



TAMESIDE METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL

Scrutiny Review of the Effectiveness of the Tameside Third Sector Coalition (T3SC) on behalf of the Executive Board.

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1. INTRODUCTION BY THE CHAIR



The Resources and Community Services Scrutiny Panel is pleased to present its report on The Effectiveness of the Tameside Third Sector Coalition, to the Executive Board.

I would sincerely like to thank all of the Elected Members on the Panel and Mr John Barlow, a representative of the voluntary and community sector who had been invited to join the Panel for the duration of the review, who had all worked extremely hard in order to enable this report to be completed on time; and the Scrutiny Support team and all the officers of the Council who have collated and dissected all the detailed information necessary for this review at such short notice. Finally, I would like to thank officers from the Third Sector Coalition for their full co-operation throughout this review.

With our report and its findings now complete, we hope that the Executive Board is now able to make an informed decision on the issue of future financial support for the Tameside Third Sector Coalition.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Gwynne'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the left and right.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW GWYNNE
Chair of the Resources and Community Services Scrutiny Panel

2. SUMMARY

At its meeting held on 4th February 2004, the Executive Board considered a report which detailed the development of the community and voluntary sector in Tameside and the formation of the Tameside Third Sector Coalition (T3SC) as the Tameside Council for Voluntary Service (CVS). The report also related to a request from T3SC for core funding from the Council, to enable it to receive funding from the National Lotteries Community Fund and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister Infrastructure Fund.

The Executive Board did not make a decision on the funding request, and asked this Scrutiny Panel to review the effectiveness of T3SC and report back to the Board.

Members of the Scrutiny Panel were very aware that they could only undertake a very limited review in the short amount of time available and that the Council's budget had been agreed and funding had, therefore, not been identified for this purpose.

The Scrutiny Panel had commissioned a telephone survey of 200 voluntary and community organisations and groups in support of a separate review of grant funding and funding advice and therefore, was able to include questions about the effectiveness of T3SC. Members of the Panel also interviewed the Cabinet Deputy (Community Services), Director of T3SC and officers of the Council. Consultations were also undertaken with Greater Manchester and other 'excellent' councils. It was clear that all the councils responding supported their Council for Voluntary Service to a higher level of funding than Tameside.

The outcome of the consultation and research indicates that in the comparatively short time that T3SC has been in existence it has met the targets set by the Council with regard to funding applications from the lottery for voluntary and community sector. It has also met and exceeded targets of other funding bodies.

The Panel felt that if core funding was approved there needed to be clear and unambiguous targets and outcomes for T3SC which linked into the Local Strategic Partnership. It was also felt that T3SC and the Tameside Association of Community Organisations (TACO) should work in a closer and complementary partnership.

3. MEMBERSHIP OF THE PANEL

Councillor A J Gwynne (Chair), Councillors Duffy, P Harrison, A Holland, M J Smith, Walsh, Welsh and K Wright

Mr John Barlow – Voluntary and Community Sector Representative

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The following Terms of Reference were approved at a meeting of the Panel held on 12th February 2004 (appended to this report as Appendix One).

Terms of Reference

“To review the effectiveness of the Tameside Third Sector Coalition (T3SC) on behalf of the Executive Board”.

Objectives

- A. To establish the background of the T3SC, including the services it currently provides, and the nature of the voluntary and community sector in Tameside.**
- B. To assess the current performance of the T3SC and to continue to monitor performance over the next 10 months as necessary.**
- C. To compare the approach and arrangements between Tameside Council and the T3SC with those of other local authorities and the equivalent of the T3SC in these areas.**
- D. To establish the consequences to all stakeholders of the Council funding or not funding the T3SC.**

5. METHODOLOGY

5.1 At separate meetings, the Panel met with the following people:-

Councillor P Wilkinson, Cabinet Deputy, Community Services, with responsibility for liaison with the voluntary and community sectors, including the Tameside Compact.

Moira Cunningham, Director of the Tameside 3rd Sector Coalition.

Phil Spence, Community Economic Development Manager, Tameside MBC.

