

Commissioning and Procurement Executive Committee – 09 November 2021

Subject:	Voluntary and Community Sector Grants – 2022/23		
Corporate Director/ Directors:	Frank Jordan – Corporate Director for Residents Services Andrew Errington – Director of Community Protection Katy Ball – Director for Commissioning and Procurement		
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Neghat Khan		
Report author and contact details:	Louise Graham – VCS Partnerships Manager louise.graham@nottinghamcity.gov.uk 07885 790195		
Other colleagues who have provided input:			
Key Decision	Yes	Subject to call-in	Yes
Reasons: Expenditure of £750,000 or more taking account of the overall impact of the decision			Revenue
Significant impact on communities living or working in two or more wards in the City			No
Type of expenditure:	Revenue		
Total value of the decision:	A budget of £1,759,509 for 2022/23 which will result in a saving of £167,082		
Wards affected:	All		
Dates of consultation with Portfolio Holder:	20 May, 17 June, 15 July, 16 September & 14 October 2021		
Relevant Council Plan Key Outcome:			
Clean and Connected Communities		X	
Keeping Nottingham Working		X	
Carbon Neutral by 2028		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Safer Nottingham		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Child-Friendly Nottingham		X	
Healthy and Inclusive		X	
Keeping Nottingham Moving		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Improve the City Centre		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Better Housing		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Financial Stability		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Serving People Well		X	
Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/service users):			
<p>The Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) deliver a wide range of activity for citizens across Nottingham, engaging with many communities that a local authority is unable to reach. Current VCS grant agreements cease on 31st March 2022. This report requests approval for the delivery of three one-year VCS grant programmes in 2022/23:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Based Grant (ABG) – enabling delivery of activity to benefit children and young people, support for citizens engaging in training or employment. • Communities of Identity Grant - enabling delivery of community based provision to some of the most vulnerable groups of citizens across Nottingham, refugees and asylum seekers, citizens who identify by gender or sexual orientation, new and emerging communities including Roma. • Three individual specialist grants – supporting the financial infrastructure of the VCS, providing key support, advice and guidance to refugees and asylum seekers and enabling delivery of activity and services within a community space. 			

It is proposed a one-year extension to grant arrangements from April 2022-March 2023 be approved. This will allow a number of requirements to be put in place and enable a broader conversation about what a future community model should look like both within the Council and in partnership.

Additional requirements for 2022/23:

- £167,082 agreed saving to be applied subject to final budget approval;
- Refocus activity to provide some mitigation to the reduction in Council activity particularly in relation to Early Help and Youth Services;
- Agree a new set of performance targets, including the need to begin working towards greater self-sustainability and increased leverage of other grants through match funding;
- Incorporation of funding from the Public Health Grant intended to facilitate access to mainstream health services to align with other VCS activity to provide assistance to refugees and asylum seekers.

Exempt information: None

Recommendations:

- 1** To approve spend of £1,759,509 on grants for the Voluntary and Community Sector through a grant process.
- 2** To delegate approval to undertake a grants process to the Director of Commissioning and Procurement.
- 3** To delegate approval of the grants specifications to the Director of Community Protection in consultation with the Director of Commissioning and Procurement.
- 4** To delegate approval of the outcome of the process and grant award to the Director of Community Protection, in line with the outcome of the Council budget for 2022/23, in consultation with Legal Services.

1. **Reasons for recommendations**

- 1.1 To enable a reduction in the funding available to support the delivery of activity provided by VCS organisations.
- 1.2 To enable a broader conversation about what a future community model should look like, both within the Council and in partnership.
- 1.3 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.
- 1.4 To encourage and support further opportunities for VCS organisations to leverage external, additional funding against this source of grant funding.
- 1.5 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.

2. **Background (including outcomes of consultation)**

2.1 The current grants programmes were developed as part of the Streamlining Investment in the Voluntary Sector Programme in 2013. The Grant Funding process was agreed by Executive Board Commissioning Sub-Committee in July 2013. This followed an extensive consultation process with the VCS, internal colleagues and key stakeholders. The delivery of the grants programmes provides financial support to activity provided by VCS organisations within the City.

