



PBNI Probation Board
for Northern Ireland

Community and Voluntary Sector Funding Policy 2019-22

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PROBATION BOARD FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

Community and Voluntary Sector Funding Policy

1. Introduction

The Probation Board (NI) Order 1982 Article 4 (2) allows PBNI to allocate funding to the Community and Voluntary Sector (CVS). The exercise of this legal ability is discretionary on the part of the Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI).

PBNI aims to change the lives of offenders for safer communities. In carrying out this work, PBNI works collaboratively with others, including the Community and Voluntary Sector (CVS). In this context, PBNI acknowledges the value, commitment and expertise of the CVS. PBNI is committed to partnership working with the CVS in respect of the delivery of secondary support services aimed at changing the lives of offenders. This policy puts in place an allocation framework for the distribution of community and voluntary sector funding to support PBNI's role in helping making communities safer in Northern Ireland.

2. Policy Statement

2.1 PBNI will utilise its Community and Voluntary Sector budget to fund initiatives that provide non-core, secondary services to support PBNI's core statutory work and services with adjudicated offenders.

2.2 The framework for the distribution of funding has four means for the allocation of funding:

2.2.1 Sole Procurement: For (PBNI) priority secondary services, these may be procured or commissioned through the Central Procurement Directorate (CPD) of the Department of Finance (DOF) for providers from both the private sector and the Community and Voluntary Sector. The allocation period will be for a one-year period, with the option of extension up to a further two years. Any extensions will be initially for one year's funding and will be subject to a performance review. Funding beyond the first year may be varied or terminated due to issues of performance or PBNI's overall budget situation.

2.2.2 Grant Aid: This will be in respect of allocations/applications where providers will be sought only from the Community and Voluntary Sector. Grant Aid will be allocated for a one-year period, with the option of extension up to a further two years. Any extensions will be initially for one year's funding and will be subject to a performance review. Funding beyond the first year may be varied or terminated due to issues of performance or PBNI's overall budget situation.

2.2.3 Funding through Strategic Partnerships:

- a. PBNI may enter into joint procurement arrangements with strategic partners such as the Department of Justice (DoJ), the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) and the Youth Justice Agency (YJA). Services contracted will be processed through the Central Procurement Directorate (CPD). The funding period will be as per 2.2.1.
- b. With specific reference to drawing down European Social Fund (ESF) monies, PBNI may enter into a match funding relationship with non-statutory partner(s). This arrangement may also involve other statutory partners. The ESF has its own application and allocation processes. The ESF funding cycle is for three years: PBNI will only commit on an annual basis, subject to PBNI's overall budgetary situation and performance respectively.

2.2.4 Contingency Provision: PBNI may provide continuing short-term funding to community and voluntary organisation(s) as a contingency in circumstances where funding timelines are uncertain or business needs change. This funding would be provided on a contingency basis to support services closely aligned to PBNI's statutory functions (for example, community service).

3. Governance

- 3.1 As per the requirements of the 'Financial Memorandum for the Probation Board for Northern Ireland', PBNI shall ensure that good governance arrangements are in place and complied with in respect of expenditure.
- 3.2 In June 2015, the Department for Communities as the department with lead responsibility for managing relationships between government and CVS launched a new "Code of Practice for Reducing Bureaucracy in Grant Funding to the Voluntary and Community Sector", which promotes best practice in reducing disproportionate bureaucracy in grant funding to the CVS whilst ensuring the proper use of public money. PBNI has reflected the principles in the code from 2016-17.
- 3.3 The governance arrangements for funding the CVS are detailed in a supporting Procedures document: 'Community and Voluntary Sector Funding Procedures'.

4. Purpose and Aims

- 4.1 To give effect to Article 4(2) of the Probation Board (NI) Order 1982 (See 12.1), a proportion of PBNI's budget may be utilised to provide funding to organisations which can provide secondary services for adjudicated offenders.
- 4.2 The proportion, if any, of PBNI's budget allocated to this scheme will be determined annually on the basis of operational need and affordability.

5. Policy Scope

5.1 The funding allocation framework is in line with Strategic Priority 3 of the 2017-20 (Draft) Corporate Plan (Promoting an Innovative and problem Solving Approach to Reducing Reoffending). The actions arising from this priority include:

- Continue to work with Community and Voluntary Sector partners to develop innovative rehabilitation services for people who offend, with particular reference to employment, accommodation, addictions and mental health
- To review current and future risks and opportunities for work with the Voluntary and Community Sector in the context of potential changes to funding support for the sector.

6. Policy Outcome (Benefits)

6.1 The creation of a framework for the allocation of funding to the Community and Voluntary Sector in Northern Ireland and secure the provision of services to offenders.

