

Report of the Head of Equality

Report to the Chief Officer Communities

Date: 19th February 2018

Subject: Centenary Cities: 100 Years of Votes for Women

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. In November 2017 Leeds City Council received notification from Government Equalities Office that they had been successful in their bid to the Centenary Cities: 100 Years of Votes for Women for the delivery of a programme of activity as part of the Women's Suffrage Centenary programmes. This is fixed term non-recurring funding.
2. The council will receive grant funding of £152,500 to deliver a programme of activities in 2018.

Recommendations

1. That the Chief Officer Communities accept the grant funding from Government Equalities Office to deliver the Centenary Cities: 100 Years of Votes for Women programme in Leeds and agrees to provide grant funding of £25,000 to Women's Lives Leeds to deliver a Community Outreach Programme.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The report sets out the background information and proposal for Leeds City Council to accept grant funding from the Government Equalities Office.
- 1.2 The funding will be used to develop and deliver a programme of activities to deliver the Centenary Cities: 100 Years of Votes for Women in Leeds.

2. Background information

- 2.1 Leeds is one of the fastest growing cities in the UK with people of different ages and from many different backgrounds, cultures and beliefs living and working alongside each other.
- 2.2 The number of women living in the City represents half of the population and despite continued growth in the city we know that the benefits of economic growth are not reaching everyone. 20% of the Leeds population almost 155,000 people are classified as being in 'absolute poverty' (2014/15) with a number of our residents in low-wage and insecure jobs. We know that women are more likely to be disproportionately affected by poverty and disadvantage.
- 2.3 A range of work is taking place across the city to ensure that women and girls have a greater voice and are empowered to have a greater voice and influence in the city.
- 2.4 Leeds City Council is one of the biggest employers in the city, employing 14,404 staff of which 61% are female. The internal staff network 'Women's Voices' is currently undertaking work to refresh the network which will help to identify the key issues and priorities for women in the organisation, particularly, those women who are employed in lower paid, remote jobs who don't always get the opportunity to have their voices heard. Central to this is improving how women are able to influence the decision making process and provide mutual support.
- 2.5 Leeds City Council are also working in partnership with Women's Lives Leeds which is a unique partnership of twelve women and girls organisations from across Leeds. The partner organisations have specialisms in domestic violence, mental health, sexual health, sex work, trafficking, substance misuse, child sexual exploitation and education. This unique partnership received funding from the Big Lottery Women and Girls Initiative for four years. Women's Lives Leeds are also the Womens Hub for the City which is part of the Equalities Assembly. The Equalities Assembly is a forum, made up of Equality Hubs, which helps ensure Leeds City Council is engaging with and involving the full range of citizens that live in Leeds in the decisions it makes. It offers all equality groups the opportunity to meet and work together to let the council know the issues that affect them.

3. Main issues

- 3.1 The total value of the grant from Government Equalities Office is under £250,000 and the decision can be approved by the Chief Officer Communities as a Significant Operational Decision.
- 3.2 This work is an important part of the vision for Leeds to be the best city in the UK: one that is compassionate with a strong economy, which tackles poverty and

reduces the inequalities that still exist. We want Leeds to be a city that is fair and sustainable, ambitious, fun and creative for all with a council that its residents can be proud of: the best council in the country.

- 3.3 The funding will help the council to build on the range of activities that were already planned for the year, for example:-
- A Woman's Place Exhibition at Abbey House Museum
 - International Womens Day event on 8th March
 - The Vote Before the Vote Exhibition, Leeds Library May 2018
 - Leeds Reclaim the Night Event
 - Compassionate City Awards
- 3.4 New projects will be delivered including:-
- Light night themed display of suffrage
 - Commissioning a play on the life of Leonora Cohen
- 3.5 In addition a community outreach programme will be delivered and hosted by Womens Lives Leeds which is a collaboration of 11 third sector organisations. The focus will be on reaching out to those women and girls who are the furthest away from mainstream involvement and engagement activities. They will provide activities to empower, inform and encourage understanding of the democratic process and voting. The council will provide grant funding of £25,000 to deliver this programme of activities.

4. Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

- 4.1.1 Over the last 12 months work has taken place in Leeds to establish the evidence base for understanding need and issues for women. Some of this work has been undertaken by the Leeds City Council Women's Hub which is facilitated by Womens Lives Leeds and the council's Womens Voice staff network who have undertaken work on identifying the women's priorities for the City.
- 4.1.2 The outcome of this work has highlighted some of the issues and challenges women in the City still face.
- 4.1.3 The funding bid was signed off by the Leader of the Council, the Lead Member for Women and the Director of Communities and Environment.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

- 4.2.1 The issues for women in the city are clearly a significant aspect of equality and cohesion and this will be carefully considered during the development of the projects. Equality Impact Assessments will be undertaken on specific pieces of work as required.

4.3 Council policies and best council plan

- 4.3.1 Leeds is a welcoming and compassionate city and the recommendations in this report support the Best Council Plan key aim of 'Building strong, cohesive communities, raising aspirations and reducing financial hardship'.

4.4 Resources and value for money

- 4.4.1 The resources to fund this project will be via grant funding from Government Equalities Office.

4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in

- 4.5.1 There are no specific legal implications with this report. The report is not subject to call-in.

4.6 Risk management

- 4.6.1 There are no risks associated with the development of the Centenary Cities: 100 Years of Votes for Women programme of activities.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The 'Centenary Cities' programme forms part of the government's wider plans to promote the pivotal moment in history when women received the vote for the first time.
- 5.2 The initiatives and commemorations that will take place across the country next year also aim to help inspire and educate young people about UK democracy and its importance, as well as encourage more women to get into political and public life.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 That the Chief Officer Communities accept the grant funding from Government Equalities Office to deliver the Centenary Cities: 100 Years of Votes for Women programme in Leeds and agrees to provide grant funding of £25,000 to Women's Lives Leeds to deliver a Community Outreach Programme.

7. Background documents

- 7.1 None.