



# OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**Thursday, 22nd December, 2011**

**7.00 pm**

**Town Hall, Watford**

Publication date: 14 December 2011

## **CONTACT**

If you require further information or you would like a copy of this agenda in another format, e.g. large print, please contact Sandra Hancock in Legal and Property Services on 01923 278377 or by email to [legalanddemocratic@watford.gov.uk](mailto:legalanddemocratic@watford.gov.uk) (Minicom available on 01923 278499).

Welcome to this meeting. We hope you find these notes useful.

## **ACCESS**

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# COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Councillor M Watkin (Chair)

Councillor S Rackett (Vice-Chair)

Councillors N Bell, S Greenslade, K Hastrick, P Jeffree, S Johnson, R Martins and K McLeod

## AGENDA

### PART A - OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**
2. **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS (IF ANY)**
3. **CALL-IN: REVIEW OF THREE YEAR GRANT FUNDING PROGRAMME TO ACHIEVE SAVINGS** (Pages 1 - 82)

The following decision taken on 5 December 2011 by Cabinet has been called in:

Review of three year grant funding programme to achieve savings

The reason for call-in, agreed by 3 Members, is as follows

“We the undersigned Call-In the decision by the Cabinet on Monday 5th December to agree the Officer recommendations in Item 34 regarding the Review of the 3-year Grant funding programme to achieve savings, including Appendix A and B.

We feel that the "single-Interest" criteria was not followed consistently across all groups and Organisations and that the overall funding criteria was not followed consistently for all groups.

We feel that groups and organisations were not given sufficient time to prepare for the possible loss of funding.”

The following documents are attached

- (a) Report of the Head of Community Services presented to Cabinet
- (b) Appendix A to the report – Recommended savings options table
- (c) Appendix B to the report – Organisation Analysis table
- (d) Additional paper – Feedback to Cabinet from the organisations
- (e) Extract of the minutes of Cabinet on 5 December 2011
- (f) Proforma requesting the call-in of the decision agreed by Councillors Nigel Bell, Ken Brodhurst and Asif Khan
- (g) Call-in procedure to be followed

#### **4. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS**

- Thursday 2 February 2012
- Wednesday 7 March 2012
- Thursday 29 March 2012 (For call-in only)

## PART A

**Report to:** Cabinet  
**Date of meeting:** 5<sup>th</sup> December 2011  
**Report of:** Head of Community Services  
**Title:** Review of three year grant funding programme to achieve savings

### 1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 At the Full Council meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup> January 2011, as part of a package of savings identified within the Service Prioritisation programme, it was agreed that the budgets for the provision of voluntary sector grants would be reduced by £280,740, approximately 23% of the overall budget, for the financial year 2012/13. This was necessary in view of the Council's challenging overall savings target of £5 million, approximately 30% of its annual budget.
- 1.2 A consultation process was undertaken during summer 2011 with all 14 of the grant funded organisations that would be affected by this decision. Officers have subsequently analysed the information received and undertaken equality impact analyses and performance assessments. This report contains the results of that work and recommendations for members consideration that will significantly achieve the target funding reduction figure but not in total.
- 1.3 In all cases where savings have been identified by organisations these have been accepted. In addition the recommendations include a complete withdrawal of grant aid from three organisations, a 50% reduction in funding to a further one and smaller % savings from organisations where officers have identified capacity to achieve them. The recommendations are still £20,000 short of the overall saving target but officers are of the opinion that any further reductions at this time would not be sustainable.

### 2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Cabinet is recommended to consider the information in the report and in the attached analysis in Appendix B and the officer recommendations as summarised in Appendix A and make decisions on the funding for 2012/13.
- 2.2 That Cabinet is recommended to approve the mitigating actions identified in paragraph 3.15 to support those organisations whose funding is being ceased.
- 2.3 That Cabinet is asked to delegate authority to the Portfolio Holder and Head of

Community Services to make any subsequent decisions required in relation to

- the actions needed to re-commission alternative service provision where necessary;
- decisions required on the use of set aside funds as identified in 3.15
- setting the eligibility criteria for the small grants programme
- decisions required in relation to making reasonable adjustments to the profile of the savings targets should this become necessary during implementation.

**Contact Officer:**

For further information on this report please contact: Lesley Palumbo Head of Community Services telephone extension: 8561 email: [lesley.palumbo@watford.gov.uk](mailto:lesley.palumbo@watford.gov.uk)

**Report approved by:** Cate Hall Executive Director - Services

### 3.0 DETAILED PROPOSAL

- 3.1 In December 2010, Community Services wrote to all 14 grant funded organisations to inform them of the council's proposal to reduce the overall council funding to the voluntary sector by 20-25% in financial year 2012/13. This proposal went to Cabinet on 13 December 2010 and was approved at Full Council on 26 January 2011. The proposal identified a figure of £280,740 from the grant and property budgets that support key voluntary sector partners through the Voluntary Sector Funding programme. This is equivalent to approximately 23% of the overall budget of approximately £1.2million.
- 3.2 To achieve this target it is necessary to make some difficult decisions that will impact on the council's voluntary sector partners and the individuals and communities they serve. As a result, a full consultation has been undertaken on the process to be adopted to inform the decision making. An equality impact analysis has been undertaken, which has been informed by feedback obtained from service users by the service provider organisations.
- 3.3. The voluntary sector funding programme budget of £1.2m consists of:
- a) Annual Fund
  - b) Mayor's Fund
  - c) Three year grant funding programme
- 3.4 The Annual Fund budget is £50,000 and the Mayor's Fund budget is £50,000. These budgets fund small one off grants to organisations to enable specific project work to be undertaken to meet community and Council priorities. If these budgets are reduced they will not have an immediate impact on individuals, communities or organisations as they are subject to a bidding process. A reduction in these funds for 2012-13 will, however, limit the funding available and, therefore, will reduce grant support available. The Council in its consultation proposed to:
- overall reduce the budget by 50%
  - amalgamate the two funds
  - redefine the criteria for application

No negative comments were received in relation to this proposal.

**Officers recommend that this saving proposal is adopted as it will achieve a £50,000 contribution to the budget reduction figure without an immediate or direct impact on service users leaving £230,740 savings still to be found.**

### 3.5 Preferred Recipients

The three year grant funding programme is distributed amongst 14 organisations, three of whom were designated under the current Commissioning Framework as "preferred recipient organisations".

These three organisations support key priorities of the council through the grant programme including cultural activities, infrastructure support and advice services.

In the consultation, the Council confirmed it intends to both maintain the commitment

to “preferred recipients” and continue funding during 2012-13 for the following reasons

- a. The Watford Palace Theatre – is a key delivery partner in the cultural renaissance of the town
- b. Watford’s Council for Voluntary Services – provides support to the wide range of voluntary organisations in the town and maintains and develops a thriving community centre
- c. Citizens Advice Bureau – provides a generic advice services town-wide to all its citizens, particularly those in greatest need of support.

Despite the preferred status, it was decided to ask these organisations if they could identify any efficiency savings.

The Palace Theatre did not offer a saving but demonstrated a number of significant new areas of work they are now delivering for the town within the same overall grant. These include the organisation and production of Imagine Watford with an estimated cost to the Palace of £15k, plus in kind contribution valued at £20k; investment in the equipment to show 250-300 film screenings a year in advance of a new cinema envisaged in the redevelopment of Charter Place; subsidising annual celebrations for a wide range of communities including Diwali, Eid, Vaisakhi, Chinese New Year and Black History Month. The theatre has also gone through a major cost cutting exercise in the last three years which have reduced overheads in total by 12% but have increased turnover and the range of activity by 17%. Staff numbers have been reduced e.g. senior management team from 7 to 4 and restrictions on pay increases have taken place.

Watford CVS has identified a saving of 10% (£9,774) which is split 50/50 between efficiencies and income generation. This will have minimal impact on service delivery and the move to Holywell has given the CVS an opportunity for income generating possibilities not available to it before.

For the CAB, there has been a renegotiation of the rent on its premises resulting in an agreed reduction in the amount payable to the council. This has provided for a saving of 5.7% (£12,929) in the overall grant required but no impact on service provision.

- 3.6 All groups were asked to try and identify efficiency savings in the region of 10% to seek to reduce the impact of compulsory reductions. In order to provide support a two year post of Voluntary Sector Resilience Officer, employed by the CVS, has been funded from reserves. The postholder has assisted organisations to review their future business plans and identify ways to achieve savings in the next financial year as well as develop an approach to the ending of the current three year grant funding programme on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013.
- 3.7 Not all organisations offered savings. The amount of savings achieved from those that volunteered was in the region of £58,000. This left a short fall of £173,000 still to be achieved. Officers’ analysis indicated that there was some scope for savings from those organisations that did not submit proposals. Recommendations for an appropriate saving have been summarised in the recommendation in the table at [Appendix A](#). This additional amount of approximately £12,000 still left a significant shortfall of £161,000 to be found.
- 3.8 The consultation identified that, in the likely event that insufficient savings would be



identified from voluntary proposals, the Council would consider, in relation to each of the organisations, one of four options

- a. Cease all funding from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012
- b. Accept an offer of an efficiency saving on their 2012/13 final year budget
- c. Require the organisation to redesign their service to support a significant cut in grant in excess of any efficiency savings offered on their 2012/13 final year budget
- d. Require the organisation to provide additional services through a redesign of their service

As each service requires a decision to be made the Council undertook to consider the following key elements when forming their judgements and reaching their decisions.

- **Impact on service users/clients**
- **Performance**
- **Alternative Service provision/duplication**
- **Single interest groups**

3.9 The information in the consultation documents relating to these four criteria were as detailed below:

#### **Impact on service users/clients**

The Council will be undertaking an impact assessment and there will be two elements to the impact assessment.

- i.) Service providers will be supported to seek the views of a range of their service users using a standard template to ensure consistent information on the impact of service withdrawal is obtained. This feedback will then be incorporated into the over arching assessment
- ii.) The Council will undertake its own over-arching assessment of comparative impact taking into account its priorities and awareness of users needs.

This evidence will then inform the decision making process.

3.10 This impact analysis has been undertaken by officers on each individual organisation assuming a worse case scenario of a 100% funding cut. The outcome has informed the recommendations made by officers in the attached tables at Appendix A and B. These final recommendations are now being incorporated into an over-arching analysis on the funding decisions being recommended and will be further analysed and adjusted in the light of the decisions made by Cabinet.

#### **3.11 Performance**

All current grant recipients are subject to monitoring of their service delivery performance. Officers have undertaken a performance assessment based on all the current monitoring information and visits undertaken, the outcome of which has formed part of the decision making process. Key aspects of the service performance assessment relate to:

- Value for Money
- Performance in relation to delivery of their service specification
- Quality assurance - where appropriate

This information has then been used to inform the recommendations made by officers in the attached tables at Appendix A and B

### 3.12 **Alternative Service provision/duplication**

The Council will take into consideration issues that indicate an element of duplication of service or where alternative service provision could be more cost effectively achieved. The Council is also aware of the need to move towards a rationalisation of service provision and opportunities to do so may influence the decision making process.

Officers have taken account of this when reaching the recommendations made in the attached tables at Appendix A and B.

### 3.13 **Single Interest Groups**

There are a number of groups that cater for specific communities and there is a need to review whether or not the initial principles for supporting individual communities of interest are as valid today as they were in the past. This is particularly relevant in the light of the general move to more integration into mainstream services, government changes in equality legislation and issues of community cohesion. This will inform the decision making process, having taken account of the outcome of equality impact assessments.

Officers have taken account of this when reaching the recommendations made in the attached tables at Appendix A and B

- 3.14 Attached as Appendix B is the summary analysis of the detail that has led to the officers recommendations that appear as Appendix A. All of the organisations have received a copy of their own analysis and are being given the opportunity to respond to that ahead of the Cabinet meeting. The feedback received will be reported to Cabinet.

Where recommendations will have a severe impact on an organisation, they are being offered the opportunity to meet with the Head of Community Services and Commissioning Manager to discuss the recommendations, the outcome of which will also be reported at the Cabinet meeting.

Appendix A contains the recommendations that Cabinet are asked to consider. The savings are in the range of 5.7% to complete ceasing of funding for three organisations

### 3.15 **Mitigation measures where grant aid is recommended for substantial or complete withdrawal**

The three organisations that are recommended for complete withdrawal of funding are Multi-Cultural Community Centre, Watford African Caribbean Association and Muslim Community Project. In addition it is recommended to reduce funding to Watford

Women's Centre by 50%. One of the main reasons for this is the move away from supporting single interest groups where other provision is available or can be made available as well as lower performance in two of the four cases.

In each of these cases there are proposals to mitigate the impact. Every organisation has an offer of some dedicated support from the Resilience Officer to re-examine their business plans and to work with them on securing more cost efficient service delivery. They will also be allowed to use their final quarter grant for 2011/12 to meet any redundancy and other wind down costs. The use of the last quarter grant will need to be agreed with the council.

The detailed analysis of each organisation and the reasons for the recommendations are set out in Appendix B but the information below highlights the impacts and mitigation for each of the services:

### **Multi-Cultural Community Centre**

The main service is that of a hall for hire. The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) concluded that there would be some impact from the withdrawal of grant if the organisation decided not to continue its activities. For this reason it is recommended that £20,000 be set aside to either commission an appropriate organisation to continue to make the hall available for hire during 2012-13 or alternatively to provide support to the organisation to create a more collaborative and sustainable future for the centre by securing improvements to the building enabling better use of the facility, subject to a programme of improvement agreed between the organisation and the council.

### **Watford African Caribbean Association**

The council's grant provides primarily for core costs whilst the activities the organisation provides are funded by other agencies. In order not to destabilise the organisation's other funding it is recommended that £20,000 is set aside to assist the organisation to make the transition to an alternative model. The EIA assessed the impact of this as minimal on the basis that the activities are funded by other organisations.

