

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report/Report

Panel:	Executive Member for Policy and Resources
Date:	5 March 2020
Title:	Annual core infrastructure grants to Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations
Report From:	Assistant Chief Executive

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Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to:
 - provide an update on the return on the County Council's investment of core infrastructure grant funding to Citizens Advice Hampshire during 2019/20 to-date; and
 - recommend the allocation of ongoing funding for 2020/21.

Recommendation(s)

2. This report recommends that the Executive Member for Policy and Resources approves the allocation of £70,000 infrastructure grant funding for Citizens Advice Hampshire.

Contextual information

3. The County Council continues to recognise the vital contribution of the voluntary and community sector (VCS) to delivering its [Strategic Plan](#) and, in particular, preventing and managing demand for County Council services. To support a vibrant and sustainable sector within Hampshire, the County Council sees an ongoing role for effective local infrastructure organisations – for example, in providing advice, building capacity, attracting funding, supporting financial resilience, brokering partnerships and providing a collective voice for, and single front door to, the sector.

4. One local infrastructure organisation, with which the County Council has a longstanding partnership, is Citizens Advice Hampshire (CitAH). CitAH delivers training and development to around 220 paid employees and 1,000 volunteers across 14 local Citizens Advice offices. It also provides specialist advice lines on employment and welfare and maintains a single point of contact between Local Citizens Advice and wider strategic partners.

Performance

5. The County Council values the role that CitAH plays in enabling its local offices to continue to meet the needs of some of Hampshire's most vulnerable residents. This is reflected, in part, by the fact that the County Council has maintained core grant funding to CitAH for the previous three years at £70,000.
6. This funding has enabled CitAH to deliver the following, which align with the agreed grant purpose:
 - support 41,226 clients, addressing 134,293 issues (see appendix A);
 - 34% of issues were related to benefit claims and universal credit);
 - 39% of clients had either a disability or long-term health condition and the greatest demand for support came from those aged between 50 and 64;
 - develop a new suite of 'on-demand' training courses, leading to a boost in the number of sessions being offered and take up;
 - run bespoke workshops, e.g. on bid writing
 - embed the *Making Every Contact Count* approach within CitAH services, including by promoting use of the *Connect to Support Hampshire* directory. This included delivering training and undertaking research to understand the range of issues raised by clients, where they were signposted to, and what gaps appear to exist in service provision; and
 - commence an innovative pilot in partnership with the County Council to embed a Citizens Advice Advisor within an Adults' Health and Care mental health and substance misuse team (see case study below).

Case study: Integrated mental health services

During 2018, Citizens Advice Hampshire undertook initial research which demonstrated a positive correlation between information and advice given and a measurable increase in clients' wellbeing scores to be more in line with the national average. Building on this research, the County Council and CitAH agreed to explore the extent to which the impact could be maximised through providing advice to mental health and substance misuse services clients as part of holistic, multi-disciplinary approach.

Consequently, the two organisations co-designed a pilot project to test the impact of co-locating a Citizens Advice Advisor within the Fareham mental health and substance misuse team over a 12-month period. The pilot commenced in November 2019 and involves the Advisor working as an integrated part of the team, contributing to assessment of need, the design of care packages, arrangements for ongoing support and review of client progress.

The focus of the pilot is on addressing situations where mental ill-health and substance misuse may impact on an individual's financial wellbeing, or where financial stress may exacerbate mental ill health and substance misuse. Evaluation of the project will evidence the degree to which arrangements resulted in an improved service user experience, better outcomes, increased capacity for the social work team and improved knowledge and capability between the organisations.

2020/21 funding

7. Based on evidence of impact to-date, it is proposed that core infrastructure grant funding continues to be maintained at £70,000 for the 2020/21 financial year. Funding will, in part, be used to support the completion of the innovative pilot project outlined above, which directly aligns with Adults' Health and Care's demand management and prevention priorities.

