

SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

BETWEEN

SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

AND

**SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE COMMUNITY
AND VOLUNTARY ACTION (A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

FOR THE PERIOD

1ST APRIL, 2010 – 31ST MARCH, 2013

SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

Between South Staffordshire Council and South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action (a Company Limited by Guarantee) for the period 1st April, 2010 – 31st March, 2013

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE AGREEMENT

- 1.1 To ensure the effective use of grant aid from South Staffordshire Council (the Council) by South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action (a Company Limited by Guarantee).
- 1.2 To maintain and develop a full and effective partnership between South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action and the Council.
- 1.3 To give increased financial security to South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action for the period of the agreement, subject to the functions and objectives set out in this Agreement being fulfilled.

2.0 INDEPENDENT BODIES

- 2.1 The Council recognises that, in order to fulfil its functions and maintain credibility with the diverse agencies with whom it works, South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action will need to maintain independence in the establishment of policy, practice, and development subject to such independence being exercised having regard to and within the scope of this agreement.

3.0 AREAS OF WORK OF SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY ACTION TO BE GRANT AIDED

- 3.1 The areas of work to be grant aided, namely support, development, co-ordination/liaison and representation (the core functions), are set out at 4.0 to 7.1 below.

4.0 SUPPORT

- 4.1 A function of South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action is to give support and encouragement to the establishment and running of community and voluntary organisations within South Staffordshire and South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action will assist such organisations in meeting this by:-

(a) The provision of:-

- Information
- Advice
- Training
- Consultancy
- Co-ordination/Liaison with other voluntary bodies/agencies.

(b) Practical help including:-

- Printing, photocopying
- Hire of various pieces of equipment
- Stationery order service
- Access to Desk Top Publisher

5.0 DEVELOPMENT

5.1 South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action will encourage, facilitate and promote the establishment of new community and voluntary organisations, new services to organisations, and new methods of working.

5.2 This process will involve the review of existing provision, identifying unmet needs and initiating action to meet them, and seeking to achieve a good match between needs and available resources.

5.3 South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action will maintain a directory/data base of South Staffordshire community and voluntary organisations, which will be updated annually, and a copy thereof will be provided to the Council with South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action's annual report. Additionally, South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action will, within the life of this agreement, progress the development of a web-based version of the directory/database.

5.4 Specifically/additionally, South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action will :-

- maintain membership of and actively engage with and participate in the work of the Staffordshire Consortium of Infrastructure Organisations (SCIO).
- continue to actively develop and enhance its relationship with the Council and, in particular, actively engage with and participate in the development of the Council's "Locality" working arrangements and initiatives.
- maintain membership of and actively engage with and participate in the work of the South Staffordshire Local Strategic Partnership (LSP).
- engage with and participate in the work of the Rural Transport Partnership.
- engage with and develop its relationship with the Community Council of Staffordshire and in particular seek and pursue opportunities for joint/collaborative working and avoiding duplication of effort and services, in order to achieve the best use of resources and enhance the support provided by both organisations for the benefit of the community and voluntary sector in South Staffordshire.

6.0 CO-ORDINATION/LIAISON

- 6.1 South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action will encourage the exchange of information and opinion between community and voluntary sector groups and between the community and voluntary and statutory sectors, and the planning of joint action. That activity will include the identification of duplication of voluntary effort and overlapping of functions. South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action will seek to minimise that overlapping through the provision of information and exchange and co-ordination of effort to achieve a better use of resources.
- 6.2 South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action will organise regular special interest meetings, forums (including the holding of an annual forum), or other local arrangements for the discussion of issues and information needs of and with community and voluntary organisations.

7.0 REPRESENTATION

- 7.1 South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action will encourage and act in an enabling role to assist the community and voluntary sector to articulate its views, protect interests, press for change through negotiation and publicity including at times representing collected views with their agreement, on behalf of other organisations to central and local government or other bodies as may be appropriate.

8.0 GRANT AID

- 8.1 The Council will provide grant aid of £11,500 per annum for a three year term commencing 1st April, 2010, and concluding 31st March, 2013 (payable six monthly in advance commencing 1st April in each year) subject to the grant for the years 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 having first been approved under the Council's annual budgetary process in respect of each year. No grant will be paid by the Council until a programme of work, including new development work, for the ensuing financial year, and a review of the previous years programme and development work and attainment thereof, and a summary of small grants made pursuant to paragraph 9.3, has been submitted to and approved by the Deputy Leader (Community Services) of the Council prior to the commencement of the ensuing financial year.
- 8.2 The grant aid provided by the Council is restricted funding and shall be used by South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action as a contribution to funding the core functions referred to in paragraph 3.0 above and within South Staffordshire and for the benefit of South Staffordshire residents only.
- 8.3 South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action acknowledges the support in kind to be given by the Council through the Council's Director of Finance in the carrying out of salary administration on behalf of South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action in respect of its employees (valued at £1,000 per year on 1st April, 2010), the continuation of such support to be entirely at the discretion of the Deputy Leader (Community Services), in consultation with the Director of Finance of the Council.

