

Voluntary Sector Funding Review 2012-13 – Analysis and recommendations

<p>1) Watford Council for Voluntary Service “Preferred recipient status” (PRS) - 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"> • Strengthening of the voluntary sector in Watford through leadership, support, advice and example. • Training, Development and Business Planning • Funding Advice • Volunteering and Time banking 	<p><u>Financial and savings analysis</u> 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>Performance Assessment Scale A - D Excellent - Poor</p>	<p>Assessed as an A – contributing factors to this assessment are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a strategic plan in place • a recent external review undertaken • consistently meets or exceeds service specification targets and outcomes • strong evidence of use of volunteers • evidence of extensive collaboration • quality assurance in place

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<p>Equality Impact Analysis 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 minimal impact overall as only indirect impact on smaller organisations who are likely to be supporting protected characteristics groups.</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>Officers recommend that the 10% saving offered is accepted.</p>

<p>2) Watford Citizens Advice Bureau “Preferred recipient status” (PRS) - 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"> • generalist advice in person; • telephone advice; • specialist money advice; • referrals; and • outreach. 	<p><u>Financial and savings analysis</u></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) .</p> <p>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.)</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 £52,428 to £39,500 and this therefore represents a saving of £12,928 (equivalent to a saving of 5.7%)</p>
<p>Performance Assessment Scale A - D Excellent - Poor</p>	<p>Assessed as a B contributing factors to this assessment are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • timely submission of data • good collaboration evidenced • strong evidence of extensive use of volunteers • has largely achieved predicted outputs but some further improvement to outcomes to be achieved
<p>Equality Impact Analysis 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>

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	<p>Should funding be reduced significantly by more than the amount offered by the CAB, the direct impact would be assessed as severe 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>
Recommendation	<p>Officers recommend limiting the reduction in funding to the savings offered as this will have no direct impact on service delivery.</p>

<p>3) Watford Palace Theatre “Preferred recipient status” (PRS) - 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"> • a range of events & projects for a wide range of audiences through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. new/ contemporary work, popular and/or classic theatre pieces b. development & production of a robust range of plays c. Commissioning of work of culturally diverse artists • A range of Participatory Activities • Develop wide ranging partnerships 	<p><u>Financial and savings analysis</u> 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>Performance Assessment Scale A - D Excellent - Poor</p>	<p>Assessed as an A - contributing factors to this assessment are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a strategic plan in place • consistently meets or exceeds service specification targets and outcomes • evidence of extensive collaboration • has been nominated or achieved a range of awards including Theatrical Management Association awards. • Received a “very good” assessment from Arts council and scored “strong” in all 3

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	<p>assessment areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have increased their volunteer base (26 volunteers in 2010/11)
<p>Equality Impact Analysis 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 some. 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>Recommendation</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>4) Watford Multi Cultural Community Centre (MCCC)</p> <p>MCCC provides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hall hire to various community groups, e.g. exercise and fitness groups, religious groups, luncheon clubs, PCT baby clinic • Various community and commercial/private hall hire events and activities 	<p><u>Financial and savings analysis</u></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>Performance Assessment</p> <p>Scale A - D Excellent - Poor</p>	<p>Assessed as a C. Contributing factors to this assessment are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • amount of reserves held which reflect a years income. • 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. • Some evidence of use of volunteers • not fully meeting objectives outlined in service specification • delays with data submission • some evidence of collaboration with other agencies but requires more robust development in service delivery • Achieved PQASSO level 1
<p>Equality Impact Analysis</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 & 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>

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	<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 some 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>Alternative Service Provision/Duplication</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 & 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>Single Interest groups</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>Recommendation</p>	<p>In view of the performance assessment, the amount of reserves and the existence of alternative provision officers recommend that the funding to the organisation is ceased. 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>

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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>5) West Watford Community Assoc (WWCA)</p> <p>WWCA provides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local community centre providing a ‘drop in’ service for help and information • Internet access, photocopying, help with phone calls, letter writing and form filling • Various activities for all age groups including parent & toddler sessions, over 50’s exercise, reminiscence group 	<p><u>Financial and savings analysis</u></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>Performance Assessment Scale A - D Excellent - Poor</p>	<p>Assessed as an A - contributing factors to this assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strong evidence of use of volunteers • 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. • Monitoring information is delivered on time • consistently meets service specification targets and outcomes • Achieved PQASSO level 1
<p>Equality Impact Analysis 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>

