

Third Sector Partnership Council
Funding & Compliance Committee
Draft response to Grant policy change

The Third Sector Partnership Council Funding and Compliance committee is broadly supportive of the proposal based on the current details.

As a committee we share officials' concerns around loss of flexibility and innovation, but also wonder who will be the ultimate beneficiary of this change? Would it be currently funded organisations over and above the wider public/ community of interest? Will smaller third sector organisations potentially be disproportionately impacted? Communication and transparency will be key to ensuring successful implementation of this policy.

We welcome the early engagement of policy officials and would like to continue this engagement as the policy is developed. This policy change will ultimately benefit the communities being supported through grant programmes, reduced short-termism and improve staff retention. Our discussions also highlighted that we can help more widely with the drafting of guidance and wider engagement with the sector. For example, the guidance provided to grant managers needs to recognise that a one size approach does not fit all; proactive support may be necessary to ensure successful outcomes; that the evaluation process needs to be clear and part of the initial competitive exercise

We would recommend that the term 'evaluation' rather than 'benchmarking' is used as this reflects the wider social values that the third sector brings. With the evaluation including service users, as well as non-service-users, feedback as part of the decision process to extend or not, where applicable. In addition the pandemic has shown that where solutions are co-designed from the outset, they complement existing services and meet the needs of the most excluded in our communities.

This proposal may bring unforeseen problems but unlocks one of the systemic issues that the sector has faced for a number of years. Having the potential to increase both capability and capacity of the third sector in Wales and we look forward to continue working with officials.