

Cabinet

19 July 2011

A report of the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Culture and Social Inclusion

## **Strengthening the Capability and Capacity of York's Voluntary Sector**

### **Summary**

1. The Cabinet is asked to approve a proposal for the use of the new £100k fund for the voluntary sector in York.

### **Background**

2. The City of York Council Plan, 2011-2015 clearly articulates the Council's aspirations and priorities over forthcoming years. Key themes and actions contained within the plan focus upon building vibrant communities and protecting York's most marginalised and vulnerable citizens.
3. The plan emphasises the importance of the York's voluntary sector, both as service providers and advocates for vulnerable, marginalised individuals in the City.
4. To facilitate these outcomes Council approved, in June this year, a £100k 'pump priming' fund for the voluntary sector, with the aim of building the capacity of the sector to deliver against priorities identified in the Council Plan.
5. The intention is for York Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) to act as the accountable body for this additional £100k year-on-year funding. The Neighbourhood Management Unit would be responsible for regular contract management, carefully monitoring progress against agreed outputs and outcomes.

### **Proposal**

6. It is proposed to allocate the £100k funding against the following priorities:

<b>Creating a strong, successful City Volunteering Centre</b>	<b>£ 30,000</b>
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This funding will enable the continued work of the Volunteer Centre operating at 3 days per week. It will also provide for a micro bursary support scheme for organizations facing difficulties in recruiting and retaining key volunteers with specialist skills. Additional services will be introduced such as “time banking”, volunteering pilots, work on developing “real-time” volunteering using social media platforms, support for volunteering as a route into employability, and volunteering programmes for vulnerable adults.

<b>Voluntary Sector Bursary Scheme - New Business Models</b>	<b>30,000</b>
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Grants will enable voluntary organizations to trial or develop new business models including trading companies and fundraising initiatives, including for groups who need to expand existing activity.

<b>Voluntary Sector Projects – Neighborhood Based Initiatives</b>	<b>40,000</b>
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This funding would enable the voluntary sector to establish projects and initiatives that directly respond to community need evidenced through area working. It will take the form of a combination of microgrants to individual projects and direct funding for more city-wide strategic approaches that may arise through the voluntary sector’s participation in area working tasking groups.

<b>Total</b>	<b>100,000</b>
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### **Projected Outputs and Outcomes**

7. Specific outputs against which the scheme will be measured in its first year of operation include the following:
  - Numbers of new social enterprises and mutuals successfully supported into creation.
  - % increase in residents participating / establishing volunteering projects in their local communities.

- Numbers of volunteers brokered into statutory and voluntary sector services.
  - Numbers of voluntary sector organizations supported to be involved in CYC service delivery.
8. This in turn will translate in the following overarching outcomes:
- More organizations are better able to offer volunteering opportunities.
  - More organizations consult with the York Volunteer Centre for advice and information on good practice and for volunteer matching and brokerage.
  - Volunteers have increased skills, confidence and social capacity
  - More voluntary organizations have improved their readiness to contract with statutory services.
  - More voluntary organizations have improved their readiness to increase service delivery.
  - More voluntary organizations have explored new business models, e.g. social enterprise, trading arms, new fundraising initiatives and income diversification.
  - More small voluntary organizations facing difficulties have received support to become sustainable; including access to an organizational health check or community accounting.

### **Consultation**

9. York CVS have consulted extensively with the wider voluntary sector in York to determine their support for the proposal. There were three key areas where it was felt that additional support was required:
- Support for residents to access community based volunteering opportunities.
  - Greater understanding of collaborative working, including development of voluntary consortia / reduced back office costs.
  - Support for investigating new voluntary sector business models / income generation mechanisms.

### **Options**

10. Members are recommended to approve the allocation of an additional £100k funding to the voluntary sector in York to support the specific strands of activity, and deliver against the outputs and outcomes outlined above. An alternative option would be for

members to amend and adjust the above priorities, activities and outcomes as appropriate.

