

24 January 2008

Helen Ball
Head of Policy, Performance and Equalities
Bristol City Council
The Council House
College Green
BS1 5TR

Dear Helen

AREA BASED GRANT CONSULTATION - Safer Stronger
Communities Fund (SSCF)

We are pleased that the Council wishes to support continuation funding for the Changeup Consortium, given that infrastructure support is vital for the survival of the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector.

It is important to continue to invest in the Consortium's work because:

The Consortium has a track record of bringing in match funding, and can bring added value to the SSCF investment.

During 2006 – 07, SSCF investment has enabled us to deliver a comprehensive work programme in partnership with the City Council Community Development team including (amongst other things): training; mentoring; funding advice and support; strengthening links between the Voluntary, Community Social Enterprise Sector and schools; supporting participation in the development of the Local Area Agreement (LAA) – our 5 themed stakeholder events have been very well-attended and generated valuable feedback; increasing understanding of Community Cohesion and Integration issues in Bristol, including contributing to the Celebrating Age festival and to the forthcoming Building the Bridge event (a Muslim conference for everyone). This work

programme has been delivered to time, has given value for money and the outcomes have been achieved.

The Consortium is leading on a LAA stretch target 'influencing decision making', which involves ensuring that local people and grass-roots organisations are engaged with the roll-out of neighbourhood partnerships across the whole of the city. The Consortium needs investment to help to achieve this target, which, if successful will bring in substantial funds to the Voluntary and Community Sector in Bristol. This will be a difficult target to achieve and will not be achieved without the SSCF investment.

It is vital that groups delivering services which are in danger of losing funding at this time are supported to seek alternative funding and sources of income, are able to understand and benefit from commissioning processes, and helped with redundancy and closure processes if necessary. The Consortium will work city-wide and support diverse front-line voluntary and community sector organisations from all Equalities communities of interest, including those outside of Neighbourhood Management areas.

SSCF investment will ensure that the effective partnership working that has been achieved between the Consortium and the Council will continue and will help drive the Safer Stronger agenda, particularly around community cohesion, preventing extremism and community engagement.

The Consortium aims to continue to develop and deliver the work programme that was begun this year, and we would propose that the SSCF allocation is related to agreed outcomes, as has been the case in the past.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Stephenson
On behalf of the ChangeUp Consortium
CC Councillor Helen Holland
Councillor Peter Hammond
Nick Gurney – Chief Executive