### **Muslim Community Project**

The main service is advice on benefits, housing, employment and on passports, visas, immigration etc. The EIA identified that there would be some impact on service users but that most should be able to access similar services elsewhere in the town. The impact was such, however, that it is recommended that £30,000 is set aside to commission the CAB to provide additional services to accommodate users of the MCP including the provision of Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) Level 1 (basic immigration advice and services)

### **Watford Women's Centre**

The main services include support for women in crisis; counselling; information, advice and guidance; volunteering and ESOL classes. The EIA highlighted that should the individual support and counselling provided be withdrawn, particularly for women who are experiencing domestic violence, then this would have a severe impact. For the other services provided there is alternative provision, albeit not under the same roof. For this reason it is recommended that the organisation's grant is reduced by 50% which will enable it to regroup and continue to provide a service for those women who are experiencing domestic violence.

### 3.16 **Future funding of the Voluntary Sector and community groups**

All organisations were made aware during the consultation process and in addition a letter has been sent and acknowledged by the Chairs of Trustees and Management Boards that the existing three year funding programme ends on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013. The Council has made clear that during 2012/13 it will be reviewing grant funding to voluntary sector organisations and examining all the aspects of support that is provided across the Council's services. This review will form the foundation of a new Commissioning Framework that will clearly define how the Council intends to engage with the voluntary sector in the future. The review will be subject to consultation with our community, partners, stakeholders, residents, voluntary sector organisations etc.

## 4.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

### 4.1 **Financial**

4.1.1 The Head of Strategic Finance comments that the Council has to reduce its current levels of expenditure by circa 30% (after allowing for inflation) in order to meet Central Government grant reductions. Regrettably support to the voluntary sector cannot be immune from these necessary savings and a 23% expenditure reduction target had been set. The conclusions within this report is that circa £261k of reductions are achievable with a residual £20k shortfall not being met. This is an exceptionally good performance against a background of communities all being affected by retrenchment in the wider economy. This shortfall will be reviewed as part of the ongoing review into the Council's finances. In the short term the £20k can be drawn down from reserves although alternative sources of savings will continue to be identified.

### 4.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

4.2.1 The Head of Legal and Property Services comments that Members need to have regard to the results of the consultation and the Council's duties under the Equalities Act 2010 when making their decisions. The impact is set out in more detail in appendix B

### 4.3 **Equalities**

4.3.1 As explained in the body of the report at para 3.9 and 3.10 organisations were pro-actively engaged in consultation with their service users and given an opportunity to feed in any additional material to support our Equality Impact Analysis. Data was also extracted from the services regular monitoring information and consultation took place with colleagues in relation to other local and national data that would inform our analysis.

It has been identified during the process of analysis that there would be potentially detrimental impacts on some service users who fall into the protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010 and where this has been identified proposals have been put forward to mitigate those potential impacts where it was considered to have a

severe or significant impact.

Analysis has taken place at three levels

- Initial analysis assuming a worse case scenario of a 100% funding cut for each organisation, the outcome of which informed the proposals for mitigation
- An over-arching analysis in the light of the final list of recommendations which have highlighted areas for re-investment and support to mitigate those risks
- A final stage when the Cabinet decision is known when any changes to the recommendations will be examined to ensure mitigation is still appropriate or needs adjustment

#### 4.4 **Potential Risks**

Potential Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Overall score
Savings will not be achieved	2	4	8
Funding cuts will impact detrimentally on at risk service users	2	4	8
Actions taken to mitigate the risks identified above include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Detailed consultation with affected organisations and their service users and the provision of support through the Resilience Officer post</li> <li>▪ Actions identified to mitigate the risks of the impact on service users which include maintaining some funding to re-commission elements of the service</li> </ul>			

#### 4.5 **Staffing**

4.5.1 No immediate staffing impact for the Council identified but some organisations may have staffing cuts to make in order to respond to any change in funding.

#### 4.6 **Accommodation**

4.6.1 Some of the grant funded organisations occupy premises leased to them by the Council. Where the funding proposals impact on those organisations Property Services and Community Service will work together with the organisations to address any property related issues that are impacted on.

#### 4.7 **Community Safety**

4.7.1 Some of the organisations affected provide services that support a reduction in anti social behaviour but there are no specific Community Safety issues identified as a result of this report.

#### 4.8 **Sustainability**

4.8.1 Some of the organisations affected provide services that support improvements in carbon management and climate change but there are no specific sustainability issues identified as a result of this report.

## Appendices

- Appendix A. Recommended savings options table
- Appendix B Organisation Analysis table

## Background Papers

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report. If you wish to inspect or take copies of the background papers, please contact the officer named on the front page of the report

- Third Sector Funding Commissioning Framework
- Consultation papers submitted by the 14 consulted organisations
- Voluntary sector funding review Consultation pack

## File Reference

- None.

**TABLE OF SAVINGS OPTIONS IDENTIFIED**

<b>Organisation or Fund</b>	<b>Saving recommended (£)</b>	<b>Impact on total saving required of £280,740 and reduction total (£)</b>	<b>Funding cut %</b>	<b>Officer Recommendation</b>
Annual/ Mayors Fund	50,000	230,740	50%	That the two current annual grant programmes are amalgamated and reduced by 50%. Decision on eligibility criteria to be delegated to Portfolioholder and Head of Community Services
1.Council Voluntary Service	9,774	220,966	10%	Officers recommend that the 10% saving offered is accepted.
2.Citizens Advice Bureaux	12,928	208,038	5.7%	Officers recommend limiting the reduction in funding to the savings offered as this will have no direct impact on service delivery.
3.Palace Theatre	0	208,038	0%	No savings have been offered but evidence has been provided of additional benefits within existing funding. The Council has a three year funding partnership for the theatre with the Arts Council and 2012/13 is the third year of the partnership. The Arts Council understands the financial pressures on the Council but have commented that they have continued to support the theatre more than they might have and supported Rifco Arts' move to the Palace because of the confidence they have in the Council as a dependable partner and a champion for the arts. Their confidence in the council would be significantly diminished if funding for next year was reduced. There is a strong likelihood that this would have a negative impact on the support the council could receive from the Arts Council to support Imagine Watford for the next two years and

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Organisation or Fund	Saving recommended (£)	Impact on total saving required of £280,740 and reduction total (£)	Funding cut %	Officer Recommendation
				<p>on other funding decisions the Arts Council may make in regard to Watford.</p> <p>The Arts Council's approach is that it is better to "sweat the asset" and get the theatre to do more for the same amount of money.</p> <p><b>The officer recommendation is to accept a nil reduction in funding</b> in view of the efficiencies already achieved and the potential longer term impact on accessing future Arts Council funding opportunities. However it is recognised that this will impact overall on the ability to achieve the full cost savings target.</p>
4.Multi-Cultural Community Centre	23,000	185,038	100% + commissioning fund of £20,000	<p>In view of the performance assessment, the amount of reserves and the existence of alternative provision <b>officers recommend that the funding to the organisation is ceased.</b> The organisation do have reserves that would enable them to continue to operate for some period of time while considering a sustainable business plan for the future. However in order to mitigate the risks of the building not being secured for community use during 2012/13 and to address the equality impact analysis it is recommended that £20,000 of the saved funding is set aside to commission if necessary a suitable organisation to continue to maintain its availability for local community hire or alternatively to provide support to the organisation to create a more collaborative and sustainable future for the centre. It is further recommended that a proportion of the voluntary sector resilience</p>



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Organisation or Fund	Saving recommended (£)	Impact on total saving required of £280,740 and reduction total (£)	Funding cut %	Officer Recommendation
				<p>officer post's time is secured to support the organisation to re-examine its business plan and to also work collaboratively with other local organisations on a more cost effective solution to maintaining the use of the building.</p> <p>It is also recommended that all organisations having funding completely withdrawn should be allowed to not meet their service specification requirements in the final quarter of the 2011/12 should funding be required to pay for redundancy and other wind down costs. Use of the last quarter grant will need to be agreed with the council.</p> <p>The saving achieved through this recommendation would be £23,000</p>
5.West Watford Community Association	3,815	181,223	10%	<p>The organisation has offered a 5% saving however their income/expenditure ratio indicates an ability to sustain a greater % cut in funding. As the impact of the required savings overall is of such significance a higher level reduction in funding should be secured to offset the impact on other services that will have a higher level of damaging impact.</p> <p><b>Officers recommend a reduction of £3815 equivalent to a 10% saving.</b></p>
6.Watford African Caribbean Association	44,130	137,093	100% + enablement fund of £20,000	<p><b>It is recommended that the funding to the organisation is ceased.</b> This is in view of the Council's statement in the consultation that the validity of continuing to support single interest groups in the current situation will inform the decision making process, having taken account of the outcome of equality impact assessments.</p>

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Organisation or Fund	Saving recommended (£)	Impact on total saving required of £280,740 and reduction total (£)	Funding cut %	Officer Recommendation
				<p>However in order to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ address the equality impact analysis</li> <li>▪ mitigate the risks of destabilising projects funded by other bodies</li> <li>▪ enable the organisation to review and take action to create a sustainable business plan for the future</li> </ul> <p>it is recommended that the equivalent of £20,000 funding support is set aside to assist the organisation facilitate changes to their central support of the projects after consultation with their other funders. It is further recommended that a proportion of the voluntary sector resilience officer post's time is secured to support the organisation to re-examine its business plan and to work with them on securing more cost efficient accommodation; staffing costs and service provision.</p> <p>It is also recommended that all organisations having funding completely withdrawn should be allowed to not meet their service specification requirements in the final quarter of the 2011/12 should funding be required to pay for redundancy and other wind down costs. Use of the last quarter grant will need to be agreed with the council.</p> <p>The saving achieved through this recommendation would be £44,130</p>

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Organisation or Fund	Saving recommended (£)	Impact on total saving required of £280,740 and reduction total (£)	Funding cut %	Officer Recommendation
7.Muslim Community Project	28,290	108,803	100% + commissioning fund of £30,000	<p>In view of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ the performance assessment,</li> <li>▪ the amount of reserves</li> <li>▪ the Council's statement in the consultation that the validity of continuing to support single interest groups in the current situation will inform the decision making process, having taken account of the outcome of equality impact assessments.</li> <li>▪ the opportunity to commission quality monitored alternative provision</li> </ul> <p><b>officers recommend that the funding to the organisation is ceased</b></p> <p>However in order to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ address the equality impact analysis</li> <li>▪ ensure geographically based, culturally sensitive, quality monitored advice provision continues to operate during 2012/13</li> </ul> <p>it is recommended that £30,000 of the funding is set aside to commission the CAB to provide a culturally sensitive outreach service to the West Watford community to mitigate the risks and impact of the potential reduction in service delivery.</p> <p>It should however be noted that the organisation does have reserves and is exploring opportunities for income generation which could enable it to review its business plan and create a more</p>

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Organisation or Fund	Saving recommended (£)	Impact on total saving required of £280,740 and reduction total (£)	Funding cut %	Officer Recommendation
				<p>sustainable model of service delivery. It is therefore further recommended that a proportion of the voluntary sector resilience officer post's time is secured to support the organisation to re-examine its business plan in order to secure a sustainable future without reliance on council funding.</p> <p>It is also recommended that all organisations having funding completely withdrawn should be allowed to not meet their service specification requirements in the final quarter of the 2011/12 should funding be required to pay for redundancy and other wind down costs. Use of the last quarter grant will need to be agreed with the council.</p> <p>The saving achieved through this recommendation would be £28,290</p> <p>As part of the consultation on these recommendations Watford Muslim Community Project have stated that:</p> <p>“ If WBC provide us with £30,000 funding we would along with our reserves, newly introduced service charges and cost cutting measures be able to continue to provide these services to the community”.</p>
8. Shopmobility	4,000	104,803	9%	Officers recommend accepting identified savings proposals but no further reduction in funding for 2012/13 in recognition of the severe impact which will disproportionately affect those with a disability.

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Organisation or Fund	Saving recommended (£)	Impact on total saving required of £280,740 and reduction total (£)	Funding cut %	Officer Recommendation
9. Relate	8,390	96,413	20%	Officers recommend that the saving offered of £8390 is accepted.
10.New Hope Trust	1,774	94,639	10%	Officers recommend accepting identified savings proposals but no further reduction in funding for 2012/13 in recognition of the severe impact which will disproportionately affect those predominantly male rough sleepers with mental health and addiction issues.
11.Homestart	720	93,919	10%	Although not specifically offered by the organisation they have identified that a 10% cut in council funding would only detrimentally impact on one family. In addition their reserves position, future income raising opportunities through community café and charity shop and the fact that some users felt they would be willing to contribute to cost of service should enable the organisation to re-examine their activity to minimise the impact of any reduction in funding. <b>It is recommended that a minimum of 10% funding is withdrawn</b> however when assessing the over-arching impact on all the organisations a higher % of withdrawal may be justified to preserve funding for other services at a higher level of impact.
12.Watford Philharmonic	470	93,449	10%	<b>It is recommended that a minimum of 10% funding is withdrawn</b> , as offered by the organisation, however when assessing the over-arching impact on all the organisations a higher % of withdrawal may be justified to preserve funding for other services at a higher level of impact.
13.Watford Recycling and Arts Project	1500	91,949	10%	A 10% reduction in support would require the organisation to pay £1,500 contribution to the full rent of £15,000. Although a 10% saving has not

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Organisation or Fund	Saving recommended (£)	Impact on total saving required of £280,740 and reduction total (£)	Funding cut %	Officer Recommendation
				<p>been specifically offered by the organisation officers are of the view that the change of operating location adjacent to the Three Rivers border also provides opportunity to apply for funding streams that cross local authority boundaries. In addition an officer review of similar organisations operating in Welwyn Garden City and Milton Keynes indicates there is scope to increase membership subscriptions or introduce charging for some materials.</p> <p>The equality impact assessment does not reveal a severe impact on any protected characteristic group.</p> <p><b>It is therefore recommended that a 10% reduction in funding support is agreed.</b></p>
14.Watford Women's Centre	72,580	19,369	50%	<p>The organisation is well run and commenced their business planning for reduced funding at the start of the 3 year funding programme. They have in addition offered up over the 10% savings requested and are actively exploring alternative innovative opportunities for their future sustainability. They are however a single interest group established when there was stronger evidence of the need for targeted support to re-balance disadvantages experienced by women. In view of the Council's statement in the consultation that the validity of continuing to support single interest groups in the current situation will inform the decision making process and having taken account of the outcome of equality impact assessments. <b>It is recommended that the funding to the organisation is reduced</b></p>

