



Children and Families Revenue Grants to Third Parties 2016/19

To City of Edinburgh Council Education, Children and Families Committee: Councillors Godzik (Convener), Fullerton (Vice-Convener), Aitken, Aldridge, Austin Hart, Bridgman, Child, Nick Cook, Corbett, Day, Jackson, Key, Lewis, Lunn, Main, Milligan, Redpath, Robson, Rust, Tymkewycz, Burns (ex-officio) and Howat (ex-officio)

1. EVOC supports the Edinburgh Network of Voluntary Organisations working with Children, Young People and Families. The net result of this is informed and supported Sector representatives participating across the Children's Partnership and 26 strategic partnerships and working groups. Over many years, the Sector has contributed positively to the priorities for children and families in Edinburgh.
2. EVOC welcomes the move to a three year grant programme and the introduction of the small grants programme, and we know that Edinburgh's children, young people and families will benefit directly from the stability this gives to many organisations. However, we are disappointed that the Revenue Grants to Third Parties redesign process has not fulfilled the promise of a transparent, coproduced grants programme, which could have built on many years of coproduction and partnership working.
3. The process, which has resulted in the paper for the meeting on 11 February, has not adhered to the Compact values of equal respect, indeed it has damaged the trust the Sector had in both the partnership working developed over the years, and their perception of the fairness and transparency surrounding the new grants programme.
4. We have some specific concerns alongside potential solutions outlined in Appendix A.
5. Collectively, the Sector recognises the need for redesign in a climate of changing and competing priorities, as well as reducing budgets. Following concerns expressed by the Sector at the briefing sessions held in August and September and concerted effort from EVOC to articulate those concerns, Children and Families decided to add an enhanced assessment process. Organisations were reassured that this would ensure fairness and objectivity and a fit with Strategic Outcomes. However, subsequent decisions appear to be inconsistent with the original aim of the re-design process.
6. We urge the Committee to work with the Third Sector to rebuild trust, learn lessons from this process and ensure that the Sector is treated as an equal partner. To further this, we ask the Committee to establish a cross-sector Checkpoint Group with the remit to:
 - a. Evaluate the impact of the new grants programme and the awards decisions on the Sector
 - b. Produce a 'lessons learnt' report for Committee within a six month timeline.

EVOC

10 February 2016

Children and Families Revenue Grants to Third Parties 2016/19

Issue	Possible Solution
<p>“...proposed distribution of 95% current funding for existing partners and 50% for new applicants.” (Paragraph 1.6)</p> <p>Organisations have raised concerns around this point for a number of reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In some cases, the amount they have been recommended for is not in line with what they would expect to receive based on the above statement. This gives rise to fears that the process as described has not been followed as closely as it appears, causing concern around transparency and equity. 2. Organisations will not be able to deliver the same level of outcomes as in their application due to the reduced amount (this will particularly be the case for those receiving 50%). 	<p>Clarify why organisations have received the amount allocated to them (ensuring any conditions of grant are made clear).</p> <p>Ensure that C&F, alongside the organisations involved, fully understand the impact the proposed reduction in allocated amount will have on the project proposal, before discussing and agreeing the outcomes under the new arrangement.</p> <p>We recommend that CEC make a clear statement on how they will undertake the renegotiation of project outcomes with organisations to ensure transparency and consistency across the board.</p>
<p>There appears to have been no equality impact assessment undertaken. It is our understanding that the public sector equality duties require public authorities to undertake and publish an equality impact assessment of financial decisions. The COG drew attention to the need for an assessment but this appears to have been disregarded.</p>	<p>Publish a copy of the equality impact assessment that has been undertaken for the grants programme 2016/19.</p>
<p>The level of engagement with the Sector through EVOC has been misrepresented:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is a reference (in para 2.3) to the Elected Member Working Group having agreed that EVOC would be invited to attend all the briefing sessions. That did not happen and, indeed, we were unaware of this decision. 2. It is stated (para 9.3) that regular updates have been posted on the EVOC and Compact websites. This implies that C&F have been actively sharing information. This is not the case. The information that EVOC published has been gleaned from the sector and by pro-actively seeking information from C&F. There has been no 	<p>Make public the minutes of the Elected Member Working Group meetings to clarify this ask and provide an explanation of why it was not carried through. Publication of these minutes would also improve the Sector’s confidence in the transparency of the redesign process.</p> <p>In future, provide updates (if necessary) to EVOC and the Compact.</p>

<p>update provided by C&F for the Compact website since the application forms were published last year.</p>	
<p>“...a disinvestment protocol will be developed from existing practices to ensure that the Council does all it can to mitigate potential negative impacts from disinvestment on service delivery” (Paragraph 2.2)</p> <p>Organisations we have spoken to are not aware of having seen this and would welcome a copy.</p>	<p>Provide a copy of the disinvestment protocol and make clear how this relates to the outcome of the grants programme decisions.</p>
<p>Compared with the paper published in December, the amount for small grants has decreased from £130 to £108K and the amount available for grant distribution after the transitional funding amounts has also decreased. Neither of these reductions are acknowledged in the paper.</p>	<p>Provide an explanation of why the amounts have reduced.</p>
<p>Six organisations are to receive transitional funding at 95% of 2015/16 amount (paragraph 3.11) and were judged to be “especially vulnerable”. However, there appears to be significantly more organisations who received a grant in 2015-16 but whose applications were unsuccessful in the 2016-19 round and the criteria for deciding who was particularly vulnerable is not made available.</p> <p>The identity of these six organisations is not disclosed. Preserving the anonymity of the six organisations receiving transitional funding is neither appropriate nor tenable. Other organisations have their levels of funding contained in the paper so why not these six?</p>	<p>Provide information on the principles behind how and why these six organisations were selected for interim funding, so that those not receiving any financial support fully understand the rationale behind this decision. This will increase trust in the transparency of these decisions.</p> <p>Provide the names of those organisations receiving transitional funding.</p>
<p>The arrangements for breakfast clubs are unclear. In particular, two of them no longer appear on the list of successful applicants. The year 1 of the Breakfast Club Development Fund is clearly not sufficient to provide year 1 funding for breakfast clubs.</p>	<p>Clarify the intentions surrounding the Breakfast Club Development Fund and if necessary make clear the support that will be available to those affected by this change in funding model.</p>
<p>The rescheduling of the Youth Work contracts means that in three years’ time we will be back in the same situation with the next grants and contracts cycles running concurrently.</p>	<p>It would be much better if organisations knew their contract position before applying for the next grant. This will also aid clarity over the distinction between funding through the grants programme and the aims of the contract.</p>