Common themes to these meetings were:-

- The background to the establishment of the T3SC
- Characteristics of the voluntary and community sector
- The Council’s approach to and arrangements with the T3SC for comparison with other local authorities
- Consequences of the Council funding or not funding the T3SC

- 5.2 The Panel received information on the characteristics of the voluntary and community sector in Tameside and support services available to voluntary and community groups in Tameside.
- 5.3 Consultation was undertaken by way of a telephone survey with two hundred randomly selected local voluntary and community organisations in the borough and registered on the T3SC database. The survey sought views on the support available from the Tameside Third Sector Coalition, including experience of this support, outcomes and suggested improvements.
- 5.4 The Panel compared funding arrangements with some other 'excellent' local authorities and Greater Manchester authorities
- 5.5 The Panel received information from a meeting which had taken place with the Head of Scrutiny and Ms Barbara Lowndes of the Tameside Association of Community Organisations (TACO). Information was received as to the background to TACO and its views on the establishment and work of the Tameside Council for Voluntary Service (T3SC).

6. BACKGROUND TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE TAMESIDE THIRD SECTOR COALITION

- 6.1 In 1998, the government published a "Compact on Relations between Government and the Voluntary and Community Sector in England". From the initial national Compact, progress was made towards developing Local Compacts which would bring together the voluntary and community sector (the 'third' sector) in each local authority area, together with the statutory agencies that they relate to.
- 6.2 The purpose of the Compact is to shape the way in which the relationships between those agencies are constructively developed in order to maximise the benefits for residents of the area.
- 6.3 The Compact gives recognition to the contribution of the voluntary and community sectors, and values them as equal partners in improving the quality of life of Tameside residents.
- 6.4 In 2000, the voluntary and community sector in Tameside was without effective and accountable representation and leadership, was not able to identify or work to meet its own needs, did not have sufficient infrastructure support and was largely dependent on the Council for funding.
- 6.5 The report to the Executive Board describes from 2000, the Council with the voluntary and community sector adopted a 'two pronged approach ' to

the development of the third sector in Tameside. A Compact was agreed between the third sector and statutory agencies which set out how all sides would work together for the benefit of the whole borough. Out of the development of the Compact it was recognised that an infrastructure agency was needed to deliver support to the voluntary and community sector to enable it to grow both in size and strength. This agency became the T3SC and was funded by external funding and the Council. The T3SC was constituted in 2002 and established as Tameside's Council for Voluntary Services in late 2002.

6.6 At this time local strategic partnerships were formed across the country. In some areas, including Tameside, accredited partnerships could access the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund to address local disadvantage. In order to become accredited and therefore access this funding LSPs needed to demonstrate that there was a voluntary and community sector network operating in the area which had a link to the LSP. In Tameside this was shown through the existence of the T3SC and the networks the organisation planned to establish. The Tameside LSP was therefore able to achieve accreditation and draw down funds in to the borough.

6.7 Recent development in government policy places a clear role for the voluntary and community sector in community development. The report to the Executive Board points to the recommendations made in the Treasury Report, published in late 2002 ("The Role of the Voluntary and Community Sector in Service Delivery, a Cross Cutting Review") as an indication of government policy towards the third sector. Out of the report came a number of initiatives with related funding totaling £243 million going into the sector over a three-year period.

6.8 A key recommendation of the report was the need for a 'sustainable baseline of infrastructure support' for the voluntary and community sector at local level. This support is defined as:-

- Advice and Information Support
- Co-ordination and networking, including strategic partnership work
- Representation and Leadership
- Development and Research
- Promoting and developing volunteering

6.9 The report to the Executive Board describes how many of the support services identified by the Treasury Report are now available in Tameside, largely due to the creation of the T3SC. The following are available in Tameside.

- One access point for information and advice for voluntary and community groups and for officers and members wishing to refer groups seeking advice.
- A regular newsletter for the voluntary and community sector with a circulation of over 800 groups.
- A database of over 800 groups which helps strategic planning.

- A local NVQ accredited training for voluntary and community groups.
- A voluntary and community sector network to help share learning and provide opportunities for shared working (e.g Community Transport).
- A developed voluntary and community sector forum necessary for the accreditation of the Tameside Strategic Partnership.
- Greater co-ordination of the sector and its representatives to enable greater involvement in the development of the borough.
- A Compact between the voluntary and community sector and statutory partners.

Conclusion

- 1. There is a clear need for a vibrant community and voluntary sector and appropriate mechanisms to be in place to support and grow this area.**

7. PERFORMANCE OF THE T3SC AND FUTURE ACTIVITY

7.1 The Scrutiny Panel received a copy of the T3SC first annual review which outlines the achievements of the T3SC in its first operational year 2002/03.

