

REPORT TO: Grants Advisory Committee

25 January 2019

LEAD OFFICER: Director of Housing, Health and Environmental Services

**Grants to Voluntary Sector: Service Support Grants 2019/20-2021/22
Awarding of additional funds**

Purpose

1. To determine the award of an extra sum of funding to community and voluntary sector organisations for three year programmes for 2019/20 to 2021/22.
2. This is not a key decision. However, it is subject to Council's decision on budgets in February 2019.

Recommendations

3. That the Grants Advisory Committee recommends to the Lead Cabinet Member for Finance that, subject to agreement by Council on budget, and subject to annual funding agreements with the organisations concerned, the following awards be made from the Service Support Grant Fund for 2019/20 to 2021/22:
 - (a) £5,000 per year to Disability Cambridgeshire
 - (b) £4,110 per year to Reach

Reasons for Recommendation

These awards are in addition to those made as a result of recommendations of the Grants Advisory Committee at their meeting on 13 December 2018.

Background

4. The Grants Advisory Committee's role is to consider and make recommendations to the Lead Cabinet Member responsible for grants, or Cabinet as appropriate, including, but not limited to:
 - (a) Review of the Council's grants schemes to ensure they reflect Council priorities.
 - (b) Design of any new or revised grants schemes, including consideration of criteria and guidance applicable in respect of each scheme.
 - (c) Consideration of applications made under the Council's grants schemes.
5. At the meeting on 13 December 2018 the Grants Advisory Committee recommended three year funding awards to voluntary and community sector organisations totalling £227,645 per year. It has since come to light that the 2019-20 allocation for grants to the voluntary sector (excluding housing related grants) is £143,110, i.e. £9,110 more than previously realised. The higher figure includes annual inflationary increases since 2016 which were not included in the original figure.

6. The discrepancy relates only to the non housing-related grants as housing-related grants are managed through a different account.
7. The original recommendations for funding through the Service Support Grant scheme were made by an Officer Panel consisting of five officers using an agreed assessment framework. Views of these officers were sought regarding recommendations for allocating the additional funding available.

Considerations

8. Officers considered various options including increasing the awards agreed at the 13 December meeting.
9. Officers considered a number of options including recommending passing all of the extra funding to the organisations for which awards were agreed at the last meeting of the Grants Advisory Committee.
10. Officers unanimously agreed to recommend funding Disability Cambridgeshire and Reach on the grounds that these were the organisations who would have been recommended for awards at the original Officer Panel had the additional funds been known about, and that making awards to these organisations would likely result in best value.
11. Disability Cambridgeshire are a small user-led charity providing advice and information for disabled people, older people, their families and carers. Their original application was for £16,833 pa to provide specialist welfare advice including support for initial benefit form filling and support and representation at appeal tribunals. Home visits are offered where necessary. During the year from November 2017 the organisation provided a service to 203 clients, including 50 residents of South Cambridgeshire.
12. Reach are a Haverhill-based charity providing a range of services including a foodbank, a money advice service, and financial assistance for clients. Reach asked for funding towards the costs of a Community Outreach Advisor working in South Cambridgeshire three days per week carrying out home visits and running monthly surgeries in Linton. During the year from October 2017 Reach supported approximately 500 families/individuals including 48 from South Cambridgeshire.

Options

13. The Grants Advisory Committee may recommend to the Lead Cabinet Member to
 - (a) agree the two funding awards recommended, or
 - (b) agree an alternative allocation of the additional funding (giving reasons), or
 - (c) not allocate the funding (giving reasons).
14. All awards would be subject to agreement of the budget by Council in February, and subject also to agreement of specific details of services to be delivered each year, with the organisations concerned.

Implications

15. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered: -

Financial

16. The awards recommended are within the Council's proposed budget for 2019/20. Agreements with grant recipients will make clear that funding in Year 1 is subject to confirmation of the Council's budget in February 2019, and that funding in Years 2 and 3 is subject to the continued availability of funds and confirmation of annual budgets by Council.
17. Where budgets in future years for Service Support grants allow inflationary increases, these will be passed on to the organisations concerned.

Legal

18. Agreements with grant recipients will allow variation or discontinuation of the grant in specified circumstances.

Effect on Strategic Aims

19. Ensure that South Cambridgeshire continues to offer an outstanding quality of life for our residents: the grant programmes promote a good quality of life for all residents, assisting directly or indirectly through voluntary organisations schemes which help overcome the challenges faced by residents imposed by age, infirmity, disability, low income or rurality.

Background Papers

Grants Advisory Committee Meeting minutes, 13 December 2018
<http://scamb.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeed=1096>

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