**APPENDIX A**

Organisation or Fund	Saving recommended (£)	Impact on total saving required of £280,740 and reduction total (£)	Funding cut %	Officer Recommendation
				<p><b>by £72,580 from the 2011/12 budget position and the funding that remains is used to re-commission the organisation to present proposals to tailor a reduced service focussed on delivering to high risk clients.</b></p> <p>This takes into account the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ address the equality impact analysis particularly in relation to the impact on vulnerable women suffering domestic violence</li> <li>▪ enable the organisation to review and take action to create a sustainable business plan for the future</li> </ul> <p>It is further recommended that a proportion of the voluntary sector resilience officer post's time is secured to support the organisation to re-examine its business plan and to work with them on securing more cost efficient service delivery and supporting their ambitions to become a Community of Interest Company/Social Enterprise.</p> <p>The saving achieved through this recommendation would be £72,580 and represents a 50% cut in funding</p>

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**Voluntary Sector Funding Review 2012-13 – Analysis and recommendations**

<p><b>1) Watford Council for Voluntary Service</b>  <b>“Preferred recipient status” (PRS)</b> - during consultation it was made clear that the 3 preferred recipient organisations would continue to receive funding but would be asked to seek to identify savings. A performance assessment and Equality Impact Assessment has also been undertaken on each of the PRS organisations.</p> <p>CVS provides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthening of the voluntary sector in Watford through leadership, support, advice and example.</li> <li>• Training, Development and Business Planning</li> <li>• Funding Advice</li> <li>• Volunteering and Time banking</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Financial and savings analysis</u></b>                  Direct grant £97,746                  2011/12 total income budget for CVS is estimated at £420,000. WBC funding is 23% of total income projection.                  Reserves were £86,778 at 31/3/2011 but are planned to reduce to £70,000.                  Saving of £9774 (equivalent of 10%) has been offered based on up to £5k efficiencies and £5k income raising. This is an estimate of savings/income therefore there is a risk of full amount not being achievable. However the move to the Holywell has presented opportunities for income raising and change of service delivery to generate efficiencies therefore this risk is manageable.</p>
<p><b>Performance Assessment</b>                  Scale A - D Excellent - Poor</p>	<p>Assessed as an A – contributing factors to this assessment are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have a strategic plan in place</li> <li>• a recent external review undertaken</li> <li>• consistently meets or exceeds service specification targets and outcomes</li> <li>• strong evidence of use of volunteers</li> <li>• evidence of extensive collaboration</li> <li>• quality assurance in place</li> </ul>

<p><b>Equality Impact Analysis</b> Rating assessment options = Minimal impact/ some impact/ severe impact</p>	<p>Service User Impact Assessment – 25 responses received. 84% stated that if service ceased, it would have a direct impact on their organisation. Assessed as <b>minimal</b> impact overall as only indirect impact on smaller organisations who are likely to be supporting protected characteristics groups.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation</b></p>	<p>Officers recommend that the 10% saving offered is accepted.</p>

<p><b>2) Watford Citizens Advice Bureau “Preferred recipient status” (PRS) -</b>          during consultation it was made clear that the 3 preferred recipient organisations would continue to receive funding but would be asked to seek to identify savings. A performance assessment and Equality Impact Assessment has also been undertaken on each of the PRS organisations.</p> <p>CAB provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• generalist advice in person;</li> <li>• telephone advice;</li> <li>• specialist money advice;</li> <li>• referrals; and</li> <li>• outreach.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Financial and savings analysis</u></b></p> <p>Direct grant £174,192          Accommodation £52,428          Total = £226,620</p> <p>CAB is heavily dependent on the Council as the grant and accommodation equates to in the region of 90% of the organisations total income. (Income £244,620) .          Reserves - total reserves at 31/3/2011 were £115,981 of which £105,708 are classed as designated (which includes pension deficit; service protection; fixed assets; computer renewals, etc.)          Savings have been offered which are possible because lengthy negotiations have now concluded with Property services over the leasing accommodation costs and the impact of a third party moving into the premises at St Mary’s churchyard. As a result the accommodation support costs will reduce and will be reflected in the Council’s budget monitoring for next year. The accommodation figure now reduces from £52,428 to £39,500 and this therefore represents a saving of £12,928 (equivalent to a saving of 5.7%)</p>
<p><b>Performance Assessment</b>          Scale A - D Excellent - Poor</p>	<p>Assessed as a B contributing factors to this assessment are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• timely submission of data</li> <li>• good collaboration evidenced</li> <li>• strong evidence of extensive use of volunteers</li> <li>• has largely achieved predicted outputs but some further improvement to outcomes to be achieved</li> </ul>
<p><b>Equality Impact Analysis</b>          Rating assessment options = Minimal impact/ some impact/ severe impact</p>	<p>Service User Impact Assessment – 102 responses received. Majority of responses stated that the impact would be great if there was a reduction in service with individual comments relating to a devastating impact in relation to debt advice services.</p>

	<p>Should funding be reduced significantly by more than the amount offered by the CAB, the direct impact would be assessed as <b>severe</b> as direct impact on those classed as vulnerable and evidence of high usage by protected characteristics groups e.g. 38% ethnic minority 16% disability</p> <p>Should the service be reduced or ceased it is assessed that there would be consequential impacts on statutory services through increase in benefits enquiries and threats of homelessness through debt.</p>
<b>Recommendation</b>	<p>Officers recommend limiting the reduction in funding to the savings offered as this will have no direct impact on service delivery.</p>

<p><b>3) Watford Palace Theatre</b>  <b>“Preferred recipient status” (PRS)</b> - during consultation it was made clear that the 3 preferred recipient organisations would continue to receive funding but would be asked to seek to identify savings. A performance assessment and Equality Impact Assessment has also been undertaken on each of the PRS organisations  Palace Theatre provides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a range of events &amp; projects for a wide range of audiences through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. new/ contemporary work, popular and/or classic theatre pieces</li> <li>b. development &amp; production of a robust range of plays</li> <li>c. Commissioning of work of culturally diverse artists</li> </ul> </li> <li>• A range of Participatory Activities</li> <li>• Develop wide ranging partnerships</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Financial and savings analysis</u></b>  Direct grant £257,730  Rent £32,500  Total = £290,230  WBC grant was 13% of total income for 2010-11 (Income £2,201,000)  Unrestricted reserves at 31/3/2011 were £257,819.</p> <p>The Palace Theatre did not offer a saving but demonstrated a number of significant new areas of work they are now delivering for the town within the same overall grant. These include the organisation and production of Imagine Watford with an estimated cost to the Palace of £15k, plus in kind contribution valued at £20k; investment in the equipment to show 250-300 film screenings a year; subsidising annual celebrations for a wide range of communities including Diwali, Eid, Vaisakhi, Chinese New Year and Black History Month. The theatre has also gone through a major cost cutting exercise in the last three years which have reduced overheads in total by 12% but have increased turnover and the range of activity by 17%. Staff numbers have been reduced e.g. senior management team from 7 to 4 and restrictions on pay increases have taken place.</p> <p>Contact with the Arts Council has established that any reduction in funding could also jeopardise future Arts Council support for the arts in the town, specifically Imagine Watford.</p>
<p><b>Performance Assessment</b>  Scale A - D Excellent - Poor</p>	<p>Assessed as an A - contributing factors to this assessment are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have a strategic plan in place</li> <li>• consistently meets or exceeds service specification targets and outcomes</li> <li>• evidence of extensive collaboration</li> <li>• has been nominated or achieved a range of awards including Theatrical Management Association awards.</li> <li>• Received a “very good” assessment from Arts council and scored “strong” in all 3</li> </ul>

	<p>assessment areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have increased their volunteer base (26 volunteers in 2010/11)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Equality Impact Analysis</b> Rating assessment options = Minimal impact/ some impact/ severe impact</p>	<p>Service User Impact Assessment – 97 responses received. Approx 70% directly stated that they did not know of an alternative organisation providing a similar service. Service users believe the impact would result in them having to travel further to access similar services and more broadly have a negative effect on the local economy. Almost all respondents referred to the negative impact on their quality of life/wellbeing if the services WPT offers were no longer available</p> <p>Assessed as <b>some</b>. Although majority of users are not within the protected characteristics group the grant subsidises the development of audiences from those groups and reduction would therefore have a greater impact on those minority users.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation</b></p>	<p>No savings have been offered but evidence has been provided of additional benefits within existing funding.</p> <p>The Council has a three year funding partnership for the theatre with the Arts Council and 2012/13 is the third year of the partnership. The Arts Council understands the financial pressures on the Council but have commented that they have continued to support the theatre more than they might have and supported Rifco Arts' move to the Palace because of the confidence they have in the Council as a dependable partner and a champion for the arts. Their confidence in the council would be significantly diminished if funding for next year was reduced. There is a strong likelihood that this would have a negative impact on the support the council could receive from the Arts Council to support Imagine Watford for the next two years and on other funding decisions the Arts Council may make in regard to Watford.</p> <p>The Arts Council's approach is that it is better to "sweat the asset" and get the theatre to do more for the same amount of money.</p> <p>The officer recommendation is to accept a nil reduction in funding in view of the efficiencies already achieved and the potential longer term impact on accessing future Arts Council funding opportunities. However it is recognised that this will impact overall on the ability to achieve the full cost savings target</p>

<p><b>4) Watford Multi Cultural Community Centre (MCCC)</b></p> <p>MCCC provides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hall hire to various community groups, e.g. exercise and fitness groups, religious groups, luncheon clubs, PCT baby clinic</li> <li>• Various community and commercial/private hall hire events and activities</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Financial and savings analysis</u></b></p> <p>Direct grant £43,500</p> <p>Grant is 58% of total income for 2010/11 (income £76,146)</p> <p>Reserves as at 31/3/2011 of £75,524 . The organisation has advised that £60,000 of the reserves is to enable them to comply with requirements of their landlords to have a 12 month notice break clause.</p> <p>Saving of £4,049 (equivalent to 9%) has been offered as a result of negotiated reduction in rent and plans to increase charges and fund-raising activity. Income exceeded expenditure in 2010 /11 by £17,754.</p>
<p><b>Performance Assessment</b></p> <p>Scale A - D Excellent - Poor</p>	<p>Assessed as a <b>C</b>. Contributing factors to this assessment are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• amount of reserves held which reflect a years income.</li> <li>• income exceeds expenditure which means that the grant is not demonstrating good value for money as it is substantially remaining in reserves and not actively providing the service.</li> <li>• Some evidence of use of volunteers</li> <li>• not fully meeting objectives outlined in service specification</li> <li>• delays with data submission</li> <li>• some evidence of collaboration with other agencies but requires more robust development in service delivery</li> <li>• Achieved PQASSO level 1</li> </ul>
<p><b>Equality Impact Analysis</b></p> <p>Rating assessment options = Minimal impact/ some impact/ severe impact</p>	<p>Service User Impact Assessment – 57 responses received. Service users state that the loss of the centre would impact on their health &amp; wellbeing and increase isolation.</p> <p>There are a significant number of people who fall within the groups or with the characteristics protected in the Equalities Act 2010 who use the community centre, i.e. ethnic minority community at 72%.</p>

	<p>Whilst it is acknowledged that service users feel that the service has provided them with a variety of benefits, there is no evidence to show that those people in these groups or who are protected in the Equalities Act 2010 would be severely impacted as there are a number of alternative venues in the voluntary and commercial sector which users can access and which provide a similar range of services.</p> <p>Assessed as <b>some</b> impact – However whilst the impact is not considered to be severe, consideration has been given to what action to take to mitigate any negative impact and recommendations include a proposal to mitigate the risks.</p>
<p><b>Alternative Service Provision/Duplication</b></p>	<p>There is alternative hall for hire type of provision in the voluntary and commercial sector although not all as geographically well located (e.g. Holywell Community Centre, West Watford Community Association; West Herts Sports &amp; social club, Newton Price Centre and Westfield Sports Centre etc.). In addition some of the services provided are available elsewhere in West Watford e.g. Children’s Centre.</p> <p>Should the MCCC be unable to fund the continuation of their occupation, the church hall would remain and the owners would need to consider ways for the building to be used in the absence of this groups existence. There is no indication that it would not continue to be used for community benefit.</p>
<p><b>Single Interest groups</b></p>	<p>This is an establishment catering for the geographic community in which it sits and is therefore not promoting or supporting a specific element of the community as a single interest group</p>
<p><b>Recommendation</b></p>	<p>In view of the performance assessment, the amount of reserves and the existence of alternative provision <b>officers recommend that the funding to the organisation is ceased</b>. The organisation do have reserves that would enable them to continue to operate for some period of time while considering a sustainable business plan for the</p>



future, However in order to mitigate the risks of the building not being secured for community use during 2012/13 and to address the equality impact analysis it is recommended that £20,000 of the saved funding is set aside to either commission an appropriate organisation to continue to make the hall available for hire during 2012-13 or alternatively to provide support to the organisation to create a more collaborative and sustainable future for the centre by securing improvements to the building enabling better use of the facility. It is further recommended that a proportion of the voluntary sector resilience officer post's time is secured to support the organisation to re-examine its business plan and to also work collaboratively with other local organisations on a more cost effective solution to maintaining the use of the building.

It is also recommended that all organisations having funding completely withdrawn should be allowed to not meet their service specification requirements in the final quarter of the 2011/12 should funding be required to pay for redundancy and other wind down costs. Use of the last quarter grant will need to be agreed with the council.

