

## **Funding to Voluntary Action Leeds from the Third Sector Infrastructure Support Fund**

Date: 4 July 2022

Report of: Head of Community Relations & Cohesion

Report to: Chief Officer Safer Stronger Communities

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

### **Brief summary**

- The report outlines the proposal to approve grant funding to Voluntary Action Leeds from the Third Sector Infrastructure Support Fund from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.
- 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 work delivered also helps the council's ambition to work with our communities to shape and strengthen the prospects of the city and its residents.
- The activities set out in the annual delivery plan support the Best City Priorities of Safe, Strong Communities, Inclusive Growth, Health and Wellbeing, Child-Friendly City, Culture and Climate Emergency.

### **Recommendations**

- a) The Chief Officer Safer Stronger Communities is requested to approve grant funding to Voluntary Action Leeds from the Third Sector Infrastructure Support Fund Grant from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023. The maximum grant payment is £221,670.90 from the Communities and Environment Directorate and £73,105.50 from the Children and Families Directorate. The total grant payable is £294,776.40.

### **What is this report about?**

- 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 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. In addition, it facilitates and supports the Third Sector to have an important voice into and influence over the strategic direction of the City. This includes the delivery of the Culturally Diverse Hub; the Young Lives Leeds Forum and delivering the Volunteer Centre as a City wide volunteering service.

- 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.
- 4 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. 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.
- 5 During 2018/19 a review was undertaken of the Third Sector Infrastructure Support Fund 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.
- 6 The outcomes of the review demonstrated that there is still a need for Infrastructure Support for the Third Sector and the city. That assessment still holds true to date.

### **What impact will this proposal have?**

- 7 The grant covers all wards of the city and will benefit all third sector organisations from across the city. This will assist in the development of grassroots organisations and contribute towards a thriving Third Sector that contributes to the Best City Ambition.

### **How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?**

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

- 8 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 Culturally Diverse Hub, the Young Lives Leeds Forum and delivering the Volunteer Centre as a city wide volunteering service.
- 9 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.
- 10 All these contribute towards the council's 3 key pillars by improving the prospects and opportunities for communities leading to an increase in the health and wellbeing of local people, and by tackling the inequalities and skills shortages that can lead to financial exclusion.

## What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?       Yes                       No

11 The Executive Member for Communities has been consulted and supports the work proposed. 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

## What are the resource implications?

12 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.

## What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

13 The grant is subject to quarterly monitoring requirements and key risks include not meeting the outputs and outcomes as stated within the delivery plan. A project manager will undertake regular visits to track progress against the delivery plan to ensure any risks are identified and mitigated at an early stage with the option of alternative solutions delivered to achieve the desired outcomes.

## What are the legal implications?

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

## Options, timescales and measuring success

### What other options were considered?

15 None. Voluntary Action Leeds is the Council for Voluntary Services in Leeds and therefore the primary infrastructure organisation providing support to the third sector.

### How will success be measured?

16 The Third Sector Infrastructure Support Fund grant is determined annually. VAL submit an annual delivery plan and quarterly monitoring data to the Communities, Housing and Environment Directorate. This includes details of outputs and outcomes successfully delivered, alongside any challenges in the delivery of the project and how these will be mitigated.

### What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?

17 The ISF grant covers the period 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023. Responsibility for implementation will fall to the Head of Community Relations and Cohesion.

## Appendices

- None.

## Background papers

- None.