

## Record of individual Cabinet member decision

Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

<b>Decision made by</b>	Bethia Thomas, Leader of the Council
<b>Key decision?</b>	Yes
<b>Date of decision</b> (same as date form signed)	23 January 2024
<b>Name and job title of officer requesting the decision</b>	Jayne Bolton, Community Wellbeing Manager, Policy and Programmes Team Report author: Cheryl Reeves, Community Enablement Team Leader
<b>Officer contact details</b>	Tel: 07717271911 Email: <a href="mailto:Jayne.bolton@southandvale.gov.uk">Jayne.bolton@southandvale.gov.uk</a>
<b>Decision</b>	<p>To approve the Partnership Grant awards for 2024-25 until 2028-29 to the following organisations as listed in appendix one, subject to annual budget review and approval at full Council each year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oxfordshire South and Vale Citizens Advice (OSAV CA) - £460,000</li> <li>• Vale Community Impact (VCI) - £300,000</li> </ul> <p>To delegate authority to the Service Manager for Community Wellbeing, Policy and Programmes Team to agree and amend the performance targets for the organisations, during the five-year period of funding.</p>
<b>Reasons for decision</b>	<p><a href="#">Cabinet</a> approved the five-year Partnership Grant Policy in June 2023, starting in April 2024.</p> <p>The policy provides revenue grant support for organisations providing information and advice services across the district, in relation to those who are most in need due to inequalities from the cost-of-living crisis and/or other national issues.</p> <p>The grant scheme opened on the 24 July 2023 and closed on the 18 September 2023. OSAV CA and VCI submitted applications to the value of £760,000 against a five-year budget of £774,600.</p> <p>Officers assessed the applications against the scoring criteria of the policy. These were also reviewed by the Community Enablement Team Leader, the Community Wellbeing Service Manager and Head of Service</p>

	<p>for Policy and Programmes.</p> <p>On the 18 December 2023, the Partnership Grant Panel reviewed the draft scores submitted by officers, against the scoring criteria of the policy, to make recommendations to the Leader of the Council.</p> <p>The Council recognises the pressure on organisations of increasing demand for services, when grant funding remains the same or similar each year.</p> <p>The annual review of the grants budget in September each year, will allow for possible award increases should either organisation be able to show in their midterm monitoring meetings that the costs for delivering the services have increased. Or indeed provide the opportunity to discuss the harsh reality that the budget may need to be redeployed should the councils overarching budgetary situation change during the five years.</p> <p>Legal agreements will include the conditions of award and will reflect that the funding awarded is not a guaranteed annual commitment for the life of the grant, rather an intent. This model is currently understood by the organisations. They are reliant on the councils' budget setting process each year.</p>
<b>Alternative options rejected</b>	<p>Not to award the full grant request was rejected as both applicants submitted strong applications, each scoring 31/35. Therefore, they are considered a high priority and can be awarded up to the full amount requested.</p>
<b>Legal implications</b>	<p>In accordance with the Subsidy Control Act 2022, officers have carried out an assessment and determined that the grant awards are not considered a 'Subsidy' under the Act.</p> <p>Legal agreements are currently being drafted and will be signed by each organisation, setting out the conditions of award and the targets they will be monitoring against twice a year.</p> <p>As mentioned above, this will reflect that the funding awarded is not a guaranteed annual commitment for the life of the grant, rather an intent.</p>
<b>Financial implications</b>	<p>The council has had an ongoing partnership grants budget to fund voluntary organisations for several years now. £154,920 per annum is included in the medium-term financial plan for 2024/2025 to 2028/2029 (£774,600), subject to annual review and approval by full Council when setting its budget.</p>
<b>Climate and ecological implications</b>	<p>Applicants outlined their organisations active response to the Climate emergency within their application.</p> <p>The Climate teams comments and recommendations were included within the non-scoring elements of the board papers for consideration by the Partnership Grant Panel.</p> <p>Recommendations to further advance their Climate commitment have been shared with the organisations. This will also form part of the annual monitoring meetings with the organisations.</p>

<b>Equalities implications</b>	The grant awards will help the organisations to support those most in need due to inequalities from the cost of living or other national issues.			
<b>Other implications</b>	<p>The main risk of the commitment to funding these organisations for five years, is the possibility they don't deliver against their agreed targets and as a result our residents don't receive the valuable services they need. However, both organisations have a good track record of providing an excellent service to our residents and achieving their targets. Alongside being responsive to any national and/or local issues and being able to pivot their service accordingly.</p> <p>We will continue to mitigate against this through regular on-going dialogue and performance monitoring meetings throughout the five-year period to understand current pressures and to help identify workable solutions. We also can reduce or stagger their payments should the need arise.</p> <p>Oxfordshire South and Vale Citizens Advice occupy part of the ground floor at Abbey House under an expired lease. Strategic Property are in discussions with CAB regarding a new five-year lease.</p>			
<b>Background papers considered</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board papers and appendix for OSAV CA and VCI</li> <li>• Partnership Grant Panel meeting notes 18 December 2023</li> </ul>			
<b>Declarations/ conflict of interest? Declaration of other councillor/ officer consulted by the Cabinet member?</b>	Cabinet member for Health and Community Wellbeing – Cllr Helen Pighills has a conflict of interest with one of the organisations. Therefore, Cllr Pighills attended the panel, but did not take part in the discussion or recommendations.			
<b>List consultees</b>		<b>Name</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Date</b>
	Legal <a href="mailto:legal@southandvale.gov.uk">legal@southandvale.gov.uk</a>	Pat Connell	Approved	12/1/24
	Finance <a href="mailto:Finance@southandvale.gov.uk">Finance@southandvale.gov.uk</a>	Roger McLeod	Approved	8/1/24
	Climate and biodiversity <a href="mailto:climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk">climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk</a>	Kim Hall	Approved	4/1/24
	Diversity and equality <a href="mailto:equalities@southandvale.gov.uk">equalities@southandvale.gov.uk</a>	Equalities	Approved	9/1/24
	Property <a href="mailto:property@southandvale.gov.uk">property@southandvale.gov.uk</a>	Karen Lister, Strategic Property Manager	Approved	12/1/24
		SMT	Approved	17/1/24