The saving achieved through this recommendation would be £23,000

<p><b>5) West Watford Community Assoc (WWCA)</b></p> <p>WWCA provides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local community centre providing a ‘drop in’ service for help and information</li> <li>• Internet access, photocopying, help with phone calls, letter writing and form filling</li> <li>• Various activities for all age groups including parent &amp; toddler sessions, over 50’s exercise, reminiscence group</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Financial and savings analysis</u></b></p> <p>Direct grant £27,230          Accommodation £10,920          Total = £38,150</p> <p>WBC grant is 64% of total income for 2010-11 (Income £59,652)          Undesignated reserves of £20,300 at 31/3/2011. Designated reserves of £12k for building repairs at 31/3/2011. The current undesignated reserves figures represents 38% of the annual budget for 2010-11 which was £53,715.          Savings of £1970 (equivalent to 5%) have been proposed on the basis of a line by line examination of costs and identified opportunities for savings secured. The organisation has agreed to only take on and run future services that are sustainable. They state that any additional savings will require cut in services, however income for 2010-11 exceeded expenditure by nearly £6000. In view of the significant impact of the required savings on all the organisations overall some further reduction in funding should be secured to offset the impact on other services that will have a higher level of damaging impact.</p>
<p><b>Performance Assessment</b>          Scale A - D Excellent - Poor</p>	<p>Assessed as an A - contributing factors to this assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strong evidence of use of volunteers</li> <li>• there is evidence of robust collaboration with a significant number of other agencies and further opportunities may emerge once the analysis of their community consultation exercise undertaken earlier in the year is available.</li> <li>• Monitoring information is delivered on time</li> <li>• consistently meets service specification targets and outcomes</li> <li>• Achieved PQASSO level 1</li> </ul>
<p><b>Equality Impact Analysis</b>          Rating assessment options = Minimal</p>	<p>Service User Impact Assessment – 52 responses received. Service users indicated that there would be some negative impact if there was a cut in funding including loss of social</p>

<p>impact/ some impact/ severe impact</p>	<p>contact and concern about the future of groups who hire rooms.</p> <p>Assessed as <b>some</b> impact – There is evidence which indicates that a significant proportion of users fall within the protected characteristics groups (ethnic minority 30% women 67%). Whilst it is acknowledged that service users would experience some negative impact as a result of any funding cut to the service, there is however no evidence that people in this group would be severely impacted on as there are a number of alternative venues available within the voluntary and commercial sector.</p>
<p><b>Alternative Service Provision/Duplication</b></p>	<p>There is alternative hall for hire type of provision in the voluntary and commercial sector (e.g. Holywell Community Centre, Multi Cultural Community Centre; West Herts Sports and social club, local churches etc.) Also WWCA are part of a group of local churches and community centres providing a coffee morning every weekday in different West Watford locations for people to meet and chat. In addition, some of the services provided are available elsewhere in West Watford e.g. Children’s Centre, Watford Football Club Over 50’s Keep Fit .</p>
<p><b>Single Interest groups</b></p>	<p>This is an establishment catering for the geographic community in which it sits and is therefore not promoting or supporting a specific element of the community as a single interest.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation</b></p>	<p>The organisation has offered a 5% saving however their income/expenditure ratio indicates an ability to sustain a greater % cut in funding. As the impact of the required savings overall is of such significance a higher level reduction in funding should be secured to offset the impact on other services that will have a higher level of damaging impact.</p> <p>Officers recommend a reduction of £3815 equivalent to a 10% saving.</p>

<p><b>6) Watford African Caribbean Assoc (WACA)</b></p> <p>WACA provides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A befriending project</li> <li>• Carers Support Project</li> <li>• The African Caribbean Elders Project</li> <li>• Supplementary School</li> <li>• Sickle Cell Support</li> <li>• Social and cultural activities</li> <li>• General advice and signposting</li> <li>• Work placement opportunities for 6 students a year</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Financial and savings analysis</u></b></p> <p>Direct grant £44,000          Accommodation £20,130          Total = £64,130</p> <p>WBC grant is 34% of total income for 2010/11 (Income £189,413)          The organisation has £21,000 of unrestricted funds, maintained at a level of 3-6 months expenditure.          Saving of £4,400 (equivalent to 7%) has been offered relating to a staffing reduction and membership fee increase. The Council provides funding for the core costs of office provision and Community Services Manager and project support worker salaries but majority of funding for service delivery is from other sources e.g. HCC, Lottery, PCT and some of this is currently subject to review. If funding from other organisations is cut then this will reduce the services provided and therefore the service support required which is what the Council's grant supports along with general advice and signposting.</p>
<p><b>Performance Assessment</b>          Scale A - D Excellent - Poor</p>	<p>Assessed as a B - contributing factors to this assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evidence of use of volunteers</li> <li>• there is evidence of working with a number of other agencies in relation to events</li> <li>• however more robust collaboration with local agencies to achieve savings and for the benefit of the wider community is not strongly evidenced.</li> <li>• Externally accredited achievement of PQASSO Level 1</li> <li>• Occasional delays with the submission of data</li> <li>• Overall are meeting and occasionally exceeding service specification targets</li> </ul>
<p><b>Equality Impact Analysis</b>          Rating assessment options = Minimal impact/ some impact/ severe impact</p>	<p>Service User Impact Assessment – Service users stated that if the services were to cease, there would be a negative impact resulting in greater isolation and stress, some citing that they would become culturally isolated through the loss of their African and Caribbean heritage, have less opportunities to support their children's education and gain health information.</p> <p>Assessed as <b>minimal</b> - The evidence confirms that that there are a significant number</p>

	<p>of users who fall within the protected characteristics groups. Whilst it is acknowledged that service users gain a variety of benefits from the services provided, it is considered that the impact on those in the protected groups would be indirect and the more serious consequences relate to the actions of other funding organisations. However as any reduction to WBC funding could negatively impact on the stability of other funded projects, information on any funding decisions will need to be shared with those agencies at an appropriate time. This will enable those funders to take account of the situation in their equality impact analysis on the specific projects. Whilst the impact is not considered to be severe, consideration has been given to what action to take to mitigate any negative impact and recommendations below include a proposal to mitigate the risks.</p>
<p><b>Alternative Service Provision/Duplication</b></p>	<p>The services commissioned by other funders but enabled by our core funding include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A befriending project</li> <li>Carers support</li> <li>Afro-Caribbean Elders Project</li> <li>Supplementary School</li> <li>Sickle Cell Support</li> <li>Social and Cultural activities</li> </ul> <p>A range of alternative provision exists through organisations such as Carers in Herts; Age UK; CAB and specific opportunities for celebrating Heritage exist in partnership with a number of local venues e.g. College, Palace Theatre, Museum etc.</p>
<p><b>Single Interest groups</b></p>	<p>Whilst the organisation maintains in its submission that it is not a single interest group, the fact remains that 69%, the majority of their users, are African-Caribbean. The group supports culturally sensitive tailored services in relation to luncheon clubs, extended schools and supports health issues with a cultural bias and supports the celebration of the heritage of that specific community. They are therefore a single interest group established when there was evidence of a need for targeted provision. The organisation has confirmed that its services are accessible to all and that they are increasingly</p>

	<p>moving towards a more diverse user and staff profile.          Due to demographic changes there are an increasing number of minority ethnic groups that are emerging and established in the community that are also providing culturally sensitive services but these are not priority funded by the Council. The justification for supporting one single interest group over another is where there is evidence of a need to re-balance or improve access to provision for them as a significantly disadvantaged group over others.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation</b></p>	<p><b>It is recommended that the funding to the organisation is ceased.</b> This is in view of the Council's statement in the consultation that the validity of continuing to support single interest groups in the current situation will inform the decision making process, having taken account of the outcome of equality impact assessments.</p> <p>However in order to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ address the equality impact analysis</li> <li>▪ mitigate the risks of destabilising projects funded by other bodies</li> <li>▪ enable the organisation to review and take action to create a sustainable business plan for the future</li> </ul> <p>it is recommended that the equivalent of £20,000 funding support is set aside to assist the organisation facilitate changes to their central support of the projects after consultation with their other funders. It is further recommended that a proportion of the voluntary sector resilience officer post's time is secured to support the organisation to re-examine its business plan and to work with them on securing more cost efficient accommodation; staffing costs and service provision.</p> <p>It is also recommended that all organisations having funding completely withdrawn should be allowed to not meet their service specification requirements in the final quarter of the 2011/12 should funding be required to pay for redundancy and other wind down costs. Use of the last quarter grant will need to be agreed with the council.</p> <p>The saving achieved through this recommendation would be £44,130</p>

<p><b>7) Watford Muslim Community Project</b> MCP provides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rights and Advice Services ( benefits advice, housing, employment etc)</li> <li>• Passports, visas and National Identity Cards</li> <li>• Other services include Citizenship and Nationality, education, debt, translation, interpreting, domestic violence, outreach services, health awareness sessions</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Financial and savings analysis</u></b> Direct grant £54,210 Accommodation £4,080 Total = £58,290 WBC grant was 59% of total income for 2010-11 (income £98,946) Reserves at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 were £76,072. £40,000 of which represents 6 months operational costs with the rest unrestricted. No specific savings have been offered, they have identified a range of options that would enable them to make savings including income generation through charging and cutting service provision. They have estimated a positive revenue impact of approximately £10,000 once charging is introduced which is planned for January 2012. There is a healthy uncommitted reserve so it is unclear why they have been unable to specify a savings target.</p>
<p><b>Performance Assessment</b> Scale A - D Excellent - Poor</p>	<p>Assessed as a D. Contributing factors to this assessment are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• amount of reserves held and yet no plan for achieving savings has been implemented</li> <li>• Introduction of charges has been scheduled but delayed until January 2012.</li> <li>• The PHCCS (Pakistani High Commissioners Consular Service) are free of charge to WMCP and the community and the PHCC sessions are held at weekends with offices opened by volunteers. The PHCC provide all equipment and stationery. The organisation were recommended to introduce charges for this service as the saving to users in fares to London alone justified this as an income opportunity. In June of 2011 the organisations wrote to the Council confirming their intention but they have delayed introducing the charges until January 2012.</li> <li>• Whilst the organisation has continued to provide core services as set out in the SLA, aspects of the organisations development plan remain unmet e.g. increasing volunteers, achieving PQASSO level 1</li> <li>• Though significant work has been done over the last 2 years in preparation for</li> </ul>

	<p>achieving PQASSO Level 1 accreditation this has not yet been implemented</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The organisation is accredited to level 1 (Initial advice) with the Office of Immigration Services Commission (OISC) and is DWP Alternative Office accredited</li> <li>• Limited level of success in volunteer recruitment i.e. the WMCP provided training to three individuals on admin duties who have provided voluntary support to project's staff for last 8 months.</li> <li>• insufficient evidence of robust collaboration with other agencies in terms of service delivery and development although the organisation has advised of meetings held and referrals made to CAB and other service providers.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Equality Impact Analysis</b> Rating assessment options = Minimal impact/ some impact/ severe impact</p>	<p>Service User Impact Assessment – Service users expressed concerns about their problems going unresolved should the service cease. The Muslim Community Project believe that women and older people would be most negatively impacted.</p> <p>Assessed as <b>Some</b> – The service is predominately accessed by British Nationals of Pakistani origin (81% of users) and this community would therefore be disproportionately affected. However there would be a lower impact on the majority of users who could reasonably access other advice agencies. But there may be a greater impact on some users within the protected groups particularly those from the older age groups and women who may have language and cultural needs that are not adequately catered for by the other advice agencies at present.</p> <p>Whilst the impact is not considered to be severe, consideration has been given to what action to take to mitigate any negative impact and recommendations below include a proposal to mitigate the risks.</p>
<p><b>Alternative Service Provision/Duplication</b></p>	<p>The organisation believes that no other single organisation can provide the services offered by the WMCP however the council provides support to the Citizens Advice Bureau to provide advice which is quality controlled through audits and monitoring evidence. In addition the CAB are also OISC level 1 accredited. Other community</p>



	<p>organisations locally also provide informal non accredited advice and support.</p> <p>However CABs capacity to provide for an increase in demand for services in the area of immigration needs to be considered as does language and cultural needs. The recommendations below include proposals to address this element of the provision.</p>
<p><b>Single Interest groups</b></p>	<p>The Muslim Community Project provides a service to a specific group within the community. They are therefore a single interest group established when there was evidence of a need for targeted provision. However there is evidence that the demographic changes over recent years reflects a need for geographically targeted provision to ensure provision for newly formed communities emerging from other migrating groups as well as the majority ethnic community.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation</b></p>	<p>In view of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ the performance assessment,</li> <li>▪ the amount of reserves</li> <li>▪ the Council’s statement in the consultation that the validity of continuing to support single interest groups in the current situation will inform the decision making process, having taken account of the outcome of equality impact assessments.</li> <li>▪ the opportunity to commission quality monitored alternative provision</li> </ul> <p><b>officers recommend that the funding to the organisation is ceased</b></p> <p>However in order to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ address the equality impact analysis</li> <li>▪ ensure geographically based, culturally sensitive, quality monitored advice provision continues to operate during 2012/13</li> </ul> <p>it is recommended that £30,000 of the funding is set aside to commission the CAB to</p>

