
Decision Session - Executive Member for Children and Young People's Services

13 April 2010

Report of the Director of Adults, Children and Education Services

York Youth Community Action Pilot

Summary

1. This purpose of this report is to:
 - a. provide the Executive Member with background information on the York Youth Community Action Pilot;
 - b. inform the Executive Member of the results of Round One of the York Youth Community Action Pilot Grant Fund bidding; and
 - c. ask the Executive member to approve the funding to projects recommended by the Youth Community Action Pilot Grant Fund Assessment Panel.
2. As the grant assessment process will not complete until 9 April, a list of projects recommended for funding will be tabled at the meeting.

Background

3. Following a comprehensive application process in December 2009, the City of York was selected as one of five national pilots to develop 'Community Action' (volunteering) amongst 14-16 year olds, for a defined period up until March 2011. The pilot, which is fully funded by the Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), aims to test methods of engagement and ways of delivering volunteering opportunities for 14-16 year olds throughout the city. York's Youth Community Action pilot is managed by the City of York Council in partnership with York Council for Voluntary Service and York Cares. The Secretary of State for Children and Families formally launched the Pilot at an event, attended by two of York's 14-16 year old volunteers, in London on 22 March 22.
4. The DCSF have awarded York a total of £1.38 million for the pilot. Three full time officers have been appointed to work on it: a project manager within the Council, and two volunteering co-ordinators within York CVS and York Cares.
5. Half of the pilot funding, £695,000, will be distributed directly to wide range of organisations and individuals (including statutory organisations) to fund the delivery of volunteering opportunities in the heart of the community during the pilot period. Organisations and individuals have been invited to bid for funding

support in three rounds of grant funding. Since 19 February 2010, Round One funding applications have been invited from groups who can deliver volunteering opportunities for 14-16 year olds (see Annex A for application form and Annex B for application guidance). Organisations have been assessed against the following criteria:

- Activities must involve 14-16 year old volunteers who are residents of York, or who go to school in York;
 - Benefits to young people and the wider community;
 - Engaging with young people from hard to reach groups;
 - Appropriate safeguarding arrangements;
 - Adherence to principles of equality and diversity.
6. Round One closed on Friday 19 March 2010. Initial assessment of bids was carried out by officers of the Grants and Partnership Team with support from the Strategic Partnership Team and Corporate Finance. The initial assessment involved:
- Conducting an eligibility check to ensure compliance with the criteria specified in the guidance;
 - Assessing eligible bids against priority criteria outlined in the guidance;
 - Producing a report to summarise the outcome of the assessment;
 - Moderation exercise to ensure consistency of officer's assessment.
7. A panel was convened to make recommendations on the allocation of the funds. The panel included both internal (CYC) and external organisations and was selected on the basis of local and children's services experience/ knowledge. Representatives included senior staff from: Learning City York; the Local Strategic Partnership; schools; the third sector; and a young person's representative.
8. The Assistant Director, Partnerships & Early Intervention, chaired the Panel but did not vote as part of the panel's deliberations on the individual schemes. Each panel member separately ranked every scheme and these scores were added together and then discussed at a meeting. All panel members were asked to declare any specific 'interests' or involvement in projects. Officers then employed a process to remove the potential effects of these interests on any scheme where it was deemed that the 'interest' was significant.
9. This list of panel recommendations will be tabled at the meeting on 13th April 2010. (*Attached as Annex C*) If the recommendations are approved, the next steps in allocating the Youth Community Action Pilot Grant Fund will be to:
- Notify the successful bidders via a grant offer letter, with any relevant conditions and an Acceptance form;
 - Notify unsuccessful bidders with some details of why they were unsuccessful and how their bid could be improved (in case they want to re-apply in a subsequent round);

- Upon receipt of the signed Acceptance form and any required extra paperwork, payment will be made. In line with the Compact code of conduct on grants, partial payments will be made in advance to Third sector organisations, with subsequent payments made on receipt of satisfactory financial expenditure information and monitoring/ evaluation reports.
10. In view of the very short timescale for application in Round One, any applications that miss the Round One deadline will be put forward automatically for consideration in Round Two, which closes for applications at 12.00 noon on Friday 16 April 2010. Round three will close at 12 noon on Friday 27 August 2010.
 11. Young people are also invited to apply for funding for volunteering projects of their own design. These bids will be accepted at any time and will be assessed through a rolling programme of assessment. The engagement of young people is essential to the success of this project and a YorkKash type panel of young people will be asked assess and approve young peoples bids.