2.2 **Area Based Grant - Total Funding £1,164,828**

Supporting locally owned and delivered activity in neighbourhoods across the City with provision around:

- Children and young people – Delivering the only city wide support for play opportunities for young children. Delivering access to universal provision for young people with some targeted work undertaken by specialist delivery partners.
- Employment and skills activity - Supporting citizens into work or training with a focus on people aged under 25 and over 50 years. Match funded against European Social Fund activity that draws additional funding into Nottingham to deliver.
- Support for smaller VCS groups – Providing locally based infrastructure advice and support to community groups to enable them to deliver activity effectively and safely.
- Locally identified need – Support for older isolated citizens as an example

2.3 **Communities of Identity Grant – Total Funding £499,000**

Supporting specific communities within Nottingham who are more vulnerable and demonstrate a protected characteristic. This funding will be used to support:

- Refugees and asylum seekers,
- Communities of gender and sexual orientation
- New and emerging communities that are predominantly eastern European (including Roma) and African.

All Communities of Identity (COI) partnerships provide support for specialist VCS groups and organisations within their remit, seek to build skills and confidence, deliver English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and conversational English, and provide information, advice and guidance relevant to their community. In all cases the activity delivered aims to ensure these communities feel part of the city, to build trust and enable them to be active citizens. Each partnership also delivers against outcomes specific to their community.

2.4 **Specialist Grant Funding – Total Funding £210,825**

- Financial support for the VCS (£60,000)

- Provision of specialist financial management support and advice for VCS groups that balances the generic support delivered by ABG and COI.
- Independent Living Support (£78,000)
 - Provision of high level specialist advice and support to refugees and asylum seekers. Previously delivered via contract, converted to grant to enable wrap around support that is supported by more generic COI delivery.
- Sycamore Centre (£72,825)
 - Provision of a community space, tied into a lease arrangement agreed by property.

2.5 Consultation with the VCS

There has been a series of consultation events and meetings to discuss the future of the grant programme against the needs of local people. This has included:

- Meetings with current Lead Organisations and their partnerships;
- Presentations and discussions at Area Partnership Networks across the City to listen to VCS groups and local people;
- A series of events open to all VCS organisations hosted by NCVS;
- Discussions with stakeholders including internal services who use the grant programmes as a delivery mechanism for providing activity to citizens.

Consultation themes:

- A need to ensure local ownership of delivery continues at a neighbourhood/community level;
- Recognition of the ability of the VCS to reach citizens that the Council cannot;
- Understanding that the VCS can provide a more cost effective solution to delivering activity;
- The need for a more focused infrastructure support offer.

2.6 Into the Mainstream (ITM) – Total Funding £51,939

Asylum seekers and refugees are recognised as more vulnerable to communicable diseases, mental ill health and other health issues, and face challenges in accessing health services due to language / literacy, lack of understanding of NHS services and other barriers. The current contract to fund assistance to help refugees and asylum seekers to access mainstream health services (including registration with a GP) is due to end on 31st March 2022. A review of assistance for refugees and asylum seekers has identified the opportunity to align this activity to complement the delivery of other advice and assistance to refugees and asylum seekers through the VCS grants programme.

3. Other options considered in making recommendations

3.1 **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.

3.2 **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.

4. **Consideration of Risk**

4.1 **Failure to use funding to deliver priorities** – Grant agreements will provide clearer targets in terms of the organisations objectives in using the Grant. This will be monitored through a new officer led objective management framework to ensure quality of delivery and delivery to agreed outcomes.

4.2 **Reduction of support** – Grant agreements will encourage VCS organisations work towards greater self-sustainability and increased leverage of other grants.

5. **Finance colleague comments (including implications and value for money/VAT)**

5.1 The proposed extension and re-allocation of the funding is within the existing budgets for the grant programmes as detailed below. This extension will reduce the budget available for these services when the current VCS grant agreement ceases on 31st March 2022. This will enable the approved savings of £167,083 to be met in the 2022-23 financial year and also provide a timeline to open discussions on the future community model.

