

REPORT TO: Grants Advisory Committee

27 November 2020

LEAD CABINET MEMBER: Cllr John Williams

LEAD OFFICER: Jeff Membery

Mobile Warden Scheme use of underspend for medium term funding

Executive Summary

1. Following the Grants Advisory Committee meeting in October 2020, Members agreed to roll forward the monies left from the underspend of the procurement exercise to consolidate and give greater financial support to existing schemes and ensure adequate financial support for the new schemes setting up now and currently funded to September 2022.
2. This paper explores the options as to the best use of this additional funding.

Key Decision

3. No

This report seeks to provide options to GAC for recommendation on to the Lead Member for Finance.

Recommendations

4. The Grants Advisory Committee is asked to review the report and decide how to allocate the underspend remaining from the original procurement budget for the existing and new schemes from April 2021-March 2024.

Reasons for Recommendations

5. The budget allocation for existing schemes has remained static for many years. Existing schemes will be transferring to three-year contracts from April 2021. An uplift in the size of the grant would allow schemes to provide greater opportunity to expand their services and grow schemes in times where older, vulnerable people need to stay connected with communities and people, combatting loneliness and isolation, whilst being encouraged to self-isolate and protect themselves from Covid-19.

Details

6. Historically the budget for supporting the MWS has remained static for many years except for annual inflationary uplifts.
7. Existing schemes move to three-year contracts from April 2021- March 2024.
8. There is anticipated increased demand for the service across existing schemes as the Covid-19 pandemic continues to influence behaviours and exacerbate isolation and loneliness in the most vulnerable.
9. An additional £115,766 is now available resulting from the underspend following the procurement exercise in July/August 2020.
10. Ten additional new schemes starting this financial year will also be seeking part funding from September 2022 to March 2024 and there will be no funding scheme to apply to until the next 3 year scheme is launched in 2024.
11. Longer term the Committee will need to consider funding for 24+ schemes from April 2024.
12. Provision of on-line workshops for new Schemes on how and where to apply for additional sources of grant funding will be offered by way of additional support to all new schemes.

Options

13. The Grants Advisory Committee could recommend to the Lead Member for Finance:
 1. To use the £115,766 across the three years from April 2021-March 2024 to provide an additional £38,588 per year in addition to the £27,000 already budgeted. Providing a total budget of £65,588.66/year. Consideration will still need to be given to resolve how the Council can support the 10 new schemes with part-funding when their full funding expires in Sept 2022.
 2. Top slice e.g. £40,000 from the £115,766 to leave £75,766 to provide an additional £25,255.33 per year in addition to the £27,000 already budgeted over the period April 2021-March 2024. This would result in a total budget for existing schemes (and any others wishing to set up) of £52,255.33/year. Use the £40,000 to part-subsidise the 10 new schemes for the period October 2022 to March 2024 (18 months).

Implications

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

Financial – there are implications as follows:

- a) if option 1 is chosen; whether the Council can provide additional part-funding support to the 10 new schemes whose full funding will come to an end in the middle of the three year funding round and who won't have Council funds available to them otherwise and,
- b) for Mobile Warden Scheme grant funding levels from 2024 onwards.

Staffing: there is a resource implication to setting up funding advice workshops for new MWS – it is anticipated that this will be covered from existing Sustainable Communities and Wellbeing team capacity.

Alignment with Council Priority Areas

A modern and caring Council

Ensure that South Cambridgeshire continues to offer an outstanding quality of life for our residents: the MWS promote a good quality of life for vulnerable residents, assisting directly in supporting independent living, addressing social isolation and loneliness and a wrap around service, connecting residents to other sources of help and advice within the community.

Appendices

None

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