The Council will, where possible and provided that it can be accommodated within existing resources, seek to provide to South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action additional support in kind/at no cost in such other areas as may be determined by the Deputy Leader (Community Services). The continuation of any such support provided by the Council will be entirely at the discretion of the Deputy Leader (Community Services).

- 8.4 South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action will acknowledge that it is financially supported by South Staffordshire Council in/on all annual reports, letterheads, publications, and signage, for the period of the grant aid.
- 8.5 South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action will explore the best use of resources and opportunities for gaining added value (including through sharing best practice and joint working) in order to achieve best value in the use of the funding provided by the Council for the provision of the services to be provided under this agreement in support of the community and voluntary sector in South Staffordshire.
- 8.6 The Council does not bind itself to provide funding beyond the term of this Agreement. Further funding will be subject to South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action making application for grant aid for a further term, such application to be made six months prior to expiry of the existing term.
- 8.7 South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action is committed to identifying and accessing additional sources of funding so as to reduce the funding that the Council may be looked to to provide.

9.0 ADDITIONAL SPECIFIC TASKS

- 9.1 South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action will provide an annual report and an audited set of accounts (including income and expenditure accounts) within six months of the end of the financial year. Additionally it will provide a written annual progress report on its activities and the carrying out of the approved programme of work during the preceding twelve months.
- 9.2 The Chairman and/or the Manager of South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action will attend regular progress/monitoring meetings called by the Deputy Leader (Community Services) of the Council and at such frequency as he may consider appropriate.
- 9.3 £1,500.00 of the grant aid provided by the Council will be used for the purpose of "one off" grants to community and voluntary organisations within, and serving the needs of residents of South Staffordshire. The amount of grant to each individual group will be determined by the South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action Board of Trustees. South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action will clearly indicate to applicants for or recipients of such grants that they have been made from funding provided by the Council.

- 9.4 South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action may, with the agreement of the Council, carry over any of the annual small grants provision referred to in paragraph 9.3 above remaining unexpended at the end of the financial year to the following financial year, save that, should the amount of unexpended grant be of such level as the Council may consider excessive, the Council reserves the right to either reclaim that part or a portion thereof of the small grants budget that is unexpended or withhold release of the whole or such proportion of the small grants provision within the Councils annual grant as the Council may determine until such time as any unexpended grant has been expended.

10.0 IMPLICIT ASPECTS OF THE AGREEMENT

- 10.1 That achievement of the full range of functions and objectives will be related to the availability of staffing and financial resources.
- 10.2 That South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action's concerns and interests do not lie exclusively in the field of the South Staffordshire Council, but exist in compatible work with other statutory agencies, for which it reserves the right to seek separate funding assistance if necessary.
- 10.3 That South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action is part of a national network. (The National Association of Councils for Voluntary Service has aims and objectives embodied in its "Code of Practice" to which South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action adheres).
- 10.4 That South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action, as part of its work, will seek to offer models of good practice to the organisations whom it serves. Such work will include good practice in employment and demonstrate clearly defined Equal Opportunities policies.

11.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- 11.1 It is agreed that monitoring and evaluation will be essential in ensuring that public money is spent carefully, appropriately, and effectively.
- 11.2 South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action Annual Reports will clearly identify the extent to which functions and objectives are being fulfilled and outcomes achieved and will include a full summary of the work undertaken by South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action over the year. A programme of the ongoing and development work it proposes to carry out during the ensuing year together with a review of the previous years programme and development work and attainment thereof and a summary of small grants made pursuant to paragraph 9.3 will be submitted in accordance with Clause 8.1 of this agreement.

12.0 STAFFING ISSUES

- 12.1 The number of posts established, the salaries and conditions relating to them and arrangements for the appointment and the allocation of duties to staff, will be matters for the South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action Executive Committee to determine.

13.0 REVIEW OF THIS AGREEMENT

- 13.1 Either party to this service level agreement may request a review of its provisions at any stage if it should appear that it is not working satisfactorily in terms of the purposes it is intended to achieve.
- 13.2 The Council reserves the right to reconsider/withdraw its support in total or in part in the event of South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action not carrying out its activities in accordance with the requirements of this agreement to the satisfaction of the Council, but with the proviso that any withdrawal of support will be subject to three months notice.

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Councillor S. R. Lees
Deputy Leader (Community Services)
South Staffordshire Council

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Mrs. J. Collins - Chairman
South Staffordshire
Community and Voluntary
Action
Authorised Signatory