7.2 During 2002/03 the T3SC achieved the following outcomes:-

- Delivered over 200 training and advice sessions on a variety of subjects (including legal and constitutional issues, business planning, funding, facilitation skills, Child Protection Policy and Procedures, team leadership);
- Provided development and administration support to the fifteen forums and networks which represent the different elements of the voluntary and community sector (including the eight Area Community Forums, the BME Network and the Health Network);
- Supported voluntary and community sector representatives on the Local Strategic Partnership and subgroups;
- Completed a 'mapping exercise' of voluntary and community groups in Tameside to help future planning of support services;
- Developed further the links with organisations in neighbouring authorities, attended regular meetings on a Greater Manchester level, and has been represented on the national scene;

- Provided specialist support to around 285 voluntary and community sector groups which deal specifically with health and social care;
- Continued the development of the Tameside Compact.

7.3 In order to continue and extend the support services it currently provides, the T3SC has approached the Council for core funding.

7.4 The Report to Executive Board recommended that “the Board consider a three year contract for funding the shortfall in finance that T3SC will require which could be as high as £104,000 per annum, the final sum of money to be dependant on the results of their bids for external funding”.

7.5 The current service contract between the Council and Tameside Third Sector Coalition runs from the period 1st April 2002 to 31st March 2004.

7.6 The Council agreed to pay T3SC £12,000 per year for the following service provision:-

Provision of free, confidential impartial funding advice and guidance regarding National Lottery distributors in particular and Community Fund, Awards For All and Regional Arts Lottery programme and support to voluntary and community groups in Tameside in making applications to these funds.

7.7 The Contract contains a series of detailed monitoring and evaluation measures. However, following discussion with the Economic Development Officer overseeing the Contract, there was room for improving the monitoring systems and updating the requirements of the Contract. The Panel was informed that this contract was not to be renewed as funding is no longer available to support this work.

7.8 The data collected to record the performance of this contract with the T3SC includes support provided on a one-to-one basis, at surgeries (events where the T3SC Funding Advice Worker had carried out outreach work), and through other forms of contact (telephone, email etc). There are no targets attached to this contract. Performance for the period January 2003 – December 2003 was as follows:

Type of Support	Number of Groups Supported	
	Community Fund	Awards for All
One-to-one	11	29
Surgeries	12	13
Other forms of contact	11	3
	No Community Fund grants have been awarded	6 community and voluntary groups have received grants from Awards for All (total value £17,758)

- 7.9 No data has been provided by the T3SC to the Council's Economic Development Unit for support to groups applying to the Arts Council.
- 7.10 The Economic Development Unit also collects performance monitoring information for the support provided by the Economic Development Unit and the T3SC combined. Performance monitoring data for a period April 2002 – March 2003 indicated that the target for voluntary and community organisations applying for funds through the T3SC and the Economic Development Unit combined was met (14% target, 14.11% actual). The number of organisations actually receiving an award from the lottery was exceeded (3% target, 4.2% actual). These performance measures are included in the Council's Economic Development Strategy.
- 7.11 During this period there was no Lottery Officer at the Council and therefore the T3SC provided support to applications at this time.
- 7.12 In addition to the contractual payment for service provision, the Council provided a grant of £5,000 to the T3SC in 2002/03 to assist with initial startup costs.
- 7.13 The total income for the T3SC up to 31st March 2003 was just over £251,000 forming income generation, recharges and interest. Of this, £234,000 was in the form of grants. The balance remaining on 31st March 2003 was just over £69,000.
- 7.14 Funding for the work of the T3SC has been provided by:-
- The Tameside Valley Partnership
 - European Social Fund
 - Neighbourhood Renewal (Community Empowerment Fund) via Government Office North West
 - Tameside MBC (for Lottery Advice Work)
 - Tameside Social Services
 - Tameside and Glossop Primary Care Trust
- 7.15 The targets for service delivery using the funds provided by the Tame Valley Partnerships were set by the T3SC and were all exceeded. The targets for service delivery using funds provided by the other sources listed above have been flexible and less prescriptive due to both the organisation and the type of work being relatively new.
- 7.16 The T3SC expects to deliver the following projects between April 2004 and March 2006:
- Health and Social Care Project (£82,000pa contract with the Primary Care Trust and Tameside Social Services)
 - Community Participation Project (£306,411 Government fund for the administration and distribution of grants to voluntary and community groups)

- Tameside Community Care Trust (£500,000 for the creation and administration of a source of grants to voluntary and community groups)
- Community Chest (£95,000 for the creation and administration of source of grants to voluntary and community groups)
- Community Learning Chest (£50,000 for the creation and administration of a source of grants to voluntary and community groups)

7.17

An important role of the T3SC is to work with other partners in the borough including other voluntary and community sector support agencies. Members were informed that in addition to the T3SC, TACO provided support and advice to mainly smaller community organisations which included the provision of funding advice and constitutional matters.