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<p>impact/ some impact/ severe impact</p>	<p>contact and concern about the future of groups who hire rooms.</p> <p>Assessed as some 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>Alternative Service Provision/Duplication</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>Single Interest groups</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>Recommendation</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>6) Watford African Caribbean Assoc (WACA)</p> <p>WACA provides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A befriending project • Carers Support Project • The African Caribbean Elders Project • Supplementary School • Sickle Cell Support • Social and cultural activities • General advice and signposting • Work placement opportunities for 6 students a year 	<p><u>Financial and savings analysis</u></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)</p> <p>The organisation has £21,000 of unrestricted funds, maintained at a level of 3-6 months expenditure.</p> <p>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>Performance Assessment Scale A - D Excellent - Poor</p>	<p>Assessed as a B - contributing factors to this assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evidence of use of volunteers • there is evidence of working with a number of other agencies in relation to events • however more robust collaboration with local agencies to achieve savings and for the benefit of the wider community is not strongly evidenced. • Externally accredited achievement of PQASSO Level 1 • Occasional delays with the submission of data • Overall are meeting and occasionally exceeding service specification targets
<p>Equality Impact Analysis 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 minimal - The evidence confirms that that there are a significant number</p>

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	<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>
Alternative Service Provision/Duplication	<p>The services commissioned by other funders but enabled by our core funding include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A befriending projectCarers supportAfro-Caribbean Elders ProjectSupplementary SchoolSickle Cell SupportSocial and Cultural activities <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>
Single Interest groups	<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>

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	<p>moving towards a more diverse user and staff profile.</p> <p>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>
Recommendation	<p>It is recommended that the funding to the organisation is ceased. 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">▪ address the equality impact analysis▪ mitigate the risks of destabilising projects funded by other bodies▪ enable the organisation to review and take action to create a sustainable business plan for the future <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>7) Watford Muslim Community Project MCP provides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rights and Advice Services (benefits advice, housing, employment etc) • Passports, visas and National Identity Cards • Other services include Citizenship and Nationality, education, debt, translation, interpreting, domestic violence, outreach services, health awareness sessions 	<p><u>Financial and savings analysis</u> 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 31st 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>Performance Assessment Scale A - D Excellent - Poor</p>	<p>Assessed as a D. Contributing factors to this assessment are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • amount of reserves held and yet no plan for achieving savings has been implemented • Introduction of charges has been scheduled but delayed until January 2012. • 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. • 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 • Though significant work has been done over the last 2 years in preparation for

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	<p>achieving PQASSO Level 1 accreditation this has not yet been implemented</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organisation is accredited to level 1 (Initial advice) with the Office of Immigration Services Commission (OISC) and is DWP Alternative Office accredited • 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. • 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.
<p>Equality Impact Analysis 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 Some – 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>Alternative Service Provision/Duplication</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>

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	<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>
Single Interest groups	<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>
Recommendation	<p>In view of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ the performance assessment,▪ the amount of reserves▪ 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.▪ the opportunity to commission quality monitored alternative provision <p>officers recommend that the funding to the organisation is ceased</p> <p>However in order to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ address the equality impact analysis▪ ensure geographically based, culturally sensitive, quality monitored advice provision continues to operate during 2012/13 <p>it is recommended that £30,000 of the funding is set aside to commission the CAB to</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.

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

As part of the consultation on these recommendations Watford Muslim Community Project have stated that:

“ 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>8) Shopmobility provides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loan of wheelchairs and battery-powered scooters to anyone with a disability for use in Watford Town Centre • Loan of manual wheelchairs on a long term basis to be used in the home or on holiday. 	<p><u>Financial and savings analysis</u> 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>Performance Assessment Scale A - D Excellent - Poor</p>	<p>Assessed as a B - contributing factors to this assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evidence of increased income raising activity • robust evidence of recruitment and retention of volunteers from wide ranging backgrounds • evidence of working with a number of other agencies • consistently submit data within requested deadlines • overall are meeting service specification targets • have not yet achieved PQASSO Level 1
<p>Equality Impact Analysis 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 Severe – 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>

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Alternative Service Provision/Duplication	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.
Single Interest groups	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.
Recommendation	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>9) Relate Provides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-going relationship counselling for adult couples and individuals (over 16 yrs) • Family Counselling • Sex Therapy 	<p><u>Financial and savings analysis</u> 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>Performance Assessment Scale A - D Excellent - Poor</p>	<p>Assessed as an A – contributing factors to this assessment are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a strategic business plan in place • Have organisationally restructured and merged to obtain cost efficiency and resilience • consistently meets or exceeds service specification targets and outcomes • Monitoring information delivered complete and on time • robust use volunteers to support service provision • evidence of collaboration across a broad range of agencies • achieved level 1 PQASSO
<p>Equality Impact Analysis</p>	<p>Service User Impact Assessment – All service users responded that their quality of life</p>