<b>Confidential decision?</b> If so, under which exempt category?	N/A
<b>Call-in waived by Scrutiny Committee chairman?</b>	No
<b>Has this been discussed by Cabinet members?</b>	Yes – the Partnership Grants Panel consists of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cabinet member for Health and Community Wellbeing</li> <li>• Cabinet member for Finance</li> <li>• Chair of Scrutiny</li> </ul>
<b>Cabinet portfolio holder's signature</b> To confirm the decision as set out in this notice.	Signature _Councillor Bethia Thomas (via email)  Date __23 January 2024_____

**ONCE SIGNED, THIS FORM MUST BE HANDED TO DEMOCRATIC SERVICES IMMEDIATELY.**

For Democratic Services office use only		
Form received	Date: 23 January 2024	Time: 14:45
Date published to all councillors	Date: 23 January 2024	
Call-in deadline	Date: 31 January 2024	Time: 17:00

## Guidance notes

1. This form must be completed by the lead officer who becomes the contact officer. The lead officer is responsible for ensuring that the necessary internal consultees have signed it off, including the chief executive. The lead officer must then seek the Cabinet portfolio holder's agreement and signature.
2. Once satisfied with the decision, the Cabinet portfolio holder must hand-sign and date the form and return it to the lead officer who should send it to Democratic Services immediately to allow the call-in period to commence.  
Tel. 01235 422520.  
Email: [democratic.services@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@southandvale.gov.uk)
3. Democratic Services will then publish the decision to the website (unless it is confidential) and send it to all councillors to commence the call-in period (five clear working days) if it is a 'key' decision (see the definition of a 'key' decision below). A key decision cannot be implemented until the call-in period expires. The call-in procedure can be found in the council's constitution, part 4, under the Scrutiny Committee procedure rules.
4. Before implementing a key decision, the lead officer is responsible for checking with Democratic Services that the decision has not been called in.
5. If a key decision has been called in, Democratic Services will notify the lead officer and decision-maker. This call-in puts the decision on hold.
6. Democratic Services will liaise with the Scrutiny Committee chairman over the date of the call-in debate. The Cabinet portfolio holder will be requested to attend the Scrutiny Committee meeting to answer the committee's questions.
7. The Scrutiny Committee may:
  - refer the decision back to the Cabinet portfolio holder for reconsideration or
  - refer the matter to Council with an alternative set of proposals (where the final decision rests with full Council) or
  - accept the Cabinet portfolio holder's decision, in which case it can be implemented immediately.

## Key decisions: assessing whether a decision should be classified as 'key'

The South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils' Constitutions now have the same definition of a key decision:

**A key decision is a decision of the Cabinet, an individual Cabinet member, or an officer acting under delegated powers, which is likely:**

- (a) to incur expenditure, make savings or to receive income (except government grant) of more than £75,000;**

- (b) to award a revenue or capital grant of over £25,000; or**
- (c) to agree an action that, in the view of the chief executive or relevant head of service, would be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising more than one ward in the area of the council.**

Key decisions are subject to the scrutiny call-in procedure; non-key decisions are not and can be implemented immediately.

In assessing whether a decision should be classified as 'key', you should consider:

- (a) Will the expenditure, savings or income total more than £75,000 across all financial years?
- (b) Will the grant award to one person or organisation be more than £25,000 across all financial years?
- (c) Does the decision impact on more than one district council ward? And if so, is the impact significant? If residents or property affected by the decision is in one ward but is close to the border of an adjacent ward, it may have a significant impact on that second ward, e.g. through additional traffic, noise, light pollution, odour. Examples of significant impacts on two or more wards are:
  - Decisions to spend Didcot Garden Town funds (significant impact on more than one ward)
  - Changes to the household waste collection policy (affects all households in the district)
  - Reviewing a housing strategy (could have a significant impact on residents in many wards)
  - Adopting a supplementary planning document for a redevelopment site (could significantly affect more than one ward) or a new design guide (affects all wards)
  - Decisions to build new or improve existing leisure facilities (used by residents of more than one ward)

**The overriding principle is that before 'key' decisions are made, they must be published in the Cabinet Work Programme for 28 calendar days. Classifying a decision as non-key when it should be a key decision could expose the decision to challenge and delay its implementation.**