Grant	Value	
Area Based Grant	£1,164,828	
Communities of Identity Grant	£499,000	
Specialist Grant Funding	£210,825	
Into the Mainstream (ITM)	£51,939	*funded by Public Health
TOTAL GRANT	£1,926,592	
SAVING 2022-23	(£167,083)	
REVISED GRANT TOTAL	£1,759,509	

5.2 The table above includes the Into the Mainstream grant (ITM) totalling £0.052m which is funded by Public Health. This funding will be transferred to VCS in 2022/23 on a one off basis in order to fund this grant whilst a while a review of this activity is undertaken and longer term arrangements put in place for 1 April 2023+, ensuring value for money is sought for the organisation.

The ITM grant will be subject to a full monitoring process ensuring adherence to the Public Health grant conditions and ensuring that the desired outcomes are achieved.

The ITM grant is not impacted by the ongoing Public Health funding review exercise currently being undertaken and this spend is captured within the

Public Health budget as incorporated within the Council's 2022/23 Medium Term Financial Plan.

Susan Turner – 20.10.21
Senior Commercial Business Partner

Hayley Mason
Strategic Finance Business Partner (Adults and Public Health)
28 October 2021

6. **Legal colleague comments**

- 6.1 The proposals in this report seek an extension of the VCS grant process to support a variety of activities provided by VCS organisations with the City.
- 6.2 It is understood that these organisations offer significant benefit across the projects they deliver, which the Council wishes to support under this grant process.
- 6.3 It is intended that a long term assessment of the future community model will be undertaken to consider the Council's funding position going forward.
- 6.4 Grants are not governed by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR) and so there is no requirement for a procurement process to be followed. Appropriate grant agreement terms should however be put in place between the parties in order to reflect this arrangement, following the completion of a fair and transparent grant award process.
- 6.5 The Grant recipients shall be required to provide such information and comply with any instructions from the Council to ensure that a Grant remains compliant with the Subsidy Control Rules, including where appropriate or required to so, obtaining independent advice on receipt of the Grant to ensure compliance.

Dionne Screaton 22.10.2021
Solicitor, Legal and Governance

7. **Other relevant comments**

- 7.1 This report proposes the funding of activities delivered by the voluntary and community sector from April 2022 through a grant funding process. The Procurement Team have been consulted on the proposals and are supportive of the proposed approach. As the arrangements will be grant funding and not services contracts, they are not subject to the UK Procurement Regulations or the procedural requirements of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. A grant application process should be undertaken and appropriate grant agreements entered into to reflect the award of funding.

Jo Pettifor – 21.10.21
Category Manager Strategy and People
Commissioning and Procurement

- 7.2 The proposals outlined do not have a direct impact upon the Council's workforce, other than in their delivery and performance management by Officers as part of their substantive job role.
The proposals do highlight an opportunity to positively influence the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion ('EDI') strategy, by supporting delivery of provision for a number of groups within the city, including young people, vulnerable groups and those with protected characteristics.

Consideration of the future operating model will require review and input from the Council's support services, including HR and Legal teams, at the relevant time, to help understand the impact of any changes.

Paul Slater
HR Business Lead
29 October 2021

8. **Crime and Disorder Implications (If Applicable)**

8.1 N/A

9. **Social value considerations (If Applicable)**

9.1 These proposals support Nottingham City Council's approach to social and environmental well-being in connection with public service grant agreements for the VCS by requiring community groups to share space and work in partnership or to form consortia. This work will contribute to an increase and improvement in social and community cohesion and will help to foster a greater understanding and respect between communities and cultures.

9.2 Priorities for the grant programme have been identified in partnership with the VCS through a series of consultation events. Successful applicants will be required to engage with other grant funded programmes, organisations, area partnerships, stakeholders and Nottingham City Council initiatives such as the Employers Hub to help direct service outcomes and support local citizens.

10. **Regard to the NHS Constitution (If Applicable)**

10.1 N/A

11. **Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)**

11.1 An EIA is not required because there are no significant changes to existing services that will impact on delivery.

12. **Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)**

12.1 A DPIA is not required because there are no significant changes to existing services that will impact or change the way that data is managed.

13. **Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA)**

13.1 A CIA is not required because there are no significant changes to existing services that will impact on the minimal carbon production from delivery.

14 List of background papers relied upon in writing this report (not including published documents or confidential or exempt information)

14.1 N/A

15 Published documents referred to in this report

15.1 N/A