

SHAPING THE FUTURE

Proposals for new arrangements for funding services delivered by the Third Sector, and to Town and Parish Councils



Proposals for new arrangements for funding services delivered by the Third Sector, and to Town and Parish Councils

Warwickshire County Council has a long standing and valued relationship with the Third Sector (Voluntary and Community Sector). The Third Sector has significant expertise in direct work with communities, and particularly with those of our residents who are vulnerable or in need. The variety and spread of the Sector across Warwickshire means that many people benefit from the work it delivers, and these local organisations are trusted and valued by the people that use them.

What is an infrastructure organisation?

Infrastructure organisations exist to ensure that Third Sector organisations get the advice, support and representation they need to improve the circumstances of the people and communities they work with.

What is the Third Sector?

The term 'Third Sector' describes a wide range of not for profit groups and organisations which includes charities and Community Interest Companies, voluntary and community organisations, social enterprises and co-operatives.

Also of importance at the most local level are Town and Parish Councils, whose expertise in community matters often makes them the first port of call for Warwickshire residents.

Public Sector budgets have been under heavy strain for several years now, with further cutbacks scheduled for the coming years. This pressure on the public purse means that the County Council can't continue to deliver services as it has in the past. The relationships that we have got with partners across both the Private and the Third Sectors are more important than ever in working with us to find creative solutions so as to stretch the budget to meet community needs

Currently, Warwickshire County Council makes funding available to several organisations to provide services which:

- Provide free support to community-based groups and volunteers
- Provide free advice to people with financial and welfare problems
- Support Town and Parish Councils to operate effectively

We also award grants to Third Sector groups through the Councillor Grant Fund.



Now, whilst the County Council remains committed to maintaining a strong relationship with these organisations, the Council needs to make savings in every area of its spending.

In order to help us make savings we have been looking at what is delivered through the Third Sector to see how it might be prioritised or delivered differently.

We now have proposals on how these services and the grant fund might be delivered differently, with reduced budgets. This consultation asks you for your views on our proposals.

For each financial year we have savings targets. By 2018 we need to make savings of £250,000, meaning that our budget to pay for these services will be reduced to £1,003,000 by 2018:

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Third Sector infrastructure support	£ 493,000	£ 430 ,000	£ 380,000	£ 270,000
Equalities service	£ 68,000	£ 68,000	£ 68,000	£ 65,000
Advice services	£ 360,000	£ 350,000	£ 330,000	£ 280,000
Town and Parish Councils support	£ 22,000	£ 22,000	£ 20,000	£ 16,000
Councillor Grants Scheme	£310,000	£310,000	£372,000	£372,000
Total	£1,253,000	£1,180,000	£1,170,000	£1,003,000

In addition to the above funding, Warwickshire County Council also funds Third Sector organisations to deliver services directly to groups of people with specific needs. The funding for these groups and services is not included in this consultation.

The closing date for this consultation is 12 February 2015.

To have your say:

Complete the online survey at <http://askwarks.wordpress.com/>

Complete this paper survey and post it back to **FREEPOST RTKH-YLUH-BLER, Warwickshire County Council, Localities and Partnerships, P.O. Box 43, Barrack Street, Warwick. CV34 4SX**

For questions about the consultation process or for help in letting us know your views please call **01926 456102** or email thirdsector@warwickshire.gov.uk

If this information is difficult to understand we can provide it in another format, for example, in large print, on audio tape, or in another language. Please contact the Localities and Partnerships Team on 01926 456102.



Section 1

Support to Third Sector groups

When any Third Sector group or volunteer needs help they can contact a support organisation for free help. The services provided means that groups and volunteers can find out about things like:

- Funding
- Filling in grant application forms
- Training opportunities
- Recruiting and supporting volunteers
- Good practice

We currently pay two organisations a combined total of £493,000 a year to deliver these services.

One organisation provides a specialist service for youth groups while the other provides a service to all groups.

(A third organisation provides some elements of this support to Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups, and some other types of support to BME communities.)

Our consultation about support services earlier this year showed that some groups had been confused about which organisation to use.

