

**Response by the Social Enterprise Coalition to the consultation on
the Review of the Children, Young People and Families Grant
Programme**

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Introduction

The Social Enterprise Coalition (the Coalition) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Department for Children, Schools and Families' consultation on the Review of the Children, Young People and Families (CYPF) Grant Programme.

The Coalition was established in 2002 as the national voice of social enterprise. We represent a wide range of social enterprises, umbrella bodies and networks, with a combined membership reaching over 10,500 social enterprises. These include co-operatives and mutuals, development trusts, housing associations, leisure and football supporters' trusts and Social Firms. This response was informed by consultation with members of the Coalition.

Social enterprises are businesses with primarily social or environmental objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose in the business or in the community, rather than being driven by the need to maximise profit for shareholders and owners. We believe that by applying innovative and efficient approaches to addressing the complex and diverse needs of children and young people, social enterprises can make a real and sustained contribution to providing children and young people's services.

The Coalition recognises the Department for Children, Schools and Families' ongoing commitment to promoting and supporting a thriving third sector, and to ensuring that the Department's relationship with the sector is open and clear. The Department's CYPF Grant Programme has provided valuable funding to a wide range of third sector organisations since 2006, and we welcome the opportunity to consult on this review of the programme.

The vision for the CYPF Grant Programme

1. The Coalition recognises enormous value in a funding stream which potentially supports any aspect of the Every Child Matters agenda and the Department's Children's Plan.
2. Social enterprises, which combine entrepreneurialism with an emphasis on engaging directly with users and local people, are well placed to design and deliver services tailored to the needs of users and the local community. Indeed, social enterprises are frequently characterised by a close understanding of and commitment to their users, often including the involvement of these clients in the organisational structure.
3. Through the provision of services tailored to a community or individual's needs, ranging from affordable childcare, and activities such as sports clubs, to training designed to support people into employment, social enterprises make a real contribution to enriching the lives of children, families and their communities.
4. Because social enterprises provide highly personalised and tailored services to their communities, there is great value to the sector in flexible funding which is open to services aimed at meeting any aspect of the Every Child Matters agenda and the Department's Children's Plan, and thereby supports innovation and creativity.

5. However, as acknowledged by the Department, the grant programme has been increasingly over-subscribed and we therefore support the Department's efforts to ensure that this funding programme is as transparent and clear as possible.

Question 2: Do you agree with the proposed criteria for strategic funding?

1. The Coalition agrees with the Department's proposed criteria for strategic funding.
2. In particular we welcome the Department's recognition, through the provision of this strategic funding, of the value of third sector umbrella organisations and networks which provide a voice for the sector, provide support to smaller third sector organisations and which promote and share best practice within and across the sector.

Question 3: Do you agree with the proposed criteria for innovation funding?

1. The Coalition supports the provision of funding for innovative models of addressing the needs of children, young people and families.
2. We broadly agree with the criteria outlined by the Department for this aspect of the grant programme. However, there is a need for the Department to be very clear about what the criteria, which stipulates that innovation funding should be used to 'undertake a genuinely new approach' to addressing needs, means in practice.
3. It is both very rare that 'genuinely new' solutions are arrived at, and in addition evidencing the originality of an approach is very complex. In order to reduce the burden on third sector delivery organisations applying to this funding stream, it is therefore necessary for the Department to be very clear on both what they consider to be a new approach, and how an organisation is expected to evidence this in their application.

Question 19: Thinking beyond the CYPF grant, what more might we do within the Department to improve our relationship with the third sector?

1. The Coalition recognises the Department for Children, Schools and Families' ongoing commitment to improving their relationship with the third sector, and to ensuring that the relationship is open and clear.
2. We welcome the recent publication of the Department's revised Third Sector Strategy and look forward to working with the Department to meet the commitments outlined in the strategy as a key means by which to ensure a mutually supportive and beneficial relationship between the Department and the sector.