<p>provide a culturally sensitive outreach service to the West Watford community to mitigate the risks and impact of the potential reduction in service delivery.</p> <p>It should however be noted that the organisation does have reserves and is exploring opportunities for income generation which could enable it to review its business plan and create a more sustainable model of service delivery. It is therefore further recommended that a proportion of the voluntary sector resilience officer post's time is secured to support the organisation to re-examine its business plan in order to secure a sustainable future without reliance on council funding.</p> <p>It is also recommended that all organisations having funding completely withdrawn should be allowed to not meet their service specification requirements in the final quarter of the 2011/12 should funding be required to pay for redundancy and other wind down costs. Use of the last quarter grant will need to be agreed with the council.</p> <p><b>The saving achieved through this recommendation would be £28,290</b></p> <p>As part of the consultation on these recommendations Watford Muslim Community Project have stated that:</p> <p>“ If WBC provide us with £30,000 funding we could along with our reserves, newly introduced service charges and cost cutting measures be able to continue to provide these services to the community”.</p>
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<p><b>8) Shopmobility</b> provides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loan of wheelchairs and battery-powered scooters to anyone with a disability for use in Watford Town Centre</li> <li>• Loan of manual wheelchairs on a long term basis to be used in the home or on holiday.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Financial and savings analysis</u></b> Direct grant £44,510 WBC grant is 38% of total income for 2010/11 (income £118,318) Reserves at 31/3/2011 were £68,062. maintained at 3 – 6 months operational costs. Savings of £4000 (equivalent to 9%) have been offered and are achieved by taking decisions to reduce spending on new equipment; seeking additional donations; broadening disability equipment product range and continuing with fund raising initiatives.</p>
<p><b>Performance Assessment</b> Scale A - D Excellent - Poor</p>	<p>Assessed as a B - contributing factors to this assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evidence of increased income raising activity</li> <li>• robust evidence of recruitment and retention of volunteers from wide ranging backgrounds</li> <li>• evidence of working with a number of other agencies</li> <li>• consistently submit data within requested deadlines</li> <li>• overall are meeting service specification targets</li> <li>• have not yet achieved PQASSO Level 1</li> </ul>
<p><b>Equality Impact Analysis</b> Rating assessment options = Minimal impact/ some impact/ severe impact</p>	<p>Service User Impact Assessment – 51 responses received. 89% of respondents said that if the service ceased to exist, it would take away their independence and dignity and impact on their quality of life and ability to access a broad range of services. 81% advised that they would not be able to access Watford Town Centre and its facilities.</p> <p>Assessed as <b>Severe</b> – It is considered that, if there were to be a ceasing of funding, this would have a severe impact by disproportionately affecting those with mobility problems who are 100% of service users.</p>

<b>Alternative Service Provision/Duplication</b>	No evidence of alternative service provision available in Watford although other retail areas outside of Watford have some services or some specific retailers have a service. However the Shopmobility service covers the whole of Watford's town centre retail including up to the Library and therefore is not just assisting access to shopping but to other key services.
<b>Single Interest groups</b>	Although this service provision is specifically for those with mobility problems it is provided for all sections of the community and is therefore not considered to be a single interest group.
<b>Recommendation</b>	Officers recommend accepting identified savings proposals but no further reduction in funding for 2012/13 in recognition of the severe impact which will disproportionately affect those with a disability.

<p><b>9) Relate</b> Provides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-going relationship counselling for adult couples and individuals (over 16 yrs)</li> <li>• Family Counselling</li> <li>• Sex Therapy</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Financial and savings analysis</u></b> Direct grant £8,400 Accommodation £33,970 Total = £42,370 WBC grant is 18% of the costs of providing the service to Watford residents for 2010/11 Reserves at 31/3/2011 were £98,527</p> <p>Savings have been offered which are possible because lengthy negotiations have now concluded with Property services over the leasing accommodation costs and the impact of a third party moving into the premises at St Mary's churchyard. As a result the accommodation support costs will reduce and will be reflected in the Council's budget monitoring for next year. The accommodation figure now reduces from £33,970 to £26,000 and this therefore represents a saving of £7,970 (equivalent to a saving of 18.8%) In addition the organisation have offered £420 off their direct grant which means total savings offered = £8390 (equivalent to a saving of 20%)</p>
<p><b>Performance Assessment</b> Scale A - D Excellent - Poor</p>	<p>Assessed as an A – contributing factors to this assessment are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have a strategic business plan in place</li> <li>• Have organisationally restructured and merged to obtain cost efficiency and resilience</li> <li>• consistently meets or exceeds service specification targets and outcomes</li> <li>• Monitoring information delivered complete and on time</li> <li>• robust use volunteers to support service provision</li> <li>• evidence of collaboration across a broad range of agencies</li> <li>• achieved level 1 PQASSO</li> </ul>
<p><b>Equality Impact Analysis</b></p>	<p>Service User Impact Assessment – All service users responded that their quality of life</p>

<p>Rating assessment options = Minimal impact/ some impact/ severe impact</p>	<p>would be adversely affected if they were not able to access support. Relate comment that any reduction to funding would impact most on those clients who are least able to afford their services particularly those on state benefits.                  Assessed as <b>Minimal</b>. Equality statistics show that the recipients of the service are reflective of the population of Watford. If funding was cut, there may be an impact on couples who are on low incomes who cannot afford alternative private family counselling services. There is however no evidence of a disproportionate impact on those within the protected groups.</p>
<p><b>Alternative Service Provision/Duplication</b></p>	<p>Whilst there are relationship counselling services available from private providers these have costs associated. Relate does not provide a free service but has a sliding scale of fees so those on limited incomes are able to access the service. Therefore if the service ceases then there will be a disproportionate impact on couples with low income where alternative free service provision is not available.</p>
<p><b>Single Interest groups</b></p>	<p>This is a service provided for all sections of the community and is therefore not considered to be a single interest group.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation</b></p>	<p>Officers recommend that the saving of £8390 is accepted</p>

<p><b>10) Watford New Hope Trust</b> Provides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of structured workshops programme to provide meaningful and worthwhile occupation leading to improved self-esteem, basic skills training and opportunities for life long learning for homeless people.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Financial and savings analysis</u></b> Direct grant £17,740 WBC grant is just under 1% of the total organisational income for 2010/11 (Income £1,852,816) however the grant funding is specifically to contribute to the costs of the Workshop Programme and represents 47% of the cost of funding that programme. Undesignated reserves for the whole organisation at 31/3/2011 were £280,304. Savings of £1774 (equivalent to 10%) have been offered but are reliant on the success of income generating activities elsewhere in the organisation which if not achieved will result in reduction in workshop provision.</p>
<p><b>Performance Assessment</b> Scale A - D Excellent - Poor</p>	<p>Assessed as A - contributing factors to this assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• extensive income raising activities undertaken by the organisation as a whole</li> <li>• robust evidence of high dependence on recruitment and retention of volunteers throughout the organisation</li> <li>• evidence of activity to generate opportunities for joint-working with other agencies</li> <li>• consistent and timely submission of data</li> <li>• exceeded specified outputs in service specification targets</li> </ul>
<p><b>Equality Impact Analysis</b> Rating assessment options = Minimal impact/ some impact/ severe impact</p>	<p>Service User Impact Assessment – 5 responses received. Service users reported finding the workshops beneficial because attending the workshops relieved boredom and reduced anxiety levels.</p> <p>Although the majority of service users do not fall within a protected characteristic, the impact of service withdrawal would be <b>Severe</b> as those who would be affected by any service reduction are men between the ages of 20 and 44 years experiencing mental ill health and addiction issues (a nationally demonstrated feature of rough sleeping.) Alternative provision is not considered suitable due to nature of service and distance to other possible options. This is a factor for service users who have chaotic</p>

	<p>lifestyles and require this service to provide stability, structure and enablement. Therefore there would be a disproportionate impact on this particular group.</p>
<p><b>Alternative Service Provision/Duplication</b></p>	<p>Training at the workshops are tailored to meet the needs of homeless clients with chaotic lifestyles compounded by mental health problems and addiction issues. The workshops provide a therapeutic environment to begin to build stability, structure and security and are linked to Day Centre and night shelter services also provided by New Hope Trust. Alternative services could not readily be accessed by this client group.</p>
<p><b>Single Interest groups</b></p>	<p>Although this service provision is specifically for those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness it is provided for all sections of the community and is therefore not considered to be a single interest group.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation</b></p>	<p>Officers recommend accepting identified savings proposals but no further reduction in funding for 2012/13 in recognition of the severe impact which will disproportionately affect those predominantly male rough sleepers with mental health and addiction issues.</p>



<p><b>11) Homestart</b></p> <p>Provides a service promoting the welfare of families with at least one child under the age of 5 years. Volunteers, who are parents themselves offer regular support, friendship and practical help to families under stress, in their own homes helping to prevent family crisis and breakdown.</p>	<p><b><u>Financial and savings analysis</u></b></p> <p>Direct grant £7,200</p> <p>WBC grant is 4% of total income for 2010/11 (Income £177,361)</p> <p>Reserves at 31/3/2011 were £132,387. These are unrestricted reserves. The minimum level of reserves set by the organisation is £80,712 to take account of current liabilities but reserves are in excess of this.</p> <p>No savings have been offered but the organisation has stated that a £720 cut would result in one family's support being reduced from 1 year to 4.5 months as it costs £1200 per annum to support each family. The service user feedback indicated that a small number of users would consider making a contribution to the cost of the service.</p>
<p><b>Performance Assessment</b></p> <p>Scale A - D Excellent - Poor</p>	<p>Assessed as an A – contributing factors to this assessment are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consistently meets or exceeds service specification targets and outcomes</li> <li>• monitoring information provided in full and on time.</li> <li>• evidence of excellent record on recruitment and retention of volunteers including a waiting list of volunteers to provide support as well as running charity shop and community cafe</li> <li>• evidence of collaboration with 11 of the 15 children's centres to support hard to reach families and referrals from broad range of agencies</li> <li>• quality assurance in place</li> </ul>
<p><b>Equality Impact Analysis</b></p> <p>Rating assessment options = Minimal impact/ some impact/ severe impact</p>	<p>Service User Impact Assessment – 14 responses received. Service users felt there would be a great impact on them if the service was cut with views expressed that this would be 'devastating' 'huge' and 'detrimental'</p>

	Assessed as <b>Minimal</b> – whilst it is acknowledged that service users feel that there would be significant negative impact on their wellbeing, in terms of an equality impact analysis, there are no significant users in the protected groups and therefore no disproportionate impact on any specific group.
<b>Alternative Service Provision/Duplication</b>	Service users who were consulted were unaware of any alternative specific free parent befriending service locally. Other charitable organisations that provide support to parents include local branches of the National Childbirth Trust, which officers are aware of, however membership fees and other costs are involved which could exclude some clients accessing the services.
<b>Single Interest groups</b>	Although this service provision is specifically for those who are parents, it is provided for all sections of the community and is therefore not considered to be a single interest group.
<b>Recommendation</b>	Although not specifically offered by the organisation they have identified that a 10% cut in council funding would only detrimentally impact on one family. In addition their reserves position, future income raising opportunities through community café and charity shop and the fact that some users felt they would be willing to contribute to cost of service should enable the organisation to re-examine their activity to minimise the impact of any reduction in funding. <b>It is recommended that a minimum of 10% funding is withdrawn</b> however when assessing the over-arching impact on all the organisations a higher % of withdrawal may be justified to preserve funding for other services at a higher level of impact.

<p><b>12) Watford Philharmonic</b> Provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• rehearsal and performance opportunities of classical music repertoire for members;</li> <li>• classical choral and orchestral concerts for members of the public in Watford; and</li> <li>• on an occasional basis, other opportunities to bring music to the local community.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Financial and savings analysis</u></b> Direct grant £4,700 WBC grant is just under 9% of their total income of £52,563 at 30/6/2011. Watford Philharmonic have reserves of £22,719 at 30/6/2011</p> <p>Savings of £470 (equivalent to 10%) have been offered which are achievable by reducing printing and advertising costs.</p>
<p><b>Performance Assessment</b> Scale A - D Excellent - Poor</p>	<p>Assessed as a B - contributing factors to this assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• good evidence of reliance on increasing number of volunteers and minimal paid for professional involvement</li> <li>• regularly submits information within requested deadlines</li> <li>• overall are meeting service specification targets revised as a result of the loss of access to Colosseum during refurbishment</li> <li>• evidence of collaboration in relation to the performance of free concerts within the town</li> <li>• limited capacity to acquire quality standard accreditation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Equality Impact Analysis</b> Rating assessment options = Minimal impact/ some impact/ severe impact</p>	<p>Service User Impact Assessment – 103 responses received. Service users cited that the service provides a variety of benefits at a social, health, learning and cultural level.</p> <p>Assessed at <b>Minimal</b> – The equality data indicates that many users fall within an older</p>

	<p>age group and are predominately female. Whilst it is acknowledged that service users derive a variety of benefits from using this service, it is considered that the negative impact of any funding cut would be minimal as there is similar alternative provision which can be accessed.</p>
<p><b>Alternative Service Provision/Duplication</b></p>	<p>Watford has access to a broad range of arts and cultural opportunities and there are alternative services that can be accessed in Watford and surrounding boroughs in the form of established choirs and orchestras and performance opportunities. An online search of professional and community choirs and orchestras in the local area resulted in 53 local choirs and 16 orchestras. Examples include, Abbots Langley Singers; Hemel Hempstead Singers, St Albans Choral Society.; Hertford Symphony Orchestra; Abbey Gateway Orchestra; Hertfordshire Philharmonia; Watford Symphony Orchestra.</p>
<p><b>Single Interest groups</b></p>	<p>This is an organisation that provides performance opportunities accessible to all members of the community and is therefore not a single interest group.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation</b></p>	<p><b>It is recommended that a minimum of 10% funding is withdrawn</b>, as offered by the organisation however when assessing the over-arching impact on all the organisations a higher % of withdrawal may be justified to preserve funding for other services at a higher level of impact.</p>

<p><b>13) Watford Recycling Arts Project</b> Provides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a warehouse for the storage of recyclable materials;</li> <li>• undertakes workshops to promote WRAP and recycling;</li> <li>• volunteering opportunities; and</li> <li>• develops relationships with the business community from whom it collects recyclable materials.</li> <li>• Enabling Arts and community activity with educational establishments and arts &amp; community groups</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Financial and savings analysis</u></b> Rent only £15,000 WBC grant is estimated to be approximately 40% of total income for their accounting year which is not co-terminus with the financial year. Reserves are £33,374 at 31/8/2011. No specific savings were identified but they have made suggestions relating to increasing their membership fees and negotiating with the Council a reduction in administrative information required to enable reduction in staffing time.</p>
<p><b>Performance Assessment</b> Scale A - D Excellent - Poor</p>	<p>Assessed as a B - contributing factors to this assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• good evidence of reliance on increasing number of volunteers to maintain its operation</li> <li>• moving towards and building upon an enterprise model for future income raising</li> <li>• evidence of collaboration in relation to arts performance opportunities within the town and with businesses in relation to the provision of recyclable materials</li> <li>• limited capacity to acquire quality standard accreditation.</li> <li>• Some delays in the submission of information within requested deadlines attributed to capacity and relocation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Equality Impact Analysis</b></p>	<p>Service User Impact Assessment – Service user engagement was difficult as much of their work is conducted with groups rather than individuals. Some service users felt that the impact of any cuts would affect some of the projects run by WRAP. Most of the feedback highlighted the benefits of the service which they felt raised environmental awareness as well as contributing the mental health of both members and volunteers.</p>