Our savings proposals

Our key proposals are:

1. Bringing the three separate service arrangements into a single arrangement to remove duplication and reduce running costs
2. Prioritising the services delivered so that they reflect the findings of our survey of earlier this year
3. Focusing face to face support on those groups that have a barrier to getting their information by phone or the internet
4. Having 'online' information available for basic or frequently provided support so that groups can access help 24/7
5. Linking the service provided closely with Council Commissioners so that the Sector is supported to be able to bid to run local services
6. Ensuring the service provider is engaged in strategic developments in Warwickshire and showcase the potential of the Third Sector
7. Developing new ways of working and delivering the service so that the resource goes further



Question 1

Do you think the proposal to bring the separate infrastructure support arrangements into a single contract will:

a) Deliver improved outcomes for Third Sector organisations

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

b) Improve the co-ordination of support activity delivered to Third Sector organisations

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

c) Improve efficiency and cost effectiveness by streamlining staffing structures

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

d) Please use the space below to expand on your answers or make suggestions



Question 2

Do you think our other proposals for the future infrastructure support service will:

a) Increase the effectiveness of the working relationship between Warwickshire County Council and the service provider/s

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

b) Enable greater clarity and understanding between Warwickshire County Council and the service provider/s to assist in aligning support activity to commissioned needs

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

c) More fully engage the Third Sector, through the service provider/s, in strategic initiatives and decision making

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

d) Please use the space below to expand on your answers or make suggestions



Section 2

Support to Volunteering

Funding for support to volunteering is included in the support service arrangement described in Section 1.

In the past we have focused our volunteering funding on services that help people find volunteering opportunities. Feedback from the consultation earlier this year indicated that this is a valued service for people with extra support needs. Some other responses stated that support was needed to develop volunteering and volunteering opportunities, and make sure that all volunteers are well supported.

The consultation from earlier this year gave us feedback that suggested we should focus on making sure that good quality volunteering opportunities are available.

Our savings proposals

Our key proposals are:

- 1.** Directing volunteers to websites like 'do-it.org' to find their own opportunities, reducing the amount of service time spent on matching people
- 2.** Focusing one-to-one time on helping people with support needs into volunteering placements
- 3.** Investing time in working with organisations across all sectors to promote the benefits of volunteering
- 4.** Supporting organisations to have robust policies in place for managing and valuing volunteers



Question 3

Do you think the proposals for refocusing volunteering support will:

a) Increase the quality of volunteering placements and experiences

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

b) Increase the range of volunteering opportunities available in Warwickshire

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

c) Raise the profile of volunteering across all sectors and communities

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

d) Please use the space below to expand on your answers or make suggestions



Section 3

Equalities Service

The Council currently funds a service that works directly with Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups. The service:

- Supports groups and volunteers supporting BME residents
- Helps BME people who feel discriminated against get professional support

We currently pay one organisation £68,000 a year to deliver this service.

Our consultation on support services earlier this year showed that some groups and partner agencies were confused about where to go for support for BME groups and volunteers, and what other types of support were on offer. BME groups reported that they needed more help with funding applications.

In Question 1 we proposed that a single service arrangement will deliver all types of support to groups and volunteers. This would include the support to groups and volunteers that is currently provided by this service. Under our proposals the support element will be removed from this future service but will be included in the single support service.

Our consultation also showed that Third Sector organisations and volunteers were interested in understanding more about all equalities groups.

Our savings proposals

Our key proposals are:

1. Reforming the service offer so that it becomes an Equalities service (encompassing BME groups rather than focusing solely on them)
2. Removing the 'support service to groups and volunteers' element of this service and including it in the single support service
3. Making equal access to services for all people, particularly those at risk of discrimination, a priority for the service
4. Increasing awareness of equalities issues and good practice



Question 4

Do you think the proposals for refocusing this service to encompass all equalities characteristics will:

a) Deliver improved outcomes for all Warwickshire residents at risk of discrimination

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

b) Clarify the type of service and support on offer for people at risk of discrimination

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

c) Strengthen the voice and profile of all people at risk of discrimination in Warwickshire

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

d) Please use the space below to expand on your answers or make suggestions



Section 4

Advice Services

When any citizen needs advice they can contact someone for free help. The service provided means that people can find out about things like:

- Debt advice
- Benefits advice
- Employment rights
- Housing issues
- Consumer rights
- Discrimination

We currently pay five organisations a combined total of £360,000 a year to deliver this service. The services are based in each district and borough of the County.

