



Changes to the Culture and Communities Grants affecting Whitchurch Silk Mill

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Department: Culture, Communities and Business Services

Date of assessment: 18/12/2018

Description of current service/policy

The Recreation and Heritage Investment Fund supports Hampshire's strategic cultural and recreational organisations delivering high-quality programmes of regional/national significance. It is an annual fund; organisations must apply each year.

Whitchurch Silk Mill is a living industrial museum of the history, production, design, distribution and sale of silk.

In 2018/19 it was awarded £19,265, 12% of budget, and advised the maximum award available by 2020/21 would be £15,412. It should be noted that funding has already been agreed, up to and including 2020/21, for two further financial years.

Geographical impact: Basingstoke & Deane

Description of proposed change

Over the next three years the Council will need to reduce its budget by a further £80 million having already reduced it by £480 million since 2008. For the services within the Executive Member for Recreation and Heritage's portfolio the Medium Term Financial Strategy approved by the County Council in September confirmed this will mean a further 13% reduction in departmental cash limits.

It is therefore proposed to change the way grants operate from 2020/21, moving away from annual revenue grants to one-off project grants which help organisations transform their operation and become self-supporting in the future. The organisation would be able to apply to this funding.

Impacts of the proposed change

This impact assessment covers Service users

Engagement and consultation

Has engagement or consultation been carried out? Yes

The Company has been informed of the future changes to the Grants scheme in September 2018, via a letter from the Executive Member for Recreation and Heritage. A subsequent visit by the Executive Member took place in November 2018.

Statutory considerations	Impact	Mitigation
Age: Low	There is a risk that due to reduced funding the organisation may reduce its training opportunities for young people. It may reduce or withdraw its targeted activities for children, families and/or older people.	
Disability: Neutral		
Sexual orientation: Neutral		
Race: Neutral		
Religion and belief: Neutral		

Gender reassignment: Neutral		
Gender: Neutral		
Marriage and civil partnership: Neutral		
Pregnancy and maternity: Neutral		
Other policy considerations	Impact	Mitigation
Poverty: Neutral		
Rurality: Neutral		

Any other information

From Oct 2017 to September 2018 the Mill closed for a major refurbishment 'Preserving the Fabric' supported by £1.6m from the Heritage Lottery Fund. This has resulted in improvements to access, visitor facilities and income generation opportunities through weaving, catering and retail and increased visitor numbers. The associated Activity Plan runs to 2020/21.

In 2019/20 the organisation predicts visitor numbers of 28,664 and its business plan aims to sustain operating costs through generated income by 2026. It has two months running costs in free reserves and employs nine members of staff.