6.2 The delivery of secondary services to offenders, supervised by PBNI, by way of enhancing desistance and promoting safer communities respectively.

7. Policy Principles

PBNI will ensure that the process through which funding is allocated is equitable and transparent, does not either directly or indirectly discriminate and complies with audit requirements and our statutory responsibility under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

8. Risks

Risks associated with non-compliance with the policy and procedures include:

- a. Financial impropriety
- b. Health and Safety risks to offenders referred to services
- c. Reputational damage through poor quality services, non-compliance with Equality, Good Relations, Human Rights and Race Relations legislation
- d. Breaches of Data Protection and Freedom of Information Acts
- e. Non-compliance with Safeguarding legislation

- f. Reputational damage to PBNI and potential increased risk to PBNI service users should an individual with a criminal conviction be employed by partner and external agencies

Actions to address these risks are incorporated into the Procedures documents.

9. Costs

- 9.1 The proportion of PBNI's budget allocated to this scheme will be determined annually on the basis of operational need and affordability.
- 9.2 The costs of operating the scheme will be kept to a minimum but some costs may be incurred from Central Procurement Directorate fees.

10. Communication and Training

- 10.1 PBNI will advertise for applications for funding through: E-sourcing NI (where appropriate); Northern Ireland Council of Voluntary Action Grant Tracker and PBNI's website and Twitter account respectively.

For European Social Fund (ESF) applications, there is a separate advertising process overseen by the ESF.

- 10.2 PBNI staff will be trained in the Financial Systems and Controls Assessment.

11. Procedures and Guidance

The Roles and Responsibilities of PBNI staff and those from recipient organisations are laid out in the separate Procedures documents.

12. Linkages and Legal Basis

- 12.1 The Probation Board (NI) Order 1982 Article 4 (2) makes and give effect to schemes for the supervision and assistance of offenders and the prevention of crime; enter into arrangements with voluntary organisations or any other persons (including government departments and public bodies) whereby those organisations or persons undertake, on such terms (including terms such as payment by the Board to those organisations or persons) as may be specified in the arrangements. The legislation states:
 - i. the provision and maintenance of such hostels and other establishments as are mentioned in sub-paragraphs (a) and (b)
 - ii. to give effect to schemes for the supervision and assistance of offenders and the prevention of crime, whether made by those organisations or persons or made by the Board under sub-paragraph (c)

13. Equality, Human Rights and Freedom of Information

13.1 This Policy and its supporting Procedures:

- a. Has been equality screened as per schedule 9 (4) (2) (b) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998
- b. Is deemed to be Human Rights compliant
- c. Is suitable for public disclosure in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000

13.2 Recipient organisations will be required to be compliant with Equality, Good Relations, Human Rights and Race Relations legislation and have in place equal opportunities and harassment policies.

13.3 Recipient organisations will also be responsible for their requirements under data protection legislation and PBNI contract requirements. Recipient organisations must adhere to the requirements of the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Acts.

14. Monitoring and Evaluation

14.1 PBNI will monitor the allocation of funding across the nine section 75 categories using the Department for Communities database and populating it with information from the PBNI equality monitoring questionnaire. In addition to monitoring those groups who have been allocated funding, PBNI will also equality monitor those who benefited through contact with the programmes/projects funded.

14.2 PBNI, in discharging its responsibilities, shall require that funded organisations also:

- a. provide services to a level of quality that meets the Board's requirements and standards
- b. provide regular detailed evaluations of the impact and outcomes of the project funded
- c. use the resources provided for the purposes specified and that value for money is obtained
- d. display the PBNI logo and acknowledge PBNI's funding of the project in documentation and publicity.

15. Review

This policy will be reviewed three years after approval or as necessary.

16. Breach of policy provision

Breaches of this policy by PBNI staff may constitute a disciplinary offence. Failures on the part of a recipient group may lead to claw-back of funding or exclusion from further applications.

17. References

- a. Department of Justice (DOJ) Guidance on Managing Grants Delegation
- b. DOJ Review of Criminal Justice System and Community and Voluntary Sector (CVS) - April 2014
- c. Department for Communities Code of Practice for Minimising Bureaucracy in Grant Funding for the Community and Voluntary Sector (CVS) - May 2014
- d. Prison Reform Recommendation 31 - October 2011
- e. Department of Health's New Direction Strategy for Drug and Alcohol Funding
- f. Recommendations of the Evaluation of the PBNI Community Grants Scheme (2012-13) – March 2014
- g. Code of Practice for Reducing Bureaucracy in Grant Funding to the Voluntary and Community Sector – June 2015
- h. General Data Protection regulation (GDPR)