

**Decision Session - Cabinet Member for
Children, Young People and Education**

27 March 2015

Report of the Assistant Director (Communities, Culture & Public Realm)

Better Play Grants and the YorPart Scheme

Summary

1. This report is brought to the Cabinet Member to seek approval for the allocation of Better Play Grants over £5k for the period 2015-2018. The report also asks the Cabinet Member to approve the process for allocating funding under the YorPart scheme, which supports the voluntary, community and independent Youth Sector.

Background

2. **Better Play Grants** are allocated to projects that address priorities outlined in the 2013-2016, *Taking Play Forward* policy. The funding available through this grant is £87K. The policy reflects the changes that have occurred at a national, regional and local level within the play sector. The document sets out the priorities and challenges for play in the city, drawing on feedback from the play sector, as well as regional and national good practice.
3. From 2014/15 this grant fund sits alongside other schemes managed within the Communities and Equalities Team, including the Youth and Community Development service, which includes the YorPart scheme and the Shine Project. This will enable funding to be coordinated in its distribution, to ensure that organisations are working to support the more vulnerable children and young people in the city, who wouldn't usually access main stream activities. Co-locating these schemes will facilitate a greater emphasis on a collaborative, community and partnership approach to delivering opportunities for children and young people in our communities, as well as a more joined up approach to planning.

4. **YorPart** is a scheme that was introduced in 2014 by the newly formed Youth and Community Development Team. This scheme distributes resources to the voluntary, community and independent youth sector, to enable the delivery of youth provision in defined areas of need. Resources include the use of buildings, vehicles and a funding pot of £40K. Grants can be up to £7.5k. Youth and Community Development officers work with partners from the sector to draw together proposals for projects aimed at addressing need. Proposals are then presented to the Youth Sector Partnership, which is led by the Council's Youth and Community Development Team and brings together representatives from the voluntary, community and independent youth sector, for consideration and to ask probing questions to ensure bids meet the aims of the scheme. Trials of this approach have proved highly successful, placing the voluntary sector at the heart of the decision making process. It has also provided the opportunity for organisations to share their resources and expertise.

Better Play Grant Applications

5. To advertise the Better Play grants, information was circulated to play sector organisations, uploaded onto the YorOK website, and promoted via a press release.
6. We received 11 grant applications. A rigorous shortlisting process has been undertaken to ensure that funding is targeted to those organisations that are able to address the priorities of York's play policy.
7. Organisations recommended for funding have clearly described how their projects work to address the priorities of the Taking Play Forward policy and are able to demonstrate that they have the necessary policies and practices in place to work with children and young people. In addition organisations are asked to formerly register on the YorOK service directory, to enable children and young people to find out about projects.
8. The funding agreements over £5k proposed are:

Name of organisation	Amount 2015/16	Amount 2016/17	Amount 2017/18
SNAPPY	£36,743	£36,743	£36,743

Door 84	£31,743	£31,743	£31,743
The Conservation Volunteers (TCV)	£7,950	n/a	n/a

9. Of the remaining 8 bids, 4 organisations were able to meet the funding criteria, their projects costing less than £5K. The 4 remaining bids did not meet the criteria.
10. Service level agreements will be drawn up with each of the successful organisations to ensure they deliver against the objectives set out in their project briefs. This will also be used to monitor the progress which will focus on the outcomes for children and young people. Results of the successful projects and their progress will be shared with the play sector via the YorOK website to help promotion and disseminate good practice.
11. As the funding was not allocated for all 3 years, we will run future funding rounds in January of 2016 and 2017, to allocate the remaining amount. Bids that are over £5k will again seek approval of the Cabinet Member.

YorPart Process

12. Following this first trial, approval is now sought from the Cabinet Member to formally adopt the approach trialled in 2014, devolving to officers the decision to award grants up to £7.5k on the advice of the Youth Sector Partnership.
13. Over the past couple of years the Youth Sector Partnership has met on a quarterly basis to collectively help shape and promote the YorPart scheme. The forum has provided an invaluable opportunity to network, share expertise and collectively problem solve, whilst gaining an understanding of the changes and challenges for the youth sector, from a national and local perspective. In addition, York Youth, a website dedicated to the practitioners in the youth sector, has been developed to provide an online resource to support this ongoing work. In the trial YorPart projects included new sports provision in areas of disadvantage, and targeted schemes relating to mental health, mentoring and healthy relationships.

Options

14. It is open to the Cabinet Member to:
 - a) not offer the proposed funding
 - b) support the proposed funding

Analysis

15. Funding is recommended in order to meet the priorities in the Taking Play Forward Policy.

Council Plan

16. The actions set out in the report contribute to the following corporate priorities as set out in the Council Plan 2011-15:

Building stronger communities by:-

- Encouraging and enabling vulnerable and disadvantaged residents to engage with the wider community through positive and affirmative opportunities
- Supporting the voluntary sector; providing volunteering opportunities and the chance to gain new skills.
- Create communities where young people can flourish; York will be one of the best places in England in which to grow up – with great schools, exciting things to do, new ways to get involved.

Implications

17. **Financial:** £87k is available for better play grants in 2015/16. The grants set out in paragraph 8 total £87K for 2015/16 and £68,486 with further funding rounds planned for 2016/17 and 2017/18 to allocate the remaining funds. The balance of the funding available will be allocated to grants of less than £5k.
18. For 2015/2016 the YorPart funding pot will be £40k.
19. Equalities – this funding support enables the most vulnerable sections of the community to access youth provision. As part of developing the approach, the Youth Sector Partnership will collectively develop a Community Impact Assessment to support the outcomes of the scheme.

20. There are no Legal, Property, Human Resources, Crime and Disorder, or Information Technology implications arising from this report.

Risk Management

21. The level of risk associated with this proposal is “Acceptable”.

Recommendation

22. The Cabinet Member is asked to:

- approve the Better Play grants allocation for the period 2015-2018
- adopt the partnership approach to the allocation of YorPart funding for grants of up to £7.5k for 2015/16 as set out in paragraph 12

Reason: To increase the wellbeing and quality of life of for children and young people.

Contact Details

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Specialist Implications Officer(s): N/A			
Wards Affected:			All ✓
For further information please contact the author of the report			

Background Papers: Taking Play Forward 2013-2016