

Update on the long-term impact on the four organisations which would be subject to the largest cuts

This update provides a brief summary of the impact of funding cuts to Watford Women's Centre, Watford Muslim Community Project, Multi Cultural Community Centre and Watford African Caribbean Association.

Watford Women's Centre (WWC)

Funding situation

Funding to WWC was reduced by 50% for the period April 2013 to March 2014. The organisation receives a direct grant of £44,000 and accommodation costs of £26,000. WBC officers have continued to offer support and have met with WWC on a quarterly basis.

Impact of reduction in funding

WWC have been very proactive in addressing the situation through the following mechanisms.

1. Conducted an internal review of service provision to identify where savings could be made;
2. Working collaboratively with the Stevenage Women's Centre to jointly put forward proposals for future funding;
3. Approached the new Police Commissioner who has funding for community safety;
4. Secured new premises which was gifted to WWC;
5. Secured Big Lottery funding for a Volunteer Co-ordinator
6. Have launched a charity shop and an EBay shop to increase income
7. Using reserves to meet costs;
8. Negotiated a reduction in rent costs with WBC property services.

Watford Muslim Community Project (WMCP)

Funding situation

WBC have provided no funding to WMCP since April 2012. WBC officers continued to have contact through face to face meetings as well as email correspondence. The Resilience Officer also offered support to the organisation.

£30,000 was allocated to the Citizen's Advice Bureau to operate a culturally sensitive outreach session in West Watford to mitigate the impact on users of WMCP in the event that they ceased providing services.

Impact of reduction in funding

The decision to cease funding has had a significant effect on WMCP. As a result WMCP made the decision to close in mid March 2013.

Prior to the closure, they were receiving support from Watford and Three Rivers Trust particularly with regard to help with funding and dealing with assets and documentation when winding up a business.

One of their employees now works for Watford and Three Rivers Trust in a different capacity.

WBC officers are meeting with the Chair of WMCP's management committee on 15 July to finalise handing over of keys and confirm all financial liabilities have been met including outstanding use and occupation and utility payments.

Multi Cultural Community Centre (MCCC)

Funding situation

MCCC received transitional funding for the period April 2012 to March 2013 for redesigning their building to make it more sustainable for future service delivery. They were also awarded £2960 from the Annual Fund to develop a business plan. WBC officers and the Resilience Officer offered support and monitored progress with the renovations and business plan through the period April 2012 to March 2013.

Impact of reduction in funding

MCCC completed renovations to the building which included asbestos removal, improved signage and dividing the main hall into two usable spaces. They reported that these changes have had a positive effect in improving morale of staff and trustees and providing an opportunity for bringing in additional income.

A consultant assisted MCCC with the completion of a strategic plan for the period 2013-17 which included an action plan for 2013-14. The consultant identified key areas that MCCC needed to work on if they were to be successful in achieving a thriving and sustainable future. These key areas were financial management; governance and centre management; partnership working and improving quality.

Watford African Caribbean Association (WACA)

Funding situation

WACA received transitional funding for the period April 2012 to March 2013 to facilitate their ongoing outreach work, make redundancy payments and assist with their move from 16 Clarendon Road to the Holywell Community Centre and make rent payments to Watford and Three Rivers Trust. The organisation also wished to do some needs analysis work to inform the shape of their future services. They were also awarded £3000 to undertake a pilot project to set up a community cafe. WBC officers and the Resilience Officer offered support and monitored progress through the period April 2012 to March 2013.

Impact of reduction in funding

WACA used the funding as outlined above and are still in the process of reviewing their services. Despite recruiting last October, they have had further staff changes so have not made the progress anticipated with the review of their services. This has also impacted on their lack of progress with

the pilot project. WBC Officers are now seeking to claw back the unspent funds.

WACA have continued to operate and co-ordinate their existing projects, namely the Supplementary School, Luncheon Club, Sickle Cell & Thalassemia Support Group and the Carers and Befriending Project. The priority for the organisation is the needs analysis work and they are using the remaining transitional money, approximately £3,000 to use the services of a consultant to complete this task.