

Nottingham City Council

Commissioning and Procurement Executive Committee

Minutes of the meeting held at Loxley House, Station Street, NG2 3NG, on 09 November 2021 from 10.00 am - 10.08 am

Membership

Present

Councillor Sam Webster (Chair)
Councillor Cheryl Barnard (Vice Chair)

Absent

Councillor Eunice Campbell-Clark
Councillor Sally Longford
Councillor Adele Williams

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Paul Burrows	- IT Change, Projects and Strategy Manager
Mark Leavesley	- Governance Officer
Bobby Lowen	- Commissioning Lead
Steve Oakley	- Head of Contracting and Procurement
Ceri Walters	- Head of Commercial Finance

Call-in

Unless stated otherwise, all decisions are subject to call-in. The last date for call-in is 17 November 2021. Decisions cannot be implemented until the working day after this date.

20 Apologies for Absence

Councillor Campbell-Clark)	other Council business
Councillor Williams)	
Councillor Longford -	personal

21 Declarations of Interests

None.

22 Minutes

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2021 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

23 Voluntary and Community Sector update

This item was deferred to the December 2021 meeting.

24 Voluntary and Community Sector Grants - 2022/23 - Key Decision

Steve Oakley, Head of Contracting and Procurement, presented the report, which detailed a one-year extension from April 2022 to March 2023 to the arrangements

currently in place for Area Based Grants, Communities of Identity Grants and 3 individual specialist grants for supporting refugees and asylum seekers.

Resolved to

- (1) approve the spend of £1,759,509 on grants for the Voluntary and Community Sector through a one-year extension to the current grant process;**
- (2) delegate authority to the:**
 - (a) Director of Commissioning and Procurement to undertake a grants process;**
 - (b) Director of Community Protection, in consultation with the Director of Commissioning and Procurement, to approve the grants specifications;**
 - (c) Director of Community Protection, in line with the outcome of the Council budget for 2022/23 and in consultation with Legal Services, to approve the outcome of the process and grant award.**

Reasons for recommendations

- i. To enable a reduction in the funding available to support the delivery of activity provided by VCS organisations.
- ii. To enable a broader conversation about what a future community model should look like, both within the Council and in partnership.
- iii. To renegotiate outcomes to help mitigate the reductions in Council services and to enable the realigning of outcomes delivered through the delivery of the VCS grant programmes. This includes understanding the impact of Covid and the new landscape that has emerged as a result of this.
- iv. To encourage and support further opportunities for VCS organisations to leverage external, additional funding against this source of grant funding.
- v. To align activity funded to assist refugees and asylum seekers to access mainstream health services to complement the delivery of other activity to assist refugees and asylum seekers currently supported through VCS grants.

Other options considered

- i. Not continuing with the VCS grants programme - Not recommended due to significant detrimental effect on citizens, particularly the most vulnerable and those in need of support if less funding is available to support these programmes.
- ii. A longer grant agreement - Not recommended as this would not align with the commissioning activity around the community support offer for vulnerable citizens and the ICS Community Transformation work stream.

25 Financial Vulnerability and Debt Advice - 2022/23 - Key Decision

Councillor Webster, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources, and Steve Oakley, Head of Contracting and Procurement, presented the report, which detailed the new arrangements for community focused financial vulnerability and debt advice to citizens most in need of support to be put in place via a one-year conditional grant process for April 2022 to March 2023.

Resolved to

- (1) approve the spend of £812,988 on Financial Vulnerability and Debt Advice through a grant application process, subject to the outcome of current budget discussions;**
- (2) delegate authority to the Director of Commissioning and Procurement to:**
 - (a) approve the grant process;**
 - (b) in line with the outcome of the Council budget 2022/23 discussions, approve the outcome of the process and award the grants.**

Reasons for recommendations

- i. The current arrangements for funding advice services for people experiencing financial difficulty, which were delivered under contracts come to an end on 31 March 2022, and a new arrangement needs to be implemented by 1 April 2022.
- ii. The creation of a one-year grant aligned to intended outcomes of the organisations will ensure stable provision of financial vulnerability support and debt advice and also enable a broader conversation about what the future community focused delivery model should look like both within the Council and in partnership.
- iii. To use the opportunity of the ending of the current arrangements to enable the re-aligning of outcomes delivered by this resource as a response to the changing need within local communities. This includes understanding the impact of Covid and the new landscape that has emerged as a result of this.
- iv. The award of a one-year grant also enables the successful delivery organisation to use this funding as match-funding against other grant opportunities such as those advertised by Central Government, Big Lottery etc.
- v. This activity is already being delivered in the City by VCS organisations as part of their core function, NCC's funding serves as a contribution to the overall activities these organisations deliver. This approach will drive efficiencies and will open up the field to smaller organisations that work at a neighbourhood level with a 'reach' into local communities. The requirements via the procurement route often deter smaller organisation from applying, despite these organisations often being best placed to deliver this type of support.

Other options considered

- i. Discontinuing current arrangements and not proceeding with a grant award - Not recommended due to significant detrimental effect on citizens, particularly the most vulnerable and in need of support.
- ii. A longer grant agreement - Not recommended as this would not align with the commissioning activity around the Community Support offer for vulnerable citizens and the ICS Community Transformation work stream.

26 Purchase of Corporate software licenses and services for Microsoft products - Key Decision

Paul Burrows, IT Change, Projects and Strategy Manager, presented the report, which sought authorisation for re-purchasing, via an approved framework, of a 3-year contract from 2022/23 to 2024/25, of Microsoft licenses and associated services, such as Microsoft approved technical support and consultancy services related to licensed products.

Mr Burrows stated that the Microsoft purchasing model was based on actual license consumption and was subject to annual review, during which licence volumes may be increased or reduced, and the volume of licences to be purchased would be based on requirements at the point at which procurement was made.

Resolved to

- (1) approve the allocation of funding from the IT Efficiency Fund, up to the value of £4,500,000 over 3 years from 2022/23 to 2024/25, for the purchase Microsoft software licences and associated services;**
- (2) delegate authority to the Head of IT Services to enter into contracts, using approved procurement frameworks, to purchase the licences and associated services.**

Reasons for recommendations

- i. In order to continue to use Microsoft products for end user and server computing beyond 30 Jun. 2022 Nottingham City Council will need to renew its software licensing agreement with Microsoft.
- ii. Microsoft products used as online services are subject to continuous development and improvement. Because of the increasing richness of these products the Council needs sometimes to be able to call upon additional support to get the best value from purchased products. This is the reason for recommending the inclusion of services within this decision as well as licenses.

Other options considered

- i. Do nothing - This is not considered feasible as the Council depends heavily upon Microsoft's software to deliver services to citizens and maintain shared service delivery with other organisations. The Council could not function without Microsoft software and would be acting illegally if this were not licensed.

- ii. Move away from Microsoft software to other providers' software - This is not considered feasible as the Council has trialled non-Microsoft software in the past and has found that challenges in compatibility between it and Microsoft products, which are far more widely used, have added cost and frustration to users' activities. There would also be significant costs associated with a change from Microsoft software.