Consultation

12. Widespread consultation was undertaken, both internally and externally, during the development the original application to the DCSF. Consultation confirmed support for the development of a grant fund that would enable a wide range of organisations to apply to help deliver the objectives of the pilot and generate a variety of volunteering opportunities for young people.
13. Round One of the grant fund has been advertised widely via existing networks and in the local media. The advertising included full page adverts in the York Press on three occasions and featured on the home page of City of York Council website. During the course of the pilot the fund will also feature in adverts on Minster FM, Vue Cinema and Local Link. All of this marketing activity is fully funded by the DCSF grant. Organisations have been invited to apply for funding to deliver volunteering projects in which young people 'define and engage in community actions which matter to them, with demonstrable impacts in their school/community'.
14. In the grant application form (Annex A) organisations were required to demonstrate the need and demand for their proposed project, for example by making reference to surveys, consultations or feedback. The grants assessment process will be prioritising projects that, amongst other things, can demonstrate the support of young people and local communities.

Options

15. The executive member may approve the funding recommendations or ask officers to review their recommendations and or selection criteria.

Analysis

16. An analysis of the first round of funding applications will be conveyed orally at the meeting.

Corporate Objectives

17. The activities that will take place within the Youth Community Action Pilot will contribute to the following LAA targets:
 - NI 6 – Participation in regular volunteering (Inclusive City)
 - NI 7 – Environment for a thriving Third Sector (Inclusive City)
 - NI 110 – Young Peoples Participation in Positive Activities (City of Culture)
 - The pilot will also contribute to many of the priorities of York's Children and Young People's Plan 2009-2012, specifically with reference to 'Making a Positive Contribution'.
18. The grants guidance document (Annex B) states that 'Community Action' activities undertaken by young people must have 'demonstrable impacts in their school/community'. The grants assessment panel will aim to fund a range of different types of volunteering activities including arts, sport, environmental, citizenship and democracy, leadership, mentoring and support, resulting in benefits to the community which could potentially reach across all strands of the Corporate Strategy.

Implications

Financial

19. The DCSF have awarded York's Youth Community Action Pilot a total of £1.38 million and have approved a budget breakdown in which £695,000 of revenue funding will be distributed to partners/deliverers. The grants process will take place over three rounds of funding during 2010. Funds will be distributed in line with CYC Financial Regulations - Grants Supplementary Guide.
20. Spending must be completed by March 2011.
21. Applicants are being assessed on financial need, in line with the above Guide.
22. Grants can be for 100% of the costs and, in line with the Compact Code of Good practice, applicants can include indirect costs or overheads (also known as Full Cost Recovery).
23. All grants, staff and project costs are totally funded from the DCSF funding.

Human Resources (HR)

24. There are no human resources implications. Project staff have been recruited in line with delegated authority within the Directorate.

Equalities

25. During the course of the pilot the project will engage with a minimum of 90% of the 4,774 14-16 year olds in York, 4,296 young people. The project is committed to providing opportunities for young people who are hard to reach, including those who are disabled or identified as in need of additional services. The grant application form requires organisations to specify how many young volunteers they plan to recruit from the following groups:
- Young people with disabilities
 - Young people with learning difficulties
 - Young people on alternative learning programmes
 - Young people from deprived areas of York
 - Young people from black and ethnic minority groups
 - Looked after young people
 - Other hard to reach groups
26. Projects that aim to recruit significant numbers of 14-16 year olds from these hard to reach groups (and provide convincing evidence of how they will achieve this), will receive additional weighting in the assessment process.

Legal

27. There are no legal implications.

Crime and Disorder

28. There are no crime and disorder implications.

Information Technology (IT)

29. There are no IT implications.

Property

30. There are no property implications.

Risk Management

31. The project has an active risk log that is regularly reviewed and updated.
32. Financial risk will be managed through a rigorous assessment of bids, strict financial review and quarterly monitoring.
33. Risk to individuals will be managed through risk assessment undertaken by groups. This will be assessed as part of the bidding process and will be reviewed, using the experience of Schools and CYC H&S officers.

Recommendations

34. The Executive Member is invited to:

- Note the process underway for local implementation of the Youth Community Action Grant Fund
- Approve for funding the list of projects recommended by the York Youth Community Action Grant Fund's Project Board.

Reasons:

- The assessment process has been rigorous and effective.
- The projects offer a great opportunity for CYC to work with the voluntary groups of York and provide the city's 14-16 year olds with a range of opportunities that would have otherwise been unavailable to them.

Contact Details

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**Report
Approved**



Date 29 March 2010

Specialist Implications Officer(s)

Finance: Sue Rothney, City of York Council, 01904 554571

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Annexes

Annex A – York Youth Community Action Pilot Grant Fund Application Form
Annex B - York Youth Community Action Pilot Grant Fund Information and Guidance
Annex C – Panel recommendations for Round One