	<p>Assessed as <b>Minimal</b> – whilst it is acknowledged that service users gain a variety of benefits from the service, the equality statistics show that service users are reflective of the population of Watford and therefore there is no disproportionate impact on any specific protected group.</p>
<p><b>Alternative Service Provision/Duplication</b></p>	<p>There is no competing organisation locally which combines the benefits of recycling with the creativity of art work. However a review of similar organisations operating in Welwyn Garden City and Milton Keynes indicates there is scope for WRAP to increase membership subscriptions or introduce charging for some materials.</p>
<p><b>Single Interest groups</b></p>	<p>This is an organisation that provides re-cycling and arts opportunities accessible to all members of the community and is therefore not a single interest group.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation</b></p>	<p>A 10% reduction in support would require the organisation to pay £1,500 contribution to the full rent of £15,000. Although a 10% saving has not been specifically offered by the organisation officers are of the view that the change of operating location adjacent to the Three Rivers border also provides opportunity to apply for funding streams that cross local authority boundaries. In addition an officer review of similar organisations operating in Welwyn Garden City and Milton Keynes indicates there is scope to increase membership subscriptions or introduce charging for some materials.</p> <p>The equality impact assessment does not reveal a severe impact on any protected characteristic group.</p> <p><b>It is therefore recommended that a 10% reduction in funding support is agreed.</b></p>

<p><b>14) Watford Women’s Centre</b> Provides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1:2:1 drop in support for women in a crisis</li> <li>• Provision of range of information</li> <li>• 1:2:1 counselling sessions</li> <li>• Internet access sessions</li> <li>• Information, Advice and Guidance</li> <li>• Volunteering</li> <li>• ESOL</li> </ul>	<p><b>Financial and savings analysis</b> Direct grant £116,580 for 2011/12 Reduction already due for 2012/13 down to £102,320 Accommodation £26,000 Total 2011-12 = £142,580 Total 2012-13 =£128,320 WBC Grant is 35% of total income for 2010/11(income £449,000) Reserves at 31/3/2011 were £181,000. Offering savings of £18,535 which represents 14.5% of their 2012/13 reduced budget</p>
<p><b>Performance Assessment</b> Scale A - D Excellent - Poor</p>	<p>Assessed as an A – contributing factors to this assessment are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consistently meets or exceeds service specification targets and outcomes</li> <li>• continuous review and adaptation of service delivery to changing needs</li> <li>• demonstrable commitment to reducing dependency on grant funding</li> <li>• robust volunteers position</li> <li>• evidence of extensive collaboration</li> <li>• quality assurance in place</li> </ul>
<p><b>Equality Impact Analysis</b> Rating assessment options = Minimal impact/ some impact/ severe impact</p>	<p>Service User Impact Assessment – 146 responses received. User responses to a possible closure of the centre were negative with expressions of devastation, depression and isolation.</p> <p>Assessed as <b>Severe</b> – The main users of the service are women - 94.4% of users - (although there is an outreach service for men). For the period 1<sup>st</sup> July 2010 – 31<sup>st</sup></p>

	<p>March 2011, there were 779 women accessing the crisis support services; of which 418 users are Watford residents. Over a third of the users are from the ethnic minority community. A further 1200 women accessed non-crisis services during the period. A reduction in funding is not considered to have a severe impact on those users accessing ESOL, Internet access or job club services as there is alternative provision. There could however be a severe impact on a number of women who require specialist domestic violence counselling and support services as there is no alternative community provision in the borough. A proportion of those accessing the 1-2-1 crisis support and counselling services (779) do so for reasons relating to domestic violence issues.</p>
<p><b>Alternative Service Provision/Duplication</b></p>	<p>The organisation points out that no other organisation in Watford provides the services they do “under one roof”. There are however alternative service provision options in relation to some of their areas of service including Internet Access sessions; Information and Advice; counselling services; Job club; English as a second language training; training courses. These are through libraries; health services; further education establishments; private enterprise; other voluntary organisations; CAB.</p> <p>However the specific area of specialist support for those women who are vulnerable through domestic abuse has been examined further. Contact with the Sunflower Centre and the Women’s Refuge has confirmed the integral role played by the Women’s Centre in relation to the network of support to victims of domestic violence. This is therefore an area that has been considered for risk mitigation as part of the recommendations.</p>
<p><b>Single Interest groups</b></p>	<p>The Watford Women’s Centre is a service specifically for women although the organisation is seeking to provide some outreach services to men, e.g. job club, away from their premises.</p> <p>They are therefore a single interest group established when there was evidence of a need for targeted provision. However there is no evidence that the full range of services delivered is currently required to be targeted to women in order to re-balance or</p>



	<p>improve access to provision for them as a disadvantaged group.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation</b></p>	<p>The organisation is well run and commenced their business planning for reduced funding at the start of the 3 year funding programme. They have in addition offered up over the 10% savings requested and are actively exploring alternative innovative opportunities for their future sustainability. They are however a single interest group established when there was stronger evidence of the need for targeted support to re-balance disadvantages experienced by women.</p> <p>In view of the Council’s statement in the consultation that the validity of continuing to support single interest groups in the current situation will inform the decision making process and having taken account of the outcome of equality impact assessments, <b>it is recommended that the funding to the organisation is reduced by £72,580 from the 2011/12 budget position and the funding that remains is used to re-commission the organisation to present proposals to tailor a reduced service focussed on delivering to high risk clients.</b></p> <p>This takes into account the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ address the equality impact analysis particularly in relation to the impact on vulnerable women suffering domestic violence</li> <li>▪ enable the organisation to review and take action to create a sustainable business plan for the future</li> </ul> <p>It is further recommended that a proportion of the voluntary sector resilience officer post’s time is secured to support the organisation to re-examine its business plan and to work with them on securing more cost efficient service delivery and supporting their ambitions to become a Community of Interest Company/Social Enterprise.</p> <p><b>The saving achieved through this recommendation would be £72,580 and represents a 50% cut in funding</b></p>

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## **Feedback to Cabinet from the organisations**

### **1) Organisations who offered savings which have been accepted or who have not been recommended for a saving**

Watford Council for Voluntary Services  
Citizens Advice Bureau  
Shopmobility  
RELATE  
New Hope Trust  
Watford Philharmonic  
Watford Palace Theatre

These organisations confirmed the factual accuracy of the information provided in the reports and did not dispute the recommendations.

### **2) Organisations who have been recommended for a saving additional to those offered or where savings were not volunteered**

West Watford Community Association  
Homestart  
Watford Recycling and Arts Project

After some initial feedback and clarification on the proposals including a meeting with WRAP and email exchanges and phone conversations with the others the factual accuracy of the information provided in the reports was confirmed and no disputing of the recommendations has been submitted.

### **3) Organisation recommended for a 50% cut in funding**

Watford Women's Centre

The organisation responded with the attached email advising that the report was factually accurate and appreciating having 4 months to mitigate the very big funding cut.

### **4) Organisations who have been recommended for a ceasing of funding with mitigation proposals**

#### **Multi Cultural Community Centre**

The organisation provided a briefing paper ahead of a meeting with Head of Community Services and the Commissioning Manager. The paper, which is attached, includes clarification on its approach to delivering change. A verbal update on the meeting will be given at Cabinet.

### **Watford African Caribbean Association**

The Chair of Trustees and Community Services Manager from WACA have met twice with the Council including a meeting with HCC Commissioning Manager Susan Street regarding the funding contract for the Luncheon Club and emails have been exchanged (copy attached) They also invited the Head of Community Services to attend a members meeting yesterday and a verbal update on these meetings will be given at Cabinet.

### **Watford Muslim Community Project**

The organisation has met with Head of Community Services and the Commissioning Manager and provided additional information that has been incorporated into the papers submitted to Cabinet. They have in addition provided a copy of their submission and an email to the Mayor which has been attached to these papers. They have requested that the £30,000 proposed to be set aside to commission CAB be instead provided to them as “we would along with our reserves, newly introduced service charges and cost cutting measures be able to continue to provide these services to the community”.

Officers do not recommend accepting this proposal for the following reasons

- One of the reasons for the original decision is that the organisation is considered to be a “single interest group” primarily fulfilling a role supporting a specific section of the community.
- In comparison with the other organisations its’ performance is below the standard the council expects
- The organisation has adequate reserves to continue the provision of service through 2012/13 and has plans to raise income through charges and seeking sponsorship. The Council has offered the support of the Resilience Officer to assist the organisation to achieve a sustainable future which should be achievable without the injection of additional funds.

**Rona Clayton Robb**

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**From:** Lesley Palumbo  
**Sent:** 02 December 2011 15:59  
**To:** Rona Clayton Robb  
**Subject:** FOR PRINTING OFF FW: Grant Funding Review - Watford Women's Centre

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**From:** Tracey Burke [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 21 November 2011 09:22  
**To:** Lesley Palumbo  
**Cc:** Prema Mani; Lorraine Cudjoe  
**Subject:** RE: Grant Funding Review - Watford Women's Centre

Hello Lesley,

Thank you for sending our individual report through, we don't have any factual inaccuracies to bring to you and appreciate having the four months to mitigate what feels like a very big funding cut.

On that basis we cannot see the point in taking up your valuable time today, we are sure this is a very busy time for you and we look forward to seeing you at some point in the future.

Tracey Burke

CEO  
Watford Women's Centre

01923 816 229  
[REDACTED]

[www.watfordwomenscentre.org.uk](http://www.watfordwomenscentre.org.uk)

Check out our Facebook page on;  
<http://www.facebook.com/home.php#!/pages/Watford-Womens-Centre/276733490366>

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**From:** Lesley Palumbo [mailto:Lesley.Palumbo@watford.gov.uk]  
**Sent:** 17 November 2011 17:38  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Grant Funding Review - Watford Women's Centre

Thank you for your patience, there has been some delay in releasing this information today because of technical IT issues for which I apologise.

I am attaching your individual analysis which contains the recommendations that it is proposed will be put to Cabinet on December the 5th. This document will form part of the public papers submitted in the report and we therefore wish to give you the opportunity to advise us of any factual inaccuracies before the paperwork is finalised. The Cabinet report itself will be finalised

during next week and when the final draft is available will also be circulated to you ahead of publication on the 24th November.

It is likely that some of you will wish to respond in writing and I would be grateful to receive that by Tuesday 22nd November. I do appreciate however that some organisations significantly impacted on will wish to meet with me to give feedback. I have therefore set aside appointment slots - listed below - for Monday 21st November and Kim Carroll will be trying to co-ordinate my diary and facilitate requests for meetings during the day tomorrow. Please email her directly with as many options as you can manage and a contact number for her to call and organise if necessary, her email is [kim.carroll@watford.gov.uk](mailto:kim.carroll@watford.gov.uk). Please ensure that no more than 2 representatives attend the meeting.

<b>MONDAY 21st NOVEMBER 2011</b>		
<b>Morning</b>	<b>Afternoon</b>	<b>Evening</b>
<b>9.30 – 10.30</b>	<b>2.00 – 3.00</b>	<b>6.00 – 7.00</b>
<b>10.30-11.30</b>	<b>3.00 – 4.00</b>	<b>7.00 – 8.00</b>
<b>11.45 – 12.45</b>	<b>4.15 – 5.15</b>	

If there is a need for further appointment slots I will seek to accommodate them. I am not in the office tomorrow morning and it may be that some of your queries could be addressed by telephone, if that is the case please email Kim a contact number and I will endeavour to call you back during the afternoon of Friday.

This is a challenging time for all of us and as stated before I value your professionalism at this difficult time.

**Lesley Palumbo**  
**Head of Community Services**  
 Watford Borough Council  
 Town Hall, Watford, Hertfordshire WD17 3EX  
 Phone: (01923) 278561 Fax: (01923) 278335  
 [REDACTED]  
 email: [lesley.palumbo@watford.gov.uk](mailto:lesley.palumbo@watford.gov.uk)

Visit the Watford Borough Council website at: [www.watford.gov.uk](http://www.watford.gov.uk)

# Multi-Cultural Community Association

Review meeting with Lesley Palumbo,

Monday 21<sup>st</sup> November

## Briefing Notes:

### 1. The funding decision by Watford BC:

- a. The MCCC will not contest this decision seeing as a challenge to change.
- b. Is the MCCC just a hall for hire and do other local organisations compete with what we do & should do? No. e.g. Holywell Community Centre (too far away), West Watford Community Association (different facilities although clear synergy in approach) West Herts Sports & social club – more limited and truly a hall for hire).
- c. Is the MCCC delivering a broad enough range of services and facilities for the community it ought to be serving? No.

### 2. How the MCCC plans to address the points made by the Council in the Report to Cabinet

- a. Change its constitution to reflect the needs of the community in which it sits.
  - i. New trustees drawn from a wider community including , for example, representatives of the local Community Association, the West Watford Community Association, the Church, the neighbouring Children's Centre and the wider cultural communities based in west Watford . All Trustees will be required to provide at least a minimum standard of commitment and support to the organisation.
  - ii. Review its aims and objectives to ensure that they align with its new role.
  - iii. Perhaps consider changing its name which in many ways no longer reflects the role it needs to adopt in the community.
  - iv. Target to become far more self-supporting within couple of years.
- b. Employ a new centre manager to deliver this new approach on behalf of the management committee.

