

Executive

27 April 2017

Report of the Director of Children, Education and Communities

Portfolio of the Executive Member for Education, Children & Young People

Local Area-Based Financial Inclusion

Summary

1. This report outlines plans for the delivery of a new local area-based financial inclusion project (4CommunityGrowthYork) to be carried out over 2 years as part of the York Financial Assistance Scheme.

Recommendations

2. The Executive is asked to agree:
 - The implementation of the 4CommunityGrowthYork – Local area-based financial inclusion project as outlined in paragraphs 7 – 20 in this report.
 - That the multiagency 4CommunityGrowthYork Local Action Group be supported.
 - The use of a Social Return on Investment measurement tool for the duration of the project, in order to measure impact and social value for every £ invested and to support funding decisions.

Reason: In order to support people in the identified communities to realise their potential and encourage financial stability and self reliance.

Background

3. This paper follows on from the decision at Budget Council to allocate £250,000 to run a financial inclusion project in the 4CommunityGrowthYork Project area. The budget allocation decision required a paper to be brought to the Executive.

4. This proposal is informed by local models of good practice including the Kingsway West Area Project in Westfield, the Delivering Differently in Neighbourhoods Project in Haxby Road, Tang Hall Big Local and the findings of the 4CommunityGrowthYork Local Action Group. This initiative supports the council's commitment to area-based services and the devolution of budgets thus building on the momentum created through ward committee budgets and capacity-building in communities. The proposed project offers an enhanced opportunity to target funds where they are most needed and to work with communities to design effective interventions.
5. This proposal is for funding to run a multi agency financial inclusion project in targeted areas within the following wards:
 - Westfield (all)
 - Clifton (part)
 - Guildhall (part)
 - Heworth (part)
 - Hull Road (part)
6. The project area is shown at Annex A. The project concentrates on the communities in York currently or recently in the bottom 20% nationally as ranked against the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). In 2010 York had 9 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA's) in the bottom 20% IMD nationally. This figure was updated in 2015 to 5 LSOAs in the bottom 20% IMD nationally. These LSOAs in the bottom 20% IMD (see Annex A) are pepper-potted across the authority area and in many cases our most deprived households are adjacent to some of the most affluent which in itself polarises the issue for residents.

Project Principles

7. Evaluation of previous projects demonstrates that a multi-agency, coordinated approach is the most effective. Projects which facilitate opportunities for communities to design and ultimately implement local solutions from initiation are the most likely to have a profound and sustainable impact. Good practice and experience shows that effective practice offers a holistic approach which is targeted to those least likely to engage proactively with existing services without intervention.
8. Consultation in the proposed project area highlighted the following as priority considerations when designing intervention strategies:

- **Small steps** – Previous experience using a multiple agency approach has shown the need to breakdown work into realistic and achievable targets that build confidence and trust. This aspect takes time and needs a supportive and nurturing environment that encourages positive steps – toward greater resilience and reducing dependency.
 - **Hyper local & bespoke** – Where practical project activities should take place within the target community, in accessible and familiar venues especially in the initial stages. Each named area should be treated as a project within a project with its own identity, and preferred methods of engagement and delivery through locally trusted organisations and individuals.
9. Utilising the small steps and hyperlocal intervention logic a typical range of activities under this programme might include:
- Benefit take-up campaigns
 - Debt and financial planning advice, support and guidance
 - Personal development and Wellbeing support
 - Employability workshops
 - Volunteering and work experience opportunities
 - Community engagement and capacity building events
 - Campaigns to raise the profile of area and its assets
 - Aspiration raising and confidence building
 - Mentoring and capacity building
10. In terms of timing there are a number of key elements which can be linked to add momentum and capacity to the project including:
- Ward Committees and Ward Teams
 - Local Area Teams
 - Local Area Coordination
 - Estate Management
 - Area-Based Working
 - Strong local Voluntary and Community Sector
 - Volunteering and Social Action Initiatives
 - Digital Interventions

Project Outline

11. The project is an invest-to-save initiative and will operate as a grant-giving and commissioning project delivered through a multi-agency Local Action Group. The project will maximise opportunities for local networking, partnership working and for local residents and stakeholders to shape the delivery programme.
12. The project budget will be made up of a grants and commissioning pot to deliver local projects and interventions, an allocation for staff resource and an operational budget to support local engagement and promotion events and project publicity for maximum impact. The indicative allocation is shown in the table; this may be refined in line with the project delivery plan.

