

Report of Head of Equality

Report to Chief Officer Communities

Date: 3rd April 2020

Subject: Third Sector Infrastructure Support Fund Grant for 2020/21 to Voluntary Action Leeds

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Has consultation been carried out?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Will the decision be open 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

1. Main issues

- Leeds City Council award an annual grant from the Third Sector Infrastructure Support Fund to Voluntary Action Leeds from the Communities and Environment Directorate budget and in 2020/21 the amount of grant is £246,300.00. In addition the Children's and Families Directorate make an additional contribution of £81,225 which is managed by the Communities and Environment Directorate.
- The allocation of this grant funding is made subject to the production of a delivery plan for 2020/21 which specifies agreed work priorities and outcomes; and continued compliance with conditions of funding.

2. Best Council Plan Implications (click [here](#) for the latest version of the Best Council Plan)

- The work undertaken by Voluntary Action Leeds which is funded by an annual grant from the Third Sector Infrastructure Support Fund contributes to the Best Council Plan focus of tackling poverty and reducing inequalities and achieving the council's ambition for a strong economy and compassionate city. The activities set out in the annual delivery plan support the Best City Priorities of Safe, Strong Communities, Inclusive Growth, Health & Wellbeing and Child-Friendly City.

3. Resource Implications

- The annual grant for the Third Sector Infrastructure Support Fund to Voluntary Action Leeds is allocated from current budgets and there are no additional resource implications arising from this report.

Recommendations

- a) The Chief Officer Communities is requested to approve grant funding to Voluntary Action Leeds from the Third Sector Infrastructure Support Fund Grant from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021. The maximum grant payment is £246,300.00 from the Communities and Environment Directorate and £81,225.00 from the Children and Families Directorate. The total grant payable is £327,525.00.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The report outlines the proposal to approve grant funding to Voluntary Action Leeds from the Third Sector Infrastructure Support Fund from 1st April 2020 to 30th April 2020.

2. Background information

- 2.1 Recipients of the Third Sector Infrastructure Support Fund provide crucial support to frontline organisations delivering services in some of the city's most disadvantaged communities.
- 2.2 Voluntary Action Leeds provides key support and development support to the Third Sector in Leeds, which includes the provision of capacity building, business support, group development, and training. As well, as facilitating and supporting the Third Sector to have an important voice into and influence over the strategic direction of the City. This includes the redevelopment and delivery of the BME Hub; the Young Lives Leeds forum and delivering the Volunteer Centre as a City wide volunteering service.
- 2.3 The funding provided through the Infrastructure Support Fund specifically includes targeted work to ensure the support and development of the smallest of Third Sector organisations; those in disadvantaged wards; and excluded groups. The funding will also support and enable positive social action to build thriving, empowered and inclusive local communities and will support groups and organisations in local communities, of place and interest, to develop and achieve positive social change from within.

3. Main issues

- 3.1 The delivery of this work is an important part of the Third Sector work the council are undertaking and more importantly will ensure all third sector organisations in Leeds have access to the skills, resources, support and voice to achieve their aspirations.
- 3.2 The funding also supports and enables positive social action to build thriving, empowered and inclusive local communities and will support groups and

organisations in local communities, of place and interest, to develop and achieve positive social change from within.

- 3.3 During 2018/19 a review was undertaken of the Third Sector Infrastructure Support grant which was overseen by the Chief Officer Communities. The purpose of the review was to ensure that the Infrastructure Support grant continues to support the council to meet its priorities outlined in the Best Council Plan and provides value for money.
- 3.4 The outcomes of the review demonstrated that there is still a need for Infrastructure Support for the Third Sector and the City.
- 3.5 The review concluded that VAL was the preferred provider, based on:
- lack of any obvious alternative local organisation that could challenge to deliver the contract
 - that the ISF offer across the city needs to be coherent and seamless
 - their track record, including the flexible response to emerging needs and demands
 - proven provider with the necessary specialist experience and established relationships and the positive feedback they receive on their current support offer
 - the added value multiplier where every £1 of council investment is matched by £2 of external funding
 - the requirement that the city wide generic infrastructure support should not be delivered by an organisation that could be in competition for contracts with the organisations that they are supporting
 - concerns about the ability of organisations external to Leeds to deliver continuity of service, comparable added value and sustainability
 - the increased opportunity for a co-production approach and greater flexibility available to respond to emerging and changing needs through a grant arrangement
- 3.6 The outcome of the review was discussed with VAL and prioritisation of future work and priorities was negotiated with them.

4. Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

- 4.1.1 The Infrastructure Support Fund Grant ensures that the council has strong local leadership, increased community conversations to resolve problems and conflict locally, maximises the use of local intelligence, raises aspirations and creates better links to social and economic opportunities, and improves the city's resilience to extremist narratives. This will help to reduce dependency on public services and increase community engagement and participation.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

4.2.1 The issue of supporting Third Sector clearly is a significant aspect of equality and cohesion and this will be carefully considered and Equality Impact Assessments will be undertaken on specific pieces of work as required

4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

4.3.1 The work undertaken by Voluntary Action Leeds which is funded by an annual grant from the Third Sector Infrastructure Support Fund contributes to the council's ambition to build a compassionate city and tackling poverty and reducing inequalities. The work supports the Best City Priorities of:-

- Safe, Strong Communities
- Inclusive Growth
- Health and Wellbeing
- Child-Friendly City
- Culture.
- Climate Emergency

Climate Emergency

4.3.2 A specific focus on this emergency aims to embed sustainability considerations into all aspects of the council's Third Sector work. As such, there are no implications for the climate emergency resulting from this report. However, the Third Sector Partnership has agreed a focus on the climate emergency as one of its current work priorities. They will consider what the potential implications are for the Third sector in the City.

4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money

4.4.1 The grant funding process supports the council's values of spending money wisely and being open, honest and trusted.

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 The grant funding process has been undertaken in a fair, open and transparent way.

5. Conclusions

5.1 Voluntary Action Leeds provides key support and development support to the Third Sector in Leeds, which includes the provision of capacity building, business support, group development, and training; as well as facilitating and supporting the Third Sector to have an important voice into, and influence over, the strategic

direction of the city, including the redevelopment and delivery of the BME Hub, the Young Lives Leeds Forum and delivering the Volunteer Centre as a City wide volunteering service.

- 5.2 The funding also supports and enables positive social action to build thriving, empowered and inclusive local communities and will support groups and organisations in local communities, of place and interest, to develop and achieve positive social change from within.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 The Chief Officer Communities is requested to approve grant funding to Voluntary Action Leeds from the Third Sector Infrastructure Support Fund Grant from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021. The maximum grant payment is £246,300.00 from the Communities and Environment Directorate and £81,225.00 from the Children and Families Directorate. The total grant payable is £327,525.00.

7. Background documents¹

- 7.1 None

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.