

Planning Committee

2.00pm, Wednesday, 3 October 2018

New Arrangements for Funding Third Sector Delivery Partners

Item number	7.1
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	All
Council Commitments	10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15

Executive Summary

This report seeks Committee approval to change how the planning service funds third sector delivery partners. To better reflect the nature of Planning's direct relationship with these important implementation partners, it is proposed to move from a system of annual grant awards to three-year service level agreements (SLA). This will provide more budgetary certainty for partners and help ensure their delivery activity is fully aligned with Council objectives and outcomes. This new approach would apply to the two largest recipients of funding - Edinburgh World Heritage and Edinburgh and Lothians Greenspace Trust – for the period 2019-22. It is also proposed to cease awarding small grants and instead enter into SLAs agreements with several third sector organisations who also help to maintain and improve Edinburgh's built and natural heritage for future generations.

A further report will be presented to Committee in the February 2019 seeking approval to enter into detailed three-year SLAs.

New Arrangements for Funding Third Sector Delivery Partners

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that Committee:
 - 1.1.1 agrees to change the funding basis for third sector delivery partners from annual grant awards to three-year service level agreements;
 - 1.1.2 agrees to enter into service level agreements for the period 2019 to 2022 with the two largest funding recipients: Edinburgh World Heritage (EWH) and the Edinburgh and Lothians Greenspace Trust (ELGT);
 - 1.1.3 notes that service level agreements will be entered into with the recipients of smaller levels of funding, including the Cockburn Association, the Edinburgh Access Panel, and existing arrangements will continue with Planning Aid for Scotland and The Wildlife Information Centre;
 - 1.1.4 notes that funding for Archaeology Scotland and the Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland will cease but as a transitional arrangement these bodies will continue to be funded for one further year; and
 - 1.1.5 notes that a report will be presented to Committee in February 2019 detailing draft service level agreements with EWH and ELGT, for approval.

2. Background

- 2.1 For many years, grants have been awarded on an annual basis to support a range of third sector organisations. The aims and objectives of these organisations were well-aligned with Council's planning and placemaking objectives to protect and enhance Edinburgh's built and natural heritage.
- 2.2 The total funding available is limited, amounting to £86,000 in financial year 2018/19. Of this, grants to the two largest organisations accounted for 90% of the available funds.
- 2.3 The renewal of grants to third sector organisations under £25,000, is delegated to the Head of Service.

3. Main report

- 3.1 Planning has operated a limited grant programme since 2010. In 2018/19 the vast majority of this fund - some 90% - was awarded to two partner organisations: Edinburgh World Heritage (EWH) (£46,000) and Edinburgh and the Lothians Green Space Trust (ELGT) (£25,833). EWH works in partnership with the Council and Historic Environment Scotland to help implement the Edinburgh Old and New Town World Heritage Site Management Plan, fulfilling the collective obligation to UNESCO and the World Heritage Centre. ELGT delivers projects that enhance the quality of life for Edinburgh's communities by improving their local environment; it works with the Council, communities, agencies and partners to create sustainable, well-managed and accessible green spaces. It is also an active member of the Edinburgh Biodiversity Partnership. The Trust is currently drafting a new Strategy for the period 2019 to 2023.
- 3.2 In 2018/19 small grants were also awarded to the Cockburn Association (£6,000), the Edinburgh Access Panel (£630), the Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland (£700) and Archaeology Scotland (£475).
- 3.3 The Cockburn Association manages the Civic Forum on behalf of the planning service as well as delivering Doors Open Day. The Edinburgh Access Panel works with the planning service to deliver improved access for disabled people to buildings, transport, streetscape and services in Edinburgh. An example of recent engagement includes consultation as part of the "Connecting our City, Transforming our Places" project.
- 3.4 Given the relatively small levels of funding and the strong partnerships developed to directly deliver Council and planning objectives with EWH and ELGT, as well as some of the smaller grant recipients, there is strong justification that financial support for these organisations should remain in place.
- 3.5 However it is considered that the grant mechanism which requires applicants to bid for funds is not the most effective way for planning to work in partnership with these third sector organisations and a move to service level agreements (SLA) with these organisations would be more appropriate. SLAs are a standard method of procurement, which the Council adopts when working with third sector organisations who support and deliver Council service objectives. Three-year SLAs, which are consistent with the Council corporate approach to third party funding, will give partner organisations much more budgetary certainty, an outcome they have sought for some time. They will also give the Council the reassurance that there will be continuity in the provision of these important delivery services. SLAs will be drawn up in consultation with these organisations before they come to committee. This approach will be reviewed again in three years' time.
- 3.6 An example of where this has already been working successfully is with the Wildlife Information Centre (TWIC) whom the Planning service engage, through an SLA, to manage ecological data and undertake site assessment. A level of service is also agreed with PAS, through a subscription arrangement; This year this involved

working with schools, during the 'Year of Young People', to engage them in the preparation of the City Plan 2030.

Other organisations receiving grants

- 3.7 It is proposed to discontinue funding for the Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland and Archaeology Scotland as they are not working as directly with the Council to deliver planning outcomes. However, as a reasonable transitional arrangement, it is proposed to support both organisations for one further year, in financial year 2019/20. The amounts are not large: £700 and £475 respectively.

4. Measures of success

- 4.1 The Council will enter into SLAs with the identified delivery partners in time to enable funding for financial year 2019/20. SLAs will commit the funded organisations to deliver actions and measurable outcomes fully aligned with Council planning and placemaking objectives.
- 4.2 This arrangement will be reviewed every three years.

5. Financial impact

- 5.1 For the next three financial years it is assumed the total available for third party SLAs will continue to be around £86,000 per year, which is the sum available in 2018/19. A report will be presented to Committee in February 2019 setting out specific SLA funding amounts, following approval of the Council budget for 2019/20.

6. Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 There are no identified risks associated with approval of the report as recommended. There is a risk to partner organisations if funding is not put in place.

7. Equalities impact

- 7.1 No infringements of rights or negative impacts on equalities have been identified. Supporting these third sector organisations increases the ability of people in Edinburgh to participate in the operation of the Council.

8. Sustainability impact

- 8.1 Supporting the identified organisations as proposed will have a significant positive impact on the environment and people's understanding of and engagement with Edinburgh's built and natural heritage.

9. Consultation and engagement

- 9.1 All grant recipients were advised during negotiation for the 2018/19 grant that a review would be taking place with regards to future funding arrangements. Further discussions have taken place with regards to the proposed new arrangements and will continue following this Committee meeting.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 [Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site Management 2017-22 Plan](#)
10.2 [ELGT Project Report 2017/18](#)
10.3 [ELGT Strategy 2015-18](#)
10.4 [Review of Council Grants to Third Parties 2013-14](#)

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11. Appendices

None