Our savings proposals

Our key proposals are:

1. Appropriately signposting people to 'online' information on basic or frequently provided support so that people can help themselves at any time of the day or night (such as Money Advice Service (www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk), Step Change (www.stepchange.org) and the National Debtline (www.nationaldebtline.org)).
2. Targeting the service at those who are the most vulnerable or with the greatest level of need
3. Developing new ways of working and delivering the service so that the resource goes further



Question 5

Do you think our proposals for advice services will:

a) Increase the number of people with lower level advice needs using online services for help and advice

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

b) Enable the advice services to work with those in the greatest need

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

c) Encourage innovation in how advice services are delivered

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

d) Please use the space below to expand on your answers or make suggestions



Section 5

Support to Town and Parish Councils

The Council currently makes a contribution of £22,000 a year to an organisation that provides legal and quality standards advice to Town and Parish Councils.

This service is a 'membership' service: Town and Parish Councils pay an annual affiliation fee to receive the service. Most of Warwickshire's Town and Parish Councils are members of the organisation.

Our savings proposals

Our key proposals are:

- 1.** As the provider has other opportunities to raise funds, we propose to reduce our contribution
- 2.** Developing new ways of working and delivering the service so that the resource goes further



Question 6

Do you think that our savings proposals for support to Town and Parish Councils will:

a) Enable the continuation of a specialist service supporting Town and Parish Councils

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

b) Encourage innovation in how the service is delivered

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

c) Please use the space below to expand on your answers or make suggestions



Section 6

Warwickshire County Councillor Grant Fund

All Warwickshire County Councillors currently have £5,000 of grant funding to allocate in their locality area. Every year we spend £310,000 on these grants. Third Sector groups bid for this money by filling in an application form.

The consultation on support services earlier this year didn't cover Councillor grants. However, a lot of the groups and volunteers that responded explained that it is becoming harder for them to find funding. Many grassroots community groups and organisations report that they are offering fewer services than they used to because funding is harder to find.

Our spending proposals

Our key proposals for the Warwickshire County Councillor Grant Fund are:

1. Increasing the amount of funding available by £1,000 per Councillor per year to a total of £6,000 per Councillor (£372,000 in total)
2. Supporting more grassroots Third Sector organisations to deliver services that support vulnerable people in their communities



Question 7

Do you think our spending proposals for the County Councillor Grant Fund will:

a) Deliver improved outcomes for Warwickshire residents reliant on the support provided by grassroots Third Sector organisations

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

b) Increase the value and role of the Third Sector as a key deliverer of services to those in the greatest need

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

c) Support the development of innovative services at the most local level

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

d) Please use the space below to expand on your answers or make suggestions



Section 7

Any other comments

If you have any suggestions for how else we might make savings and retain a quality service please tell us using the space below

Some questions about you

To help us analyse the responses to the questionnaire please tell us briefly about yourself. Tick as many boxes as apply to you.

Are you answering this questionnaire as:

- An existing contract holder
- A Third Sector group representative
- A volunteer
- A representative of a Town or Parish Council
- A resident of Warwickshire

Which of the following areas do you live or work in?

- North Warwickshire Borough
- Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough
- Rugby Borough
- Warwick District
- Stratford on Avon District
- Countywide



Section 8

Equalities Questions

Warwickshire County Council is committed to promoting and achieving equality and fairness for all. The information requested below helps us monitor and understand the profile of our customers, staff and members. It is confidential and anonymous, and it cannot be attributed back to you.

Are you...?

Male Female

How old are you?

Under 18 18 - 29 30 - 44 45 - 59 60 - 74 75+

Do you have a long standing illness or disability? (Long standing means anything that has troubled you over a period of time or that is likely to affect you over a period of time)?

Yes No

How would you describe your ethnic origin? Please tick one box only

White - English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British

White - Irish

White - Gypsy or Irish Traveller

White - any other background

Mixed - White and Black Caribbean

Mixed - White and Asian

Mixed - White and Black African

Mixed - any other missed background

Asian or Asian British - Indian

Asian or Asian British - Pakistani

Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi

Asian or Asian British - Chinese

Asian or Asian British - Any other background

Black or Black British - African

Black or Black British - Caribbean

Black or Black British - any other background

Arab

Any other ethnic group



Section 8

Equalities Questions (continued)

What is your religion?

- None
- Christian
- Buddhist
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Sikh
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please specify) _____

Do you consider yourself to be...?

- Heterosexual or straight
- Gay or lesbian
- Bisexual
- Other
- Prefer not to say



