organisation is set up and run.

Thanet Compact – This document is a Government requirement and was formally adopted by Thanet District Council's Cabinet in 2005.

Third Sector – Any non-governmental organisations that are driven by values and who principally re-invest their surpluses to progress social, environmental or cultural intentions. The third sector is inclusive of voluntary and community organisations, charities, social enterprises, cooperatives and mutuals.

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Document History

Version	Date	Agreed by	Minute ref