Conclusions

2. **That although it is very early in the operation of the T3SC to make long term judgments about the performance it has successfully undertaken work required in this relatively short time.**
3. **There appears to be some overlap of activity between TACO and T3SC.**

Recommendations

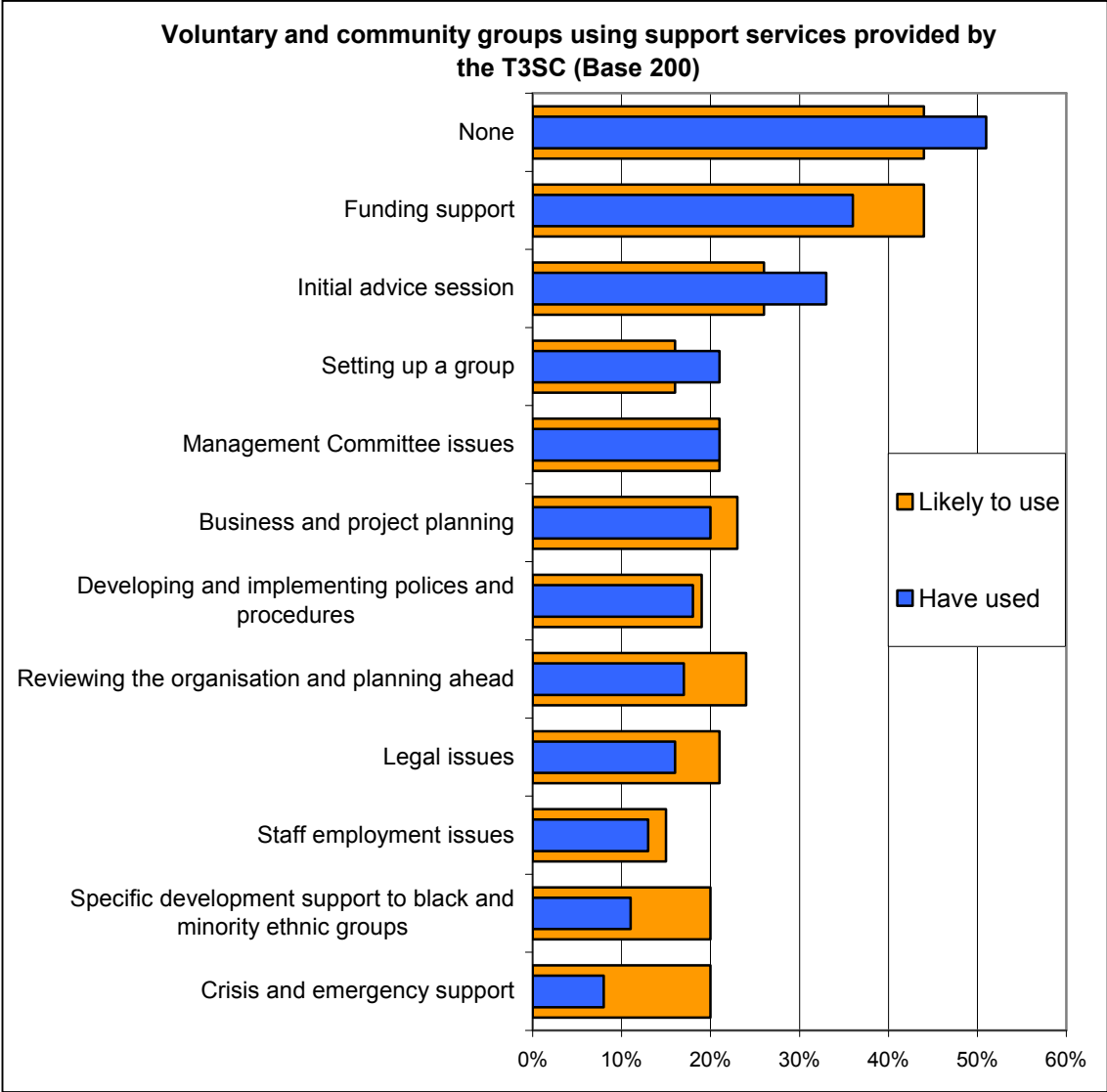
1. **Should the Executive Board agree to core fund the T3SC then clear unambiguous outcomes related to Council priorities should be agreed.**
2. **There needs to be genuine partnership working with all voluntary and community sector support organisations.**