- c. Create a clear development plan to achieve these goals using a significant proportion of its reserves to invest in the centre to make it more appropriate for its new role e.g. updating its cloak rooms, creating a suitable meeting room from its stage.
- d. Build on initiatives it has already initiated which have proved successful, e.g. The Watford Celebration.
- e. Seek to work with the other key organisations in the area to provide a complimentary rather than competing range of services.
- f. Seek advice from outside bodies such as the Council which can help initiate contacts with the wider community groups and have contact with and learn from other community groups in the town who have similarities to the MCCC (e.g. the Newton Price Centre).

### **3. Working with the Council for the future?**

- a. Understanding that the Council no longer will fund the MCCC in its present form, is it prepared to offer officer support and advice to assist the MCCC in achieving these new goals?
- b. What does this mean? "£20,000 of the saved funding is set aside to commission if necessary a suitable organisation to continue to maintain its availability for local community hire." Can the MCCC or its successor access these funds?



**Rona Clayton Robb**

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**From:** Lesley Palumbo  
**Sent:** 02 December 2011 16:02  
**To:** Rona Clayton Robb  
**Subject:** LAST ONE FOR PRINTING OFF FW: Funding

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**From:** Ademola Adeniji [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 02 December 2011 11:00  
**To:** Lesley Palumbo  
**Subject:** Funding  
Dear Lesley

Further to our discussion yesterday, assuming that Cabinet maintains the recommendations, when it meets on next week, we would like the allocated £20,000 to be available as a cash resource to assist with our transition, and where necessary to support with re-training and redundancy as may be required.

Regards

Ademola

Ademola Adeniji  
Community Services Manager  
Watford African & Caribbean Association  
16 Clarendon Road  
Watford  
WD17 1JY  
01923 220 810

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**From:** Ademola Adeniji [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 23 November 2011 15:42  
**To:** Lorraine Cudjoe  
**Cc:** Lesley Palumbo  
**Subject:** Re: Cabinet Report - Review of three year grant funding programme to achieve savings

Dear Lesley

Thank you for sending the revised version of the documentation. There are a few areas I believe needs rectification to fully reflect our discussion yesterday.

**Financial savings and analysis**

The funding for HCC has been concluded and not under review. We now receive funding for all our projects except 'Meals on Wheels.' which can be transferred to a single provider in the county. The PCT funding was a once off funding as indicated during our meeting. The cut in funding from the Watford Borough Council will not reduce the services offered, there is a high likelihood that services could cease. The HCC funding for example is dependent on the existence of a manager to manage the services provided.

**Performance Assessment**

During our discussion, we spoke of partnership working being embarked upon to generate income. Such initiatives include the *Ujima* project with Watford Probation, The proposed Cafe with Watford CVS; taking on additional Social work students placements from Bedfordshire, London South Bank and Middlesex Universities.

There are also discussion with regard to staffing reduction as well . We also have a volunteer who has been coming into the office on Thursday afternoons since September to look at tenders opportunities.

Regards

Ademola

Ademola Adeniji  
Community Services Manager  
Watford African & Caribbean Association  
16 Clarendon Road  
Watford  
WD17 1JY  
01923 220 810

**Audrey Clarke**

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**From:** Lesley Palumbo  
**Sent:** 02 December 2011 14:29  
**To:** Audrey Clarke  
**Subject:** FW: WMCP Funding  
**Attachments:** WMCP WBC Funding final.docx

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**From:** mohammad yaqoob [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 29 November 2011 16:57  
**To:** Dorothy Thornhill  
**Subject:** WMCP Funding

29 November 2011

Dorothy Thornhill  
Watford Elected Mayor  
Watford Borough Council

Town Hall  
Watford

Dear Dorothy Thornhill

**Voluntary Sector Funding Review 2012-13 – Analysis & Recommendations**

I take this opportunity to attach a copy of the "Cabinet appendix B MCP feedback"; the WBC Officers have recommended ceasing of Council's funding to Watford Muslim Community Project. If this was to be implemented then it will inevitably lead to closing-down of this organisation without giving the time to find alternative resources to continue our services to the Watford community.

Watford Muslim Community Project has been providing vital services to the local community since 1980. The services include providing advice and information in areas of employment, education, welfare rights, housing, immigration, document attestations, translation/interpretation, domestic violence, health awareness seminars and many other social and welfare issues faced by the community specifically from the ethnic origins.

The project has been addressing local community's social and personal problems to mitigate the inequalities that have hindered/slowed down the process of integration and cohesion.

Ceasing of WBC funding to WMC Project will further deprive and disadvantage a large section of British community in Watford.

We, therefore appeal for your support and continuity of WBC funding for WMCP.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours Sincerely,

Mohammad Yaqoob  
Chairman  
Watford Muslim Community Project  
15 Harwoods Road  
Watford  
WD18 7RB  
Tel: 01923 223466 [REDACTED]

**Voluntary Sector Funding Review 2012-13 – Analysis and recommendation**

<p><b>7) Watford Muslim Community Project</b> MCP provides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rights and Advice Services ( benefits advice, housing, employment etc)</li> <li>• Passports, visas and National Identity Cards</li> <li>• <i>We also provide many other services, such as Citizenship and Nationality, education ,debt, translation, interpreting, domestic violence, outreach services, Health awareness sessions etc.</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Financial and savings analysis</b> Direct grant £54,210 Accommodation £4,080 Total = £58,290 WBC grant was 59% of total income for 2010-11 (income £98,946) Reserves at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 were £76,072</p> <p>No specific savings have been offered, they have identified a range of options that would enable them to make savings including income generation through charging and cutting service provision. There is a healthy uncommitted reserve so it is unclear why they have been unable to specify a savings target.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Last year's brought forward reserves were £76,072, however at the end of this financial year it is anticipated to be much lower. This amount includes £40,000 (restricted for six months survival) hence the actual reserve would be £36,072. The amount of reserves has been built over a period of 10 years through stringent budgetary controls on expenditure and denying staff's pay increments.</i></li> <li>• <i>Charges are to be introduced that should bring revenue of approximately £10,000 per annum.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Performance Assessment</b> Scale A - D Excellent - Poor</p>	<p>Assessed as a D. Contributing factors to this assessment are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>We are shocked at the 'D' performance assessment, the facts are listed below.</i></li> <li>• <i>We strongly feel this should have been B</i></li> <li>• <i>amount of reserves held and yet no plan for achieving savings has been implemented.</i></li> <li>• <i>£36,072 is a modest reserve for an organisation of this size. Executive committee has already drawn the plans to implement charges for the various services provided.</i></li> </ul>

- lack of evidence on introducing charging or cost recovery for support given to PHCCS (Pakistani High Commissioners Consular Service)
- *The PHCC services are free of charge to WMCP and the community. They do not use any of our equipment or stationary and the project support personnel are all volunteers. The PHCC sessions are held on the weekends.*
- Aspects of the organisations service specification and development plan remain incomplete or unmet.
- *The organisation has continued to provide core services as set out in the SLA.. We serve a large number of Watford community, over the last year about 5000 people have been provided with one to one service.*
- Non- implementation of PQASSO Level 1 accreditation
- *Significant work has been done to achieve PQASSO level 1, early this year Bob Jones of the Watford CVS paid us a visit for progress assessment and had set road map for achieving the accreditation. The Work is continuing on PQASSO under a sub-committee. Project does hold accreditation such as OISC on immigration and DWP Alternative Office. We also had the CLS.*
- Limited level of volunteer engagement and lack of success in volunteer recruitment to support paid staff provision
- *The organisation provides advice and advocacy to its clients and therefore has to be mindful about data protection and clients' confidentiality while employing volunteers to support paid staff. Besides this procurement of volunteers with professional skills and qualifications is quite difficult because generally working people have no time for voluntary work. The project has provided training to three individuals on admin duties who have been providing voluntary support to*

	<p><i>project's admin staff.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Considerable numbers of volunteers have been contributing in seminars and surgeries held by the project which did not need any professional or educational skills.</i></li> <li>• <i>delays with data submission</i></li> <li>• <i>Unable to understand this statement and would require some definite examples/citations.</i></li> <li>• <i>insufficient evidence of robust collaboration with other agencies in terms of service delivery and development</i></li> <li>• <i>Referrals are made and received to/from other service providers such as CAB, WWC and MCCC.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Equality Impact Assessment</b>  Rating assessment options = Minimal impact/ some impact/ severe impact</p>	<p>Service User Impact Assessment – Service users expressed concerns about their problems going unresolved should the service cease. The Muslim Community Project believe that women would be most negatively impacted.</p> <p>Assessed as <b>Some</b> – The service is predominately accessed by the Pakistani community (81% of users) but there would be a lower impact on the majority of users who could reasonably access other advice agencies. However there may be a greater impact on some users within the protected groups particularly those from the older age groups and women who may have language and cultural needs that are not adequately catered for by the other advice agencies at present.</p> <p>Whilst the impact is not considered to be severe, consideration has been given to what action to take to mitigate any negative impact and recommendations below include a proposal to mitigate the risks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>We provide a service to approximately 10% population of WBC from the ethnic origins of British nationality. If this service was withdrawn or considerably reduced, it will have immediate negative impact on the female and the elderly.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Alternative Service Provision/Duplication</b></p>	<p>The council provides support to the Citizens Advice Bureau to provide advice which is quality controlled through audits and monitoring evidence. In addition other community organisations locally provide informal non accredited advice and support. At present the</p>



	<p>CAB does not provide a service covering immigration issues. The recommendations below include proposals to address this element of the provision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>We provide a service to approximately 10% population of WBC from the ethnic origins of British nationality. Immigration work amounts to over 50% of project's services; the CAB doesn't provide this service.</i></li> </ul> <p>The Muslim Community Project provides a service to a specific group within the community. They are therefore a single interest group established when there was evidence of a need for targeted provision. However there is evidence that the demographic changes over recent years reflects a need for geographically targeted provision to ensure provision for newly formed communities emerging from other migrating groups as well as the majority ethnic community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Muslims are the largest minority group in the County of Hertfordshire, a significant number of them live in Watford. If this service was withdrawn or considerably reduced then large population will be deprived of the services and disadvantaged. It will severely impact on their quality of life thereby creating more alienation and inequalities further hampering the process of integration and cohesion.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Single Interest groups</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>In view of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ the performance assessment,</li> <li>▪ the amount of reserves</li> <li>▪ the Council's statement in the consultation that the validity of continuing to support single interest groups in the current situation will inform the decision making process, having taken account of the outcome of equality impact assessments.</li> <li>▪ the opportunity to commission quality monitored alternative provision</li> </ul> <p><b>officers recommend that the funding to the organisation is ceased.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WMCP funding should be reviewed in the light of savings and cost cutting measures.</li> </ul> <p>However in order to</p>	



- address the equality impact analysis
- ensure geographically based, culturally sensitive, quality monitored advice provision continues to operate during 2012/13

It is recommended that £30,000 of the funding is set aside to commission the CAB to provide a culturally sensitive outreach service to the West Watford community to mitigate the risks and impact of the potential reduction in service delivery.

It should however be noted that the organisation does have reserves and is exploring opportunities for income generation which could enable it to review its business plan and create a more sustainable model of service delivery. It is therefore further recommended that a proportion of the voluntary sector resilience officer post's time is secured to support the organisation to re-examine its business plan in order to secure a sustainable future without reliance on council funding.

It is also recommended that all organisations having funding completely withdrawn should be allowed to not meet their service specification requirements in the final quarter of the 2011/12 should funding be required to pay for redundancy and other wind down costs. Use of the last quarter grant will need to be agreed with the council.

The saving achieved through this recommendation would be £28,290

- *Our Trustees strongly disagree with your recommendations and would argue that neither CAB nor any other single organisation can provide the services offered by the WMCP.*
- *The Trustees do realise that WBC has to make savings but "closing down" of the WMCP is no option. We would urge that WBC should provide us £30,000 p.a funding.*
- *With £30,000 WBC funding along with our reserves and newly introduced service charges/ cost cutting measures we should be able to continue to provide these vital service to the community.*

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**Extract from Cabinet Minutes – 5<sup>th</sup> December****34 REVIEW OF THE THREE YEAR GRANT FUNDING PROGRAMME TO ACHIEVE SAVINGS**

At the Council meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup> January 2011, as part of a package of savings identified within the Service Prioritisation programme, it was agreed that the budgets for the provision of voluntary sector grants would be reduced by £280,740, approximately 23% of the overall budget, for the financial year 2012/13. This was necessary in view of the Council's challenging overall savings target of £5 million, approximately 30% of its annual budget.

A consultation process had been undertaken during summer 2011 with all 14 of the grant funded organisations that would be affected by this decision. Officers had subsequently analysed the information received and undertaken equality impact analyses and performance assessments. Cabinet received a report on the results of that work and recommendations for consideration that would significantly achieve the target funding reduction figure.

In all cases where savings had been identified by organisations these had been accepted. In addition, the recommendations included a complete withdrawal of grant aid from three organisations, a 50% reduction in funding to a further one and smaller % savings from organisations where officers had identified capacity to achieve them. The recommendations were still £20,000 short of the overall saving target but officers were of the opinion that any further reductions at this time would not be sustainable.

The Mayor introduced the report by saying that these were significant and controversial decisions. It was not, however, a case of "slash and burn" or "salami slicing". There were many worthy organisations in Watford, most of which did not receive funding but were self sufficient and able to raise funds themselves.

The process followed had been very thorough with affected groups being given 12 months notice and the opportunity to talk to officers about planning for the eventuality that funding would be lost or reduced. She added that the Council had to be clear about why it funded one group and not another and that no organisation could be guaranteed a grant for life. She invited the Head of Community Services to outline the proposals.

The Head of Community Services explained the context of the decisions being proposed and the need to make savings of £5 million over the next four years. The Council was currently in the middle of a three year grant funding programme which had to be reviewed each year to see whether it could be sustained. To help mitigate the impact of the proposals every seriously affected organisation was to be offered some dedicated support from the Council funded Resilience Officer employed by the CVS to help re-examine business plans and work with them on securing more cost effective service delivery. This facility would be available for one year.

A full consultation exercise had been carried out with Groups and a good response had been received. Groups and their service users had also been given the opportunity to feed into the Equality Impact Analysis carried out as part of the process. Further discussion had also been held with affected groups in November regarding the officer recommendations. The outcomes of those discussions were tabled at the meeting.