### **Analysis**

11. Approval of the recommended option would build the scope and capacity of York CVS to deliver an enhanced package of support to the wider voluntary sector in York, developing the capacity and capability of the voluntary sector to engage with volunteers, support marginalised communities and explore new methods of cross sector collaboration and co-production. It would also allow CVS to extend the opening hours of the York Volunteer Centre, a critical resource in the City.
12. A wide variety of alternative options for the allocation of the £100k additional funding could be considered. However, the recommended option has been drawn up in close consultation with the Chief Executive of York CVS and the wider voluntary sector. All parties concerned have agreed that the proposal will ensure robust deliverables and will impact positively on the voluntary sector.

### **Corporate Priorities**

13. The allocation of an additional £100k funding to the voluntary sector would make a direct contribution to the following specific outcomes listed in the draft City of York Council Plan:
  - Improved volunteering infrastructure in place to support increasing numbers of residents to give up their time for the benefit of the community
  - Increased participation of the voluntary sector, mutuals and not-for-profit organisations in the delivery of service provision

### **Implications**

14. **Financial:** The budget set in February approved an increase in funding to the voluntary sector of £93k. The amendment to the budget approved by Council in June this year further increased this uplift by £7k giving a total funding uplift of £100k. This brings the total of the Council's core grant funding to the voluntary sector in 2011/12 to £376k. The additional £100k is ongoing funding; however, given the need to be aware of the financial pressures, commitments have not been made for future years but will be reviewed as part of the 2012/13 budget process.

15. **Equalities:** The fund will enable targeting of support towards activities which contribute towards all the equality outcomes set out in the draft Council Plan. It will be a requirement of all recipients of CYC funding to demonstrate and evidence their commitment to equal opportunities in the work of their organisations, in line with the Equalities Act 2010.
16. **Legal:** The additional funding set out in this report is made under section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 (other financial assistance).
17. There are no **Human Resources, Crime and Disorder, Information Technology, Property**, or other implications arising from this report.

### **Risk Management**

18. The potential risks range from failure of York CVS (as the accountable body for the £100k funding) to deliver the agreed service at the appropriate standard, to the closure of the organisation as a whole with consequential loss of funds. These types of risks have been considered and will be dealt with carefully through the monitoring, assessment and agreement process put in place by the Council.
19. The Neighbourhood Management Unit would be responsible for overarching contract management, carefully monitoring progress against agreed outputs and outcomes. Distinct lines of reporting and accountability to City of York Council against the outputs and outcomes listed in paragraphs 7 and 8 would be established.
20. If members agree to this allocation of funding the next step would be to draw up a detailed SLA between the Council and York CVS. This SLA would set out the criteria for the two funds that are to be made available, advertised and distributed, and the appropriate mechanisms for allocating funding. This will include the establishment of a steering committee to oversee the funds onto which York CVS will co-opt the Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Social Inclusion.
21. The SLA will also set out the reporting arrangements by which CVS will account for the use of the funding. The SLA will also set out that part of the £100k funding that will need to be used to fund CVS's costs in administering the funding.

## Recommendations

22. Members are asked to approve the allocation of an additional £100k funding to support the voluntary sector in the City, specifically focused around building the capacity and capability of local voluntary bodies to diversify income streams and deliver joined-up services at a neighbourhood and City-wide level, and extending the opening hours and provision of the City Volunteering Centre

**Reason:** To increase the scope and build the capacity of York CVS to strengthen the fabric of the voluntary sector in the City.

## Contact Details

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Kate Bowers Head of Neighbourhood Management Neighbourhood Management Unit 551817	<b>Report Approved</b>		<b>Date</b>	
<b>Specialist Implications Officer(s)</b> N/A				
<b>Wards Affected:</b> <i>List wards or tick box to indicate all</i>			<b>AI</b>	<b>X</b>
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**Background Papers:** N/A