8. CONSULTATION

8.1 The Scrutiny Panel undertook a consultation exercise with local voluntary and community groups as part of two related Scrutiny reviews – the review of the provision of funding and funding advice by Tameside Council to the voluntary and community sector, and also the review of the effectiveness of the Tameside Third Sector Coalition (T3SC) on behalf of the Executive Board.

8.2 A telephone survey was carried out with two hundred randomly selected local voluntary and community organisations on the database held by the Tameside Third Sector Coalition.

- 8.3 The questions were designed by the Scrutiny Support Unit and a private market research company, PH Research (Oldham), was commissioned to carry out this survey.
- 8.4 The telephone interviews included questions relating to the support available from the Tameside Third Sector Coalition, experience of this support, outcomes and suggested improvements.
- 8.5 Half of those organisations interviewed had received some form of advice and support from the T3SC. Just over half of those interviewed expected to request some support services from the T3SC in the future. The diagram below indicates the current and future uptake of services provided by the T3SC.



8.6 Overall, those organisations that had used support services were positive about the quality of the help provided. For all services around three quarters of the users of each service rated the service as good or very good.

8.7 Groups were asked to indicate how the advice and information received from the T3SC had helped the organisation. Just under half of the organisations interviewed had received some form of support service from the T3SC. The diagram below illustrates the outcome of the support received.



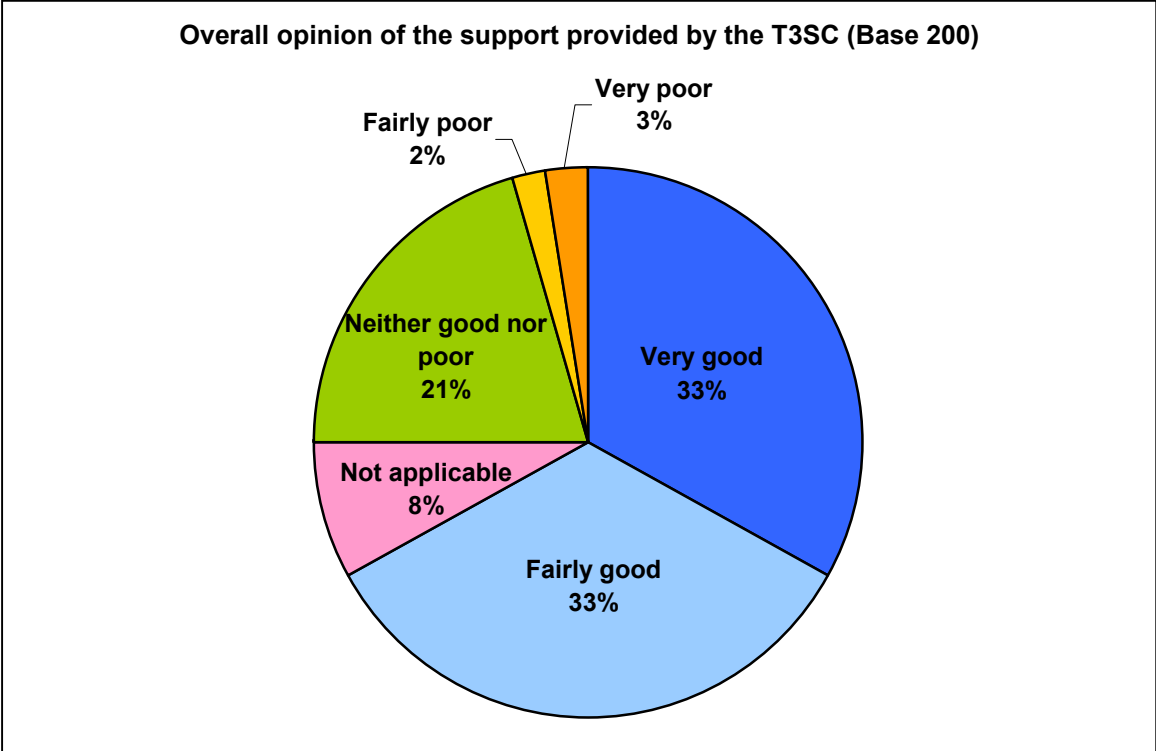
- 8.8 Analysis of the top 3 outcomes of each service shows that despite the support service sought, the outcome was very similar for all services.
- 8.9 For 9 of the 11 services received, groups reported the same top 3 outcomes:

