

Annual Lunch Club Grant Administration – Contract Extension

Date: 03.01.2023

Report of: Chief Officer / Consultant in Public Health, Adults and Health

Report to: Director of Public Health

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

- This report seeks the authority to approve a 24-month contract extension with Leeds Community Foundation (LCF) for the purpose of administering the annual Lunch Club Grant scheme for older people. The contract was approved by the Director of Public Health to commence from 1st April 2022 for a period of 12 months with the option to extend for 2 x 12 months for the value of £16,500.00 per annum. (Total over 3 years to manage the grant programme: £49,500).
- The Lunch Club annual grant offers a small financial contribution to promote and support voluntary groups who provide a hot, nutritious meal, warm welcoming space, and activities to reduce social isolation for older people (typically those over 60) in Leeds in a communal environment for an anticipated delivery of 40 weeks per year. The grants programme funds approximately 90 clubs with an anticipated total of 3,000 beneficiaries combined. This supports LCCs Best Council Plan (2020 – 2025); to be age friendly by promoting opportunities for older people to be healthy, active, included, and respected; and to be the best city for health and wellbeing by weighting grant allocations based on deprivation to reduce health inequalities supporting the improvement of the health of the poorest the fastest.
- The current contract with LCF is due to end on 31 March 2023 having been commissioned by LCC to manage the Lunch Club Grant for several years.

Recommendations

- a) A 24-month contract extension with Leeds Community Foundation (LCF) for the purpose of administering the annual Lunch Club Grant scheme for older people for 2023/24 and 2024/25 for the value of £16,500.00 per annum (total for 2 years: £33,000; total over 3 years to manage the grant programme: £49,500).

- b) Leeds Community Foundation permitted to distribute a grant pot of £149,850.00 per annum via grant agreements with third sector organisations for 24 months from 1st April 2023 (Overall total over 3 years £449,550.00).
- c) Note that the contract awarded to LCF will be monitored by a nominated officer within Public Health, with commissioning support from ASC commissioning.

What is this report about?

- 1 The annual lunch club grant provides a contribution to the delivery of approximately 90 local projects in community settings where, on average, 20+ older people receive a hot, nutritious meal in a warm social environment on a weekly basis.
- 2 Delivery models vary however each lunch club provides a choice of healthy, fresh, hot food for older people to enjoy. Most lunch clubs (where they can) operate on a user-led basis with regular feedback from older people with co-design of menu plans. Many service users attend alone and have self-reported that without this provision, they would otherwise be lonely or isolated. Lunch clubs' feedback they see success in older people building friendships, sharing knowledge about activities in the city with several service users going on to become volunteers.
- 3 It is deemed appropriate to extend the contract for the administration of this grant programme to LCF as it is considered the contract delivers best value for money for the following reasons:
 - a) LCF's main purpose is the distribution of grant funds to local organisations, and they already manage several small grant programmes and have administered the annual lunch club programme for several years on behalf of LCC. They therefore have a strong track record, contacts and required paperwork to deliver within the timescales required.
 - b) Efficiency savings are achieved within LCC in respect of officer time saved regarding advertising, managing and collated outcomes from the fund.
 - c) LCF have supported lunch clubs to secure further funding and in the past have sourced additional discretionary funds to support Lunch Clubs and small older peoples' organisational activity.
 - d) LCF ensure all lunch clubs have Constitution Governing Documents which meet the Charity Commission Guidelines. This means all grant recipients are supported to have the required legal documents and compliance as a registered Food Business in Leeds. LCF have existing records and grant templates from previous recipients to ensure a timely allocation of funds. They have been able to be flexible to support existing clubs and be a point of contact for all funded clubs.
- 4 Prior to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the internal administrative formula used by the LCF evaluation panel to identify the elements of lunch club operation to be considered for a grant contribution calculates a provisional award dependent on the following attributes:
 - a) Rent (if applicable)
 - b) Meal's subsidy
 - c) Volunteer expenses
 - d) Insurance/training
 - e) Index of Multiple Deprivation Score
 - f) Social isolation Index
- 5 Building on learning from the delivery of clubs, it is now recognised this model needs to be flexible to be able to respond to the changing needs of older people, the potential impact of Covid each winter, and the current cost of living crisis to ensure the safety and wellbeing of older people in Leeds. LCF have been supported by public health to amend the criteria used to award the grants for 2021/22 and these changes will remain for delivery in 22/23 and 23/24. These included:

a) Lunch clubs were able to apply for the delivery of a lunch club (where safe and legal) and/or the delivery of hot or cold food or meals to older people at their home whilst offering other welfare support such as phone calls or resources (or a combination of both). Lunch Clubs have been required to provide monitoring information and return funds to LCF at the end of the financial year if they have been unable to deliver.

b) Only the number of beneficiaries, number of weeks per year and those delivering in 10% most deprived areas were used to scale the amount of funding awarded.