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Rating assessment options = Minimal impact/ some impact/ severe impact	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 Minimal . 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.
Alternative Service Provision/Duplication	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.
Single Interest groups	This is a service provided for all sections of the community and is therefore not considered to be a single interest group.
Recommendation	Officers recommend that the saving of £8390 is accepted

<p>10) Watford New Hope Trust Provides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<p><u>Financial and savings analysis</u> 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>Performance Assessment Scale A - D Excellent - Poor</p>	<p>Assessed as A - contributing factors to this assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extensive income raising activities undertaken by the organisation as a whole • robust evidence of high dependence on recruitment and retention of volunteers throughout the organisation • evidence of activity to generate opportunities for joint-working with other agencies • consistent and timely submission of data • exceeded specified outputs in service specification targets
<p>Equality Impact Analysis 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 Severe 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>

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	<p>lifestyles and require this service to provide stability, structure and enablement. Therefore there would be a disproportionate impact on this particular group.</p>
Alternative Service Provision/Duplication	<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>
Single Interest groups	<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>
Recommendation	<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>11) Homestart</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><u>Financial and savings analysis</u></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>Performance Assessment</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"> • consistently meets or exceeds service specification targets and outcomes • monitoring information provided in full and on time. • 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 • evidence of collaboration with 11 of the 15 children's centres to support hard to reach families and referrals from broad range of agencies • quality assurance in place
<p>Equality Impact Analysis</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>

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	Assessed as Minimal – 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.
Alternative Service Provision/Duplication	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.
Single Interest groups	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.
Recommendation	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. It is recommended that a minimum of 10% funding is withdrawn 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>12) Watford Philharmonic Provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rehearsal and performance opportunities of classical music repertoire for members; • classical choral and orchestral concerts for members of the public in Watford; and • on an occasional basis, other opportunities to bring music to the local community. 	<p><u>Financial and savings analysis</u> 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>Performance Assessment Scale A - D Excellent - Poor</p>	<p>Assessed as a B - contributing factors to this assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good evidence of reliance on increasing number of volunteers and minimal paid for professional involvement • regularly submits information within requested deadlines • overall are meeting service specification targets revised as a result of the loss of access to Colosseum during refurbishment • evidence of collaboration in relation to the performance of free concerts within the town • limited capacity to acquire quality standard accreditation.
<p>Equality Impact Analysis 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 Minimal – The equality data indicates that many users fall within an older</p>

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	<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>
Alternative Service Provision/Duplication	<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>
Single Interest groups	<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>
Recommendation	<p>It is recommended that a minimum of 10% funding is withdrawn, 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>13) Watford Recycling Arts Project Provides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a warehouse for the storage of recyclable materials; • undertakes workshops to promote WRAP and recycling; • volunteering opportunities; and • develops relationships with the business community from whom it collects recyclable materials. • Enabling Arts and community activity with educational establishments and arts & community groups 	<p><u>Financial and savings analysis</u> 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>Performance Assessment Scale A - D Excellent - Poor</p>	<p>Assessed as a B - contributing factors to this assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good evidence of reliance on increasing number of volunteers to maintain its operation • moving towards and building upon an enterprise model for future income raising • evidence of collaboration in relation to arts performance opportunities within the town and with businesses in relation to the provision of recyclable materials • limited capacity to acquire quality standard accreditation. • Some delays in the submission of information within requested deadlines attributed to capacity and relocation.
<p>Equality Impact Analysis</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>

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	<p>Assessed as Minimal – 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>
Alternative Service Provision/Duplication	<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>
Single Interest groups	<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>
Recommendation	<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>It is therefore recommended that a 10% reduction in funding support is agreed.</p>

<p>14) Watford Women’s Centre Provides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:2:1 drop in support for women in a crisis • Provision of range of information • 1:2:1 counselling sessions • Internet access sessions • Information, Advice and Guidance • Volunteering • ESOL 	<p>Financial and savings analysis 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>Performance Assessment Scale A - D Excellent - Poor</p>	<p>Assessed as an A – contributing factors to this assessment are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consistently meets or exceeds service specification targets and outcomes • continuous review and adaptation of service delivery to changing needs • demonstrable commitment to reducing dependency on grant funding • robust volunteers position • evidence of extensive collaboration • quality assurance in place
<p>Equality Impact Analysis 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 Severe – The main users of the service are women - 94.4% of users - (although there is an outreach service for men). For the period 1st July 2010 – 31st</p>

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	<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>
Alternative Service Provision/Duplication	<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>
Single Interest groups	<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>Recommendation</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, 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.</p> <p>This takes into account the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ address the equality impact analysis particularly in relation to the impact on vulnerable women suffering domestic violence ▪ enable the organisation to review and take action to create a sustainable business plan for the future <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>