Appropriate funders were identified

Funding bids were made

The organisation now understands its legal duties and responsibilities

- 8.10 This possibly indicates how closely the issue of funding is tied to any issues about which groups go to the T3SC for advice.
- 8.11 Further exploration of the intended outcomes of the services provided is necessary to show whether the services are achieving their aims.
- 8.12 Organisations were asked to rate the support provided by the Tameside Third Sector Coalition overall. Although just half have direct experience of receiving specific support services, this question was put to all groups on the T3SC database to capture a general picture of opinion. The diagram below shows the response from those organisations interviewed.



8.13 When asked how the T3SC could improve the services it currently provides communication and advertising were mentioned by 36% of organisations, followed by support in general (12%), and improvements to financial support (6%).

Conclusions

- 4. **The feedback from the consultation exercise was generally positive and indicates a good take-up of services now and in the future with potential for growth.**
- 5. **The outcome of the support from the T3SC matches the needs identified by the voluntary and community sector, as highlighted in the consultation exercise.**

Recommendations

- 3. **The Council may want to repeat a similar consultation exercise as part of a performance monitoring of the role for the T3SC.**

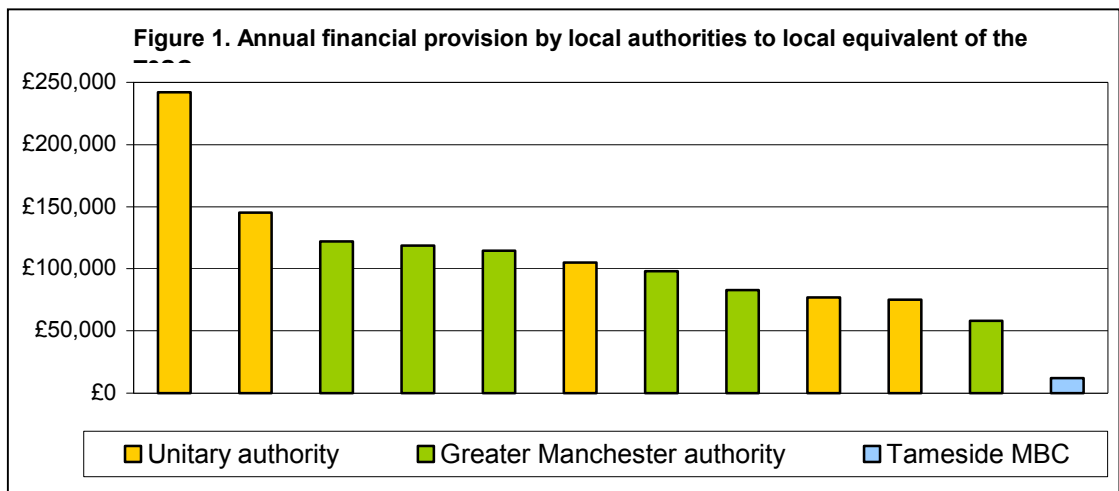
9. COMPARISONS

9.1 The Scrutiny Panel gathered comparative information from other local authorities to establish the level of financial support other local authorities provide to the local equivalent of the T3SC. Information was requested from a selection of other 'excellent' unitary authorities and all Greater Manchester authorities. A total of 11 authorities took part in the benchmarking exercise. These are identified on the map opposite.



9.2 All of those authorities which responded provided some kind of financial support to the local CVS (Council for Voluntary Service). The level of funding ranged from just under £250,000 pa to £58,000 pa (figure 1).

9.3 One authority also contributed funding to three other organisations providing specific support services to the voluntary and community sector in addition to the funding provided to the main infrastructure organisation.



9.4 Councils reported a variety of financial arrangements for the provision of funding from the council to the local CVS including Service Level Agreements, Grants and Awards Schemes, grants given under the terms and conditions of council grant aid, and Funding Agreements.