A non Cabinet Member (Green) felt there was a need to discuss the principles of the decisions. He accepted the need to reduce budgets but asked why, if organisations had not been run well in the past, the Council had funded them previously. He also asked about other organisations, such as the Palace Theatre, which were not having grants cut. He wondered whether a reduction of 5% across the board might have been better.

The Mayor responded that the Council could have gradually reduced grants over the past three years but had chosen not to because it wanted to support the groups as long as possible. It had to be borne in mind however, that whilst Council services had seen their budgets cut, the grants budget had remained frozen.

In response to the Councillor's point about the funding of organisations who did not perform, she advised that officers had challenged failure and introduced quality checks but the responses had not always been as good as might have been hoped.

With regard to the historical funding of facilities like the Watford Palace Theatre and the Colosseum she considered that, in many ways, these types of organisations should be kept separate. The Palace Theatre was now doing far more community work than before and was reaching out to the multi cultural nature of the town.

The Executive Director – Services referred the Member to the reference in the report to the Palace Theatre as a preferred recipient. She said that the Theatre had already gone through a programme of expenditure reduction and was also a key delivery partner in the cultural renaissance of the town. The Theatre also received funding from the Arts Council which was granted partly because of the Council's current three year commitment to the Theatre. The position would be reviewed again when the current funding ceased.

She confirmed that if an organisation had performed badly or where the output had not been what was required and expected, funding had been withdrawn. In other cases, work had been done with organisations to help them achieve the quality mark. She added that it was about funding services and not about individual organisations

The Head of Community Services advised that performance assessments were looked at and comparisons made across all groups. Many were at a higher level but encouragement and support was provided where required.

She went on to explain the rationale behind the recommendations made in

Appendix B of the report. Organisations had seen the officers' scoring and rationale, been assessed and given the opportunity to give feedback on the reports in Appendix B. Some adjustments had then been made as a result.

The non Cabinet Member (Green) asked about the peppercorn rent paid by the Theatre to the Council and asked whether this point had been emphasised to the Arts Council. The Mayor confirmed that the Theatre did indeed pay a peppercorn rent which had been agreed some years ago. She stressed that this kind of rental would not happen now.

The Head of Community Services went on to explain that whilst organisations had been asked to offer savings, not all had done so resulting in a shortfall of £173,000 still to be achieved. She then referred to the tabled paper outlining feedback from organisations.

The Head of Community Services provided feedback from the organisations listed below who had offered savings which had been accepted or who had not been recommended for a saving

- Watford Council for Voluntary Services
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Shopmobility
- RELATE
- New Hope Trust
- Watford Philharmonic
- Watford Palace Theatre

These organisations had confirmed the factual accuracy of the information provided in the reports and did not dispute the recommendations.

The Head of Community Services then provided feedback from organisations who had been recommended for a saving additional to those offered or where savings were not volunteered

- West Watford Community Association
- Homestart
- Watford Recycling and Arts Project

She advised that, after some initial feedback and clarification on the proposals including a meeting with WRAP and email exchanges and phone conversations with the others, the factual accuracy of the information provided in the reports had been confirmed and no disputing of the recommendations had been submitted.

The Head of Community Services then referred to the section in the report proposing mitigation measures where grant aid was recommended for substantial or complete withdrawal. The mitigation measures for all of the groups include dedicated time from the Resilience Officer to support organisations to re-examine their business plans and secure more cost-

effective service delivery and an opportunity to agree with the Council a variation to the use of their final quarter grant in 2011/12.

Watford Women's Centre was a well run organisation which fell into the category of a single interest group. In addition, alternative provision for some of their services was available elsewhere. The Equalities Impact Assessment had, however, highlighted the likely severe impact on women experiencing domestic violence and the grant had therefore been recommended for a reduction of 50% with the remainder of the funding used to re-commission the organisation to tailor a reduced service focussed on delivering to high risk clients to ensure that it could continue to provide a service for these women.

The Mayor added that the Women's Centre was an example of a "nice to do" rather than "must do" and was not a facility provided by most district councils. She stressed that the Council would not, however, want to renege on its commitment to support women in crisis.

A non Cabinet Member (Green) added his agreement with this statement although he did not see the Women's Centre as a single issue group and said it had to be borne in mind that women made up 50% of the population.

The Head of Community Services went on to speak about the Multi Cultural Community Centre and referred to the specific issues outlined in Appendix B to the report. She also referred to the tabled paper which gave details on its approach to delivering change. Following a meeting with the Treasurer and a Trustees Board member the Head of Community Services felt that they had a plan for change that could deliver a sustainable future for the centre.

It was also noted that £20k was to be set aside to either commission an appropriate organisation to continue to make the hall available for hire during 2012/13 or alternatively to provide support to the organisation to create a more collaborative and sustainable future for the centre by securing improvements to the building enabling better use of the facility.

The Mayor commented that she was saddened that it had taken this long for the Group to realise that it needed to change. It had not been serving the whole community and the same issues had arisen again and again. The Group also had significant reserves. Under the right leadership the whole community could benefit.

A non Cabinet Member (Green) asked about the delegated authority being requested for the Portfolio Holder in conjunction with the Head of Community Services to make subsequent decisions.

The Mayor assured the Member that the proposals outlined in the report were genuine and that there was a resource which, with the right leadership, could be used in Vicarage and West Watford more effectively.

The Head of Community Services then referred to the Watford African Caribbean Association (WACA). She explained that the organisation had

been shocked by the recommendation to cut the grant. The Chair of Trustees and Community Services Manager from WACA had met twice with the Council including a meeting with the Herts County Council Commissioning Manager regarding the funding contract for the Luncheon Club and emails had been exchanged (as tabled). The Head of Community Services had had a further meeting with the organisation the day before.

It was noted that, in order not to de-stabilise the organisation's other funding, it was recommended that £20,000 was set aside to assist the organisation to make the transition to an alternative model. Work would also be done on making them more cost effective including looking at a possible relocation and staffing levels.

The Mayor commented that Watford had become an increasingly diverse town and she had had difficult discussions with other groups. The African Caribbean Association had rent paid and funding for staff and this placed her in an uncomfortable position when the Council did not fund the majority of other cultural groups. Research demonstrated that funding could set groups against each other and should be used for projects which brought people together. She stressed, however, that it was important not to destabilise the organisation's other funding.

A non Cabinet Member (Labour) said he considered that the Watford African Caribbean Association had an important role to play in promoting social cohesion.

The Mayor responded that, with Watford's diverse community, it was not possible to justify financial support for just one group. It was not about cultural aspirations and it was important to be consistent.

A Cabinet member concurred with the Mayor's comments and said it was about taking stock and defining priorities.

The Head of Community Services spoke about the Muslim Community Project. This was a single interest group and in comparison with others its performance was low. It had had plans to raise its income but these were yet to materialise and they also held significant reserves. The Equalities Impact Analysis (EIA) had recognised that as 81% of service users were of Pakistani origin there would be a disproportionate impact on that community but this was not assessed as severe. To mitigate that impact, however, the recommendation included setting aside £30,000 of funding to commission the CAB to provide a culturally sensitive outreach service should the organisation choose not to continue its service provision.

She drew Members' attention to the papers circulated where it stated that the Project had requested that the £30,000 proposed to be set aside to commission CAB to provide additional services be instead provided to them as they would, along with their reserves, newly introduced service charges and cost cutting measures be able to continue to provide these services to the community. Officers did not agree with these proposals for the following

reasons:

- One of the reasons for the original decision was that the organisation was considered to be a “single interest group” primarily fulfilling a role supporting a specific section of the community.
- In comparison with the other organisations its’ performance had not fully attained the standard the council expected
- The organisation had adequate reserves to continue the provision of service through 2012/13 and had plans to raise income through charges and seeking sponsorship. The Council has offered the support of the Resilience Officer to assist the organisation to achieve a sustainable future which should be achievable without the injection of additional funds.

A non Cabinet Member (Green) referred to the EIA and the possible impact on women and older people, especially Muslim women who were hard to reach.

The Head of Community Services confirmed that the proposal to set aside £30,000 to commission the CAB to provide additional services to accommodate users of the Muslim Community Project would specifically include the provision of an Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) Level 1 (basic immigration advice and services).

The Member said he wanted assurance that the CAB had the capacity and knowledge.

The Mayor responded that it was important to avoid duplication. She was confident that the Muslim Community already accessed the CAB and that there was appropriate support for vulnerable Muslim women. She could not justify spending tax payers’ money on under performing groups.

A non Cabinet member (Labour) commented that most groups were not single issue. He considered that this organisation played a valuable role and could be accessed by all women, not just Muslims. It dealt with important issues such as immigration, benefits and day to day issues such as payment of utility bills. He also spoke about targeted intervention and honour crimes. He stressed that such groups had an important role to play.

The Head of Community Service responded that victims of honour crime may not go to the Muslim Centre because of confidentiality issues within a tight knit community. She said they were more likely to go to the Women’s Centre which was why it had been agreed to continue support for them to deal with issues of violence against women. The Women’s Centre supported a high proportion of women from ethnic minority backgrounds; over a third of their users.

The Mayor endorsed these comments. She added that she did not want services to be defined by religion or ethnicity but by need. Cabinet then discussed the proposal to amalgamate the Annual and Mayor’s



Fund and reduce by 50%. The Mayor commented that it was important to retain a small pot for small community projects.

In conclusion, a Cabinet member stated that the value of organisations should not be measured by whether or not it received funding. It was about funding specific activities for the good of all sections of the community. He added that he was glad that the Council could still offer funding; one of the few District Councils still able to do so.

A non Cabinet Member (Conservative) endorsed the points made and congratulated officers on the amount of work done. He added that transparency and fairness were important.

The Mayor said she had been heartened by the organisations' responses. The three year grant funding programme was due to cease in March 2013 and there was an opportunity for a piece of scrutiny work to be done around the issue of commissioning services from the voluntary sector as the Council developed its new Commissioning Framework for 2013/14 and beyond. She endorsed the officers' proposals but added that there needed to be a degree of flexibility on how they were implemented and over what time-frame. She concluded by thanking the officers for the work they had done.

#### RESOLVED

1. that the officer recommendations as summarised in Appendix A of the report be agreed.
2. that the mitigating actions identified in paragraph 3.15 of the report to support those organisations whose funding is being ceased be approved.
3. that delegated authority be granted to the Portfolio Holder and Head of Community Services to make any subsequent decisions required in relation to:
  - a) the actions needed to re-commission alternative service provision where necessary;
  - b) decisions required on the use of set aside funds as identified in 3.15 of the report.
  - c) setting the eligibility criteria for the small grants programme
  - d) decisions required in relation to making reasonable adjustments to the profile of the savings targets should this become necessary during implementation.

ACTION: Head of Community Services/Portfolio Holder

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# CALL-IN OF KEY DECISIONS

To: The Head of Legal and Property Services

We the undersigned call-in the following key decision:-

Title: **Review of three year grant funding programme to achieve savings**

Date Decision taken: **5 December 2011**

Decision maker (Cabinet/Portfolio Holder/Officer): **Cabinet**

Reason for Call-In:

(e.g. cost/consultation/policy/lack of clarity/other options)

Please feel free to state reasons more fully on the back of this form

**We the undersigned Call-In the decision by the Cabinet on Monday 5th December to agree the Officer recommendations in Item 34 regarding the Review of the 3-year Grant funding programme to achieve savings, including Appendix A and B.**

**We feel that the "single-Interest" criteria was not followed consistently across all groups and Organisations and that the overall funding criteria was not followed consistently for all groups.**

**We feel that groups and organisations were not given sufficient time to prepare for the possible loss of funding.**

**NB: If no reasons are given the Overview and Scrutiny Committee WILL NOT consider your request for call-in**

Signed:

1. Councillor

Nigel Bell

2. Councillor

[Signature]

3. Councillor

[Signature]

Date:

13/12/11

**Note:** Call-In does not include

- Urgent decisions of the Cabinet
- Decisions referred by the Cabinet to Council
- Decisions previously Called-In

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**PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH CALL-IN BY THE  
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The protocol for dealing with call-in was agreed by the Co-ordination & Call-in Committee at its meeting on 10 July 2002 and amended by Council at its meeting on 19 July 2006. Following Council's agreement to a revised scrutiny structure at Annual Council on 25 May 2011, call-ins are considered at Overview and Scrutiny Committee. It was agreed that as a convention the Vice-Chair, a member of the opposition, would chair this part of the meeting, or in his/her absence another member of the opposition on Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The following procedure will be adopted at the meetings where a call-in decision is being considered.

- The Member who requested the call-in to present their case (including if they have already given advance notice any members of the public to speak if appropriate).
- The Scrutiny Committee and the Mayor/portfolio holder or officer whose decision is being questioned can ask questions of the Members requesting the call-in.
- The Mayor/portfolio holder/ officer to present the case for the Cabinet to explain the reason behind the decision.
- The Scrutiny Committee and the Member requesting the call-in can then question the Mayor/portfolio holder/ officer.
- The Scrutiny Committee will then deliberate and make its decision.
- If the Scrutiny Committee ratifies the Cabinet decision it can be implemented immediately.
- If the Scrutiny Committee decides to refer the decision back to Cabinet for re-consideration it will be required to send written notice of the reasons to the Head of Legal and Property Services within 3 working days of the meeting who will forward it to the original decision taker and the Mayor.
- Cabinet must give not less than 7 working days notice to the Head of Legal and Property Services and the Chair and Vice-Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the date and time it intends to re-consider its decision.
- Any member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is entitled to attend the meeting at which Cabinet re-considers the decision, unless they have a personal and prejudicial interest in the matter being discussed.
- Cabinet will be free to take whatever decision it sees fit on re-consideration and the decision will not be open for further call-in except as provided in the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, paragraphs 13.11 – 13.17 of the Constitution (page DVi7).
- A member who has a personal and prejudicial interest in the matter being called in will not be able to be a party to the call-in request, neither will they be able to participate in the call-in meeting.

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