Budget Detail	2017/2018	2018/2019
Grants and Commissioning pot	£65,000	£65,000
Staff Resource	£50,000	£50,000
Operational	£10,000	£10,000

13. It is proposed to allocate £50,000 per annum for the staff resource to drive the project forward, actively seek additional funding opportunities and ensure connectivity with the 4CommunityGrowthYork Local Action Group, the Financial Inclusion Steering Group, Ward Committees and Ward Teams.
14. A key part of the investment in staffing resource will be to attract additional external funding streams. All applications for additional funding will build in management costs in order to maximise the delivery pot available to be invested in projects locally.
15. The 2 year fixed term post will sit within the Communities and Equalities Team.
16. Research into good practice in evaluating the impact of similar area-based projects has highlighted the effectiveness of Social Return on Investment measurement tools. Social Return on Investment produces a description of how a project creates value and a ratio that states how much social value in £s is created for every £ of investment.

17. The 4CommunityGrowth York Local Action Group is already established and is made up of representatives from the local authority, Universities, voluntary and community sector, schools, local business and residents. This group is well placed to support the delivery of the project and maximise the opportunities on offer through a multi-agency partnership approach. The Local Action Group is also well placed to support applications for additional funding to develop and extend the project.
18. Ward committees and ward teams are a vital part of this project bringing local intelligence, knowledge and established networks with residents and local stakeholders. With this wealth of expertise they are ideally placed to innovate, propose and prioritise project activities and to shape local delivery to maximise effectiveness.
19. Ward Members may also decide to use their ward committee budget to buy in additional or complementary activities e.g. if a project course on volunteering was oversubscribed ward members could choose to fund an additional course and/or a local event to promote local learning and volunteering opportunities. In turn the project offers a mechanism which supports ward priorities, offers insight into the financial challenges experienced by ward residents and the opportunity to test and measure the effectiveness of innovative and bespoke solutions.
20. Ward Committees offer a platform for promotion and awareness-raising of the project and community engagement. There is also the potential for ward committee events to support project delivery directly e.g. Ward Members could choose to host a Ward Committee event themed around debt advice and financial planning.
21. The project will utilise a multi-media approach in order to have the maximum reach in communities, where possible using existing and established communications methods and consistent branding which emphasises a positive approach. 4Community Growth York has been established as a brand across the proposed project area and this can be further qualified to reflect the very local area e.g. 4CommunityGrowth - Westfield
22. The minimum length of project would be 2 years in order to build trust and deliver a project which has at its core Community Led Local Development and therefore the potential to deliver sustainable outcomes. The project could be extended subject to additional funding being secured.

23. A communication plan is being developed to support keeping all stakeholders informed of progress and ways to get involved.

Consultation

24. A concentrated period of consultation was undertaken between February and August 2016 in order to support the production of the 4CommunityGrowthYork Local Development Strategy. The consultation was carried out through face to face conversations in communities; paper and electronic questionnaires and at stakeholder events; Ward Team and Local Action Group meetings.

Options

25. **A** – to approve the recommendations at listed as paragraph 2.
26. **B** – to reject all or part of the recommendations at paragraph 2.

Analysis

27. Approval of option a) would allow the project to get started immediately to support communities within the project area to develop financial resilience. There are no identified disadvantages to the proposal. Rejection at this stage would delay implementation of the project and therefore the identification and delivery of initiatives to support development of financial resilience within the project area. Option A is therefore recommended.

Council Plan

28. This proposal supports all three priorities of the Council Plan 2015 – 2019:
- A prosperous city for all
 - A focus on frontline services
 - A council that listens to residents
29. The project also offers an opportunity to demonstrate good practice in community engagement and encourage coproduction.

Implications

30. **Financial:** Confirmation of allocation of £250,000 as part of the York Financial Assistance Scheme

31. **Human Resources (HR):** This paper references the creation of a 2 year fixed term post which sits within the Communities and Equalities Team. The establishment of and recruitment to that post will be carried out in line with the Council's HR and management of change procedures.
32. **Equalities:** It is recognised that a wide variety of engagement and community methods will be needed in order that the opportunities offered through the project reach the target communities.
33. **Legal:** There are no legal implications.
34. **Crime and Disorder:** There are no crime and disorder implications.
35. **Information Technology (ICT):** There are no information technology implications
36. **Property:** There are no property implications

Risk Management

37. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy the main risks that have been identified associated with the proposals contained in this report are those which could lead to the inability to meet business objectives and to deliver services, leading to damage to the Council's reputation and failure to meet stakeholders' expectations. The level of risk is assessed as "Low". This is acceptable but means that regular monitoring is required of the operation of the project.

Contact Details

Author:

Mora Scaife
Neighbourhood Manager
Tel No. 551834

Charlie Croft
Assistant Director (Communities
and Equalities)
Tel No. 553371

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Jon Stonehouse
Director Children, Education and
Communities

Report
Approved



Date 12.4.17.

Specialist Implications Officer(s) Nick Carter, Human Resources

Wards Affected: Westfield, Heworth, Hull Road, Clifton
and Guildhall

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers: 4CommunityGrowthYork Local Development
Strategy

Annexes

Annex A – Project Area