9.5 Authorities reported a variety of internal support arrangements ranging from dedicated teams, to officers within teams as part of a wider role, and dedicated but individual officers based in services across the council. There did not appear to be any correlation between the level of council resources designated to the support of the voluntary and community sector and the level of financial support provided to a local infrastructure organisation i.e. a high level of financial contribution to a local CVS for the provision of support services to the voluntary and community sector did not necessarily coincide with a low level of resources dedicated to this area.

9.6 Tameside Council has no posts dedicated to voluntary and community sector support. Part of the role of the Community Economic Development Manager is to facilitate the infrastructure development of the sector which has concentrated on the establishment of the T3SC. One Economic Development Officer provides a link role for voluntary and community groups into the council and monitors contracts with voluntary groups for the delivery of Community Legal Services. However, this remains part of a wider role. A relatively small proportion of the work of three Resource Procurement Officers in the Economic Development Unit is allocated to supporting the voluntary and community sector and this is limited to liaison and dissemination of information about major bidding rounds such as Lotteries and European Social Fund.

9.7 Two authorities were particularly clear about the role that the council and the CVS play in supporting the voluntary and community sector:

“...to support infrastructure agencies to lead the sector and deliver training and support services - rather than council departments providing those services - in order to promote and develop an independent voluntary sector.”

(This authority provides just under £115,000 pa to the local CVS)

”The CVS provides the developmental and capacity building support for the voluntary sector and the council works in conjunction with the CVS and does very little direct work with voluntary groups itself.”

(This authority provides just under £150,000 pa to the local CVS)

Conclusions

- 6. That even without the level of funding provided by the Council as compared to that in other local authorities, the T3SC seemed to have provided a good service.**
- 7. In comparison with other authorities consulted during the review the Council does not allocate comparable resources both in terms of Council posts and external support agencies.**

10. CONSEQUENCES OF THE COUNCIL FUNDING OR NOT FUNDING THE T3SC

- 10.1 The Scrutiny Panel considered the consequences to the T3SC, the Council and the voluntary and community sector of the Council providing or not providing financial support to the T3SC.
- 10.2 The T3SC has identified a requirement for core-funding for staff and other running costs over the next three years for up to £104,000 per year and has approached the Council for assistance.
- 10.3 The T3SC has prepared applications to the National Lotteries Community Fund and Office of the Deputy Prime Minister Infrastructure Fund. If these bids are successful this will reduce the level of core-funding required from the Council. In order to secure these funds the Council must demonstrate a financial commitment to the T3SC.
- 10.4 The Infrastructure Fund will fund the management and administrative structures of the T3SC including strategic management and direction, policy work, support to partnerships structures, marketing, monitoring and reporting systems, and financial management. This post, along with a contribution from the Council, would also fund the salaries of the Director, Administrator and two part-time Administrators.

- 10.5 The Community Fund will be used to fund capacity building support to the voluntary and community sector including one-to-one advice and support in securing funding, legal and constitutional issues, and good practice in managing groups. If successful the Community Fund bid will also create the post of Information Worker.
- 10.6 The Panel has learned from the Director of the T3SC, and the Community Economic Development Manager that the T3SC would still exist without Council funding but would not be able to provide the extent of services it currently provides and wishes to develop in the near future.
- 10.7 The report to the Board describes the potential consequences to the organisation of the Council not providing core funding to the T3SC:

“If the Council cannot core fund T3SC it will not be able to attract monies from the Community Fund and the Home Office into the Borough and this will also limit its ability to apply for other funds. This, in turn, will mean that if it survives it will only be able to do very limited work and will not be able to provide the funding, constitutional and legal advice and capacity training to the VCS [voluntary and community sector].”

- 10.8 The Panel was informed that the services that would continue without Council funding would be the Black and Minority Ethnic community capacity building, network development, and some events.
- 10.9 The Director of the T3SC also indicated that there may be redundancies in the organisation.
- 10.10 The extent of the activities of the T3SC in the future is not only determined by Council funding. The T3SC expects to deliver the projects detailed in 7.16 in addition to funding received from the Council and any further funding this may draw down
- 10.11 These funds will be for specific projects and would not be able to be used for any other costs of the T3SC.
- 10.12 The Director of the T3SC explained that without the contribution from the Council funds available from central government, both for the development of the organisation itself, and to the sector directly with the support of the T3SC, would not be drawn into Tameside. This is also reflected in the report to the Board:

“T3SC has shown that it has the ability to support the draw down external funding not just for its own activities but for other organisations. If core funding is not available it will not be able to do this, in particular it will not be able to draw down any of the monies allocated by Central Government as part of its cross-cutting review [referring to the Infrastructure Fund]”.