The last two years and moving forwards, we can expect to see ongoing complexity in terms of what may or may not be deliverable by the time applications are assessed. Criteria and guidance therefore shall be flexible with Public Health guidance provided at the time applications are assessed.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 6 Many lunch clubs are linked to larger organisations and Neighbourhood Network Schemes which facilitates partnership working and supporting older people to engage in their local communities. Several lunch clubs link in with day trip offers, guest speakers, music and dance events, and local Elected Member surgeries. Regular interaction and opportunities to build rapport and relationships with service users provide the opportunity to identify need and signposting to community activities and events. This has widened opportunities for Public Health to share key messaging and harm minimisation support through trusted community voices during the pandemic. This has also increased our wider workforce to strengthen referral mechanisms and opportunities for advocacy or support through primary care, adult social care, or other third sector organisations. An example is one club who has worked with Adult Social Care to adapt care packages so the personal care can be done in the community centre where the lunch club is held. This means that older people are still able to attend the club (and have time to socialise, have food together, etc) whilst also having their personal care needs met.
- 7 Some lunch clubs offer transport to older people which can address barriers for those who struggle to use public transport. Several lunch clubs have paid drivers and accessible minibuses to collect attendees, and regular phone calls to confirm transport can also act as a friendly wellbeing check.

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

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

- 8 The grants programme funds approximately 90 clubs with an anticipated total of 3,000 beneficiaries combined. This supports LCCs Best Council Plan (2020 – 2025); to be age friendly by promoting opportunities for older people to be healthy, active, included, and respected; and to be the best city for health and wellbeing by weighting grant allocations based on deprivation to reduce health inequalities supporting the improvement of the health of the poorest the fastest.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected: N/A Citywide

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

- 9 Previous years' application forms have asked for the views of the applicant organisation regarding the application process. Clubs which have sought funding are asked for their view of

the application process which helps identify if groups experience difficulties using the process or if issues create barriers to using the process. These contributions are then taken into consideration to improve the following years' application process. This has, over several years, resulted in grant guidance being rewritten, the date of the grant application period being brought forward, Lunch Club consultation meetings being coordinated city-wide, and a telephone help line being offered.

- 10 The Executive Member for public health and active lifestyles was consulted on 24th November 2022.
- 11 10% of lunch clubs are contacted or visited on a regular basis to hear from staff, volunteers, and service users about the outcomes of the grants. These lunch clubs are a key way to engage older people in their own community with trusted organisations, providing nutritious food alongside social activities and linking into wider systems of support.

What are the resource implications?

- 12 The funding is met wholly by the Public Health Grant.
- 13 The transfer of the management of the fund to an external body will also continue to release LCC officers to work on other priorities.

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

- 14 This is a 24-month extension to the current contract with a known and experienced provider. The contract will clearly outline the standards to which the grant fund must be managed, and regular monitoring will take place against this agreement by officers in the Public Health Older Peoples Team.
- 15 LCF will work alongside Public Health colleagues to ensure any changes due to winter pressures and cost of living crisis are reflected and responded to.
- 16 Should the grant funding element not be spent within a reasonable time scale the Council reserves the right to recall any unspent funding at its discretion including any associated administration fee.
- 17 LCF facilitate a panel who are considered to be in the most appropriate position to award fair and equitable grant funds to lunch club organisations.

What are the legal implications?

- 18 Due to the value of the contract to LCF to administer and manage the total grant fund that will be distributed to lunch clubs, the decision is classed as a Significant Operational Decision. As such it is required to be approved in line with the council's delegated decision-making process and is not subject to call in.
- 19 The decision will be published to ensure transparency and accountability in relation to decision making within the authority.
- 20 There are no grounds for treating the contents of this report as confidential under the Council's Access to Information rules.

- 21 The decision to extend this contract is in accordance with the terms of the original contract and Contracts Procedure Rule 21 which allows a contract to be extended before its expiry date where it is in accordance with its terms and proves to deliver value for money
- 22 Although there is no overriding legal obstacle preventing the extension of contract to LCF, the contents of this report should be noted. In making their final decision, the Director of Public Health should be satisfied that the course of action chosen represents best value for the Council.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

- 23 This continues to be the best value for money with LCF being the only provider able to meet LCCs specific requirements. Therefore, no other options were considered as there are no savings or benefits to gain from considering a change of provider at this point.

How will success be measured?

- 24 All grant recipients are required to submit an end of year update to LCF with an outline of what the grant has been used for as well as the associated outcomes and outputs.
- 25 LCF will also continue to work with colleagues in LCC to visit and/or contact 10% of lunch clubs to gain further understanding and detail about the outputs and outcomes to ensure they are delivering to meet the needs of older people and to contribute to the improvement in the health and wellbeing of older people in Leeds.

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

- 26 LCF will advertise an open grants round in early 2023 with the intention of awarding grants and providing third sector organisations with funding ready to deliver in April 2023.

Appendices

- Equality, diversity, cohesion and integration screening form.

Background papers

- N/A