10.13 The Director of the T3SC described the vision for the organisation in the future as one of a sound organisation providing the right information and the right kind of support and can act as a true intermediary between statutory agencies and the voluntary and community sector.

10.14 The Community Economic Development Manager explained to members of the Panel some of the potential consequences to the voluntary and community sector itself of the Council not providing core funding. Since the community and voluntary sector is an 'ageing' sector, in so far as organisers and membership often does not change over many years and are often older people, a support agency is needed to help groups attract new, younger members able to continue groups in the future otherwise some groups will 'stagnate' and potentially fail completely. The infrastructure agency also supports the mechanisms for electing representatives for the sector. Without these mechanisms the voluntary and community sector in Tameside would be unlikely to have genuine and accountable representatives both at a Tameside, Greater Manchester and regional level.

10.15 The report to the Board describes the consequences to the voluntary and community sector:

"Whilst the VCS [voluntary and community sector] in Tameside will always remain without the support and co-ordination that T3SC provides for the sector we will return to the situation as it was in 2000 and a disengagement from the sector to the Community Strategy".

10.16 The Scrutiny Panel has noted the financial and legal implications to the Council, as authorised by the Borough Treasurer and Borough Solicitor, of the proposal to fund the T3SC. The financial implications in terms of the level of funding relate to the success of other bids made by the T3SC. However, a significant implication identified by the Borough Treasurer is that "there is no provision within the 2004/05 budget for this proposed grant and the proposal has arrived too late in the budgetary process for consideration. " (See also paragraph 11 for the Borough Treasurer's observations on this report).

10.17 This is mirrored in the comments of the Borough Solicitor: "It is necessary for the Council to ensure that it operates within a balanced budget and therefore any decision by the Board to grant funding not agreed in the budget adopted by the full Council will require a Key Decision. However, this will not resolve the issue of where resources are to be reallocated from." The Acting Borough Solicitor was also invited to give her observations on this report.

10.18

The Director of the T3SC also felt that as an 'excellent' authority the Council is judged on its relationships with external groups which are mediated by organisations such as the T3SC.

Conclusions

- 8. That no provision has been made within the Council's 2004/05 budget for this proposed grant and that the proposal has arrived too late in the budgetary process for consideration of a normal funding allocation.**
- 9. That the allocation of core funding to the T3SC will attract significant additional funding.**
- 10. That should funding not be allocated, the T3SC will deliver services for specific activities and not those services for the voluntary and community sector that the Council wishes it to.**
- 11. That the outcome of the effect of the decision of the Executive Board to either fund or not fund the T3SC be subject of a scrutiny review in 9 months.**

Recommendations

- 4. That the findings of the Panel's report be used to inform the decision of the Executive Board.**
- 5. That any funding agreements take into account Council priorities**
- 6. That some broad outcomes of the activities of the T3SC be communicated through the Local Strategic Partnership.**

11. BOROUGH TREASURER'S COMMENTS

The Council made its decision on the budget and the allocation of growth money at its meeting in February this year. My comments at the time that the initial report was presented to the Board are quoted in para.10.16 – that there is no provision for the suggested grant of £104,000 within the 2004/05 budget. The proposal arrived far too late in the budgetary process for consideration.

The Council needs to consider which of the Council's priorities these proposals would help to meet. It needs to determine if the proposals require immediate attention.

If the proposals considered by this report are felt to be of such a high priority that they require to be funded in 2004/05, then other proposals need to be made as to which parts of the budget can be diverted to provide this funding.

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 12.1** Should the Executive Board agree to core fund the T3SC then clear unambiguous outcomes related to Council priorities should be agreed
- 12.2** There needs to be genuine partnership working with all voluntary and community sector support organisations.
- 12.3** The Council may want to repeat a similar consultation exercise as part of a performance monitoring of the role for the T3SC.
- 12.4** That the findings of the Panel's report be used to inform the decision of the Executive Board.
- 12.5** That any funding agreements take into account Council priorities
- 12.6** That some broad outcomes of the activities of the T3SC be communicated through the Local Strategic Partnership.