Monitoring arrangements

8. The County Council maintains ongoing, open dialogue with CitAH regarding the organisation's financial situation, and delivery against the agreed grant purpose document. This includes through regular monitoring meetings between the Head of Insight and Engagement and the CEO.

Conclusion

9. This report demonstrates that Citizens Advice Hampshire continues to deliver a positive return on the County Council's investment, playing a key role in the provision of infrastructure support to local Offices which, in turn, support some of Hampshire's most vulnerable residents.

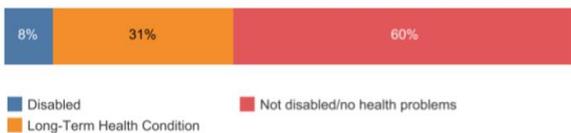
Appendix A: Information on the demographics of clients and nature of issues based on known client profiles

	Q1			2019-20 Q2			Q3			Grand Total
	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	
Benefits & tax credits	2,862	3,019	2,748	3,699	3,130	3,088	3,348	3,030	2,405	26,405
Benefits Universal Credit	2,149	2,127	1,888	2,309	2,172	2,154	2,433	2,434	1,949	18,973
Consumer goods & services	550	485	511	557	506	575	597	551	374	4,623
Debt	1,911	1,963	1,761	2,178	1,950	2,008	2,145	2,102	1,559	16,598
Discrimination & Hate & GVA	130	110	99	169	106	115	146	112	128	1,098
Education	43	32	52	69	53	75	67	54	56	496
Employment	1,276	1,298	1,278	1,508	1,167	1,271	1,396	1,174	885	11,076
Financial services & capability	1,505	1,559	1,580	1,781	1,708	1,637	1,743	1,389	850	13,663
Health & community care	190	235	265	278	304	260	260	264	183	2,188
Housing	1,239	1,236	1,123	1,442	1,209	1,214	1,401	1,240	900	10,808
Immigration & asylum	197	212	159	239	209	245	281	232	146	1,874
Legal	631	619	643	683	678	664	695	574	348	5,422
Other	508	610	518	633	689	616	742	679	637	5,575
Relationships & family	1,210	1,260	1,160	1,424	1,142	1,186	1,220	1,051	706	10,241
Tax	152	142	118	141	144	120	138	126	98	1,166
Travel & transport	194	216	200	230	212	247	252	174	134	1,838
Utilities & communications	240	240	187	264	236	208	280	404	280	2,249
Grand Total	14,987	15,363	14,290	17,604	15,615	15,683	17,144	15,590	11,638	134,293

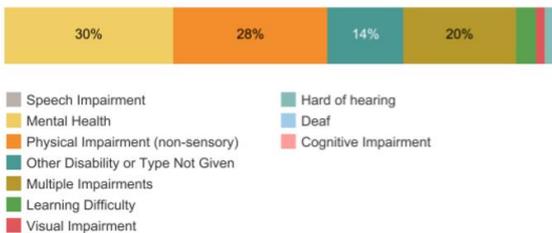
Gender



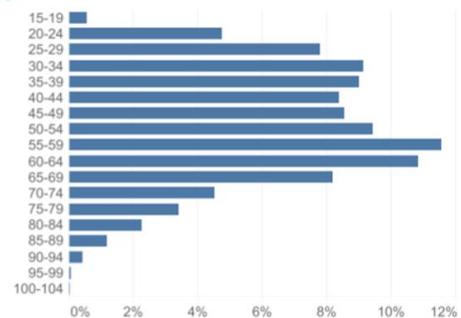
Disabled / Long term health condition



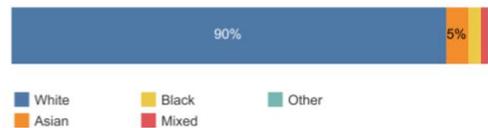
Type of disability (% of disabled clients)



Age



Ethnicity



CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	Yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

None

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equality Duty

1.1. The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- a) The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- b) Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- c) Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

2.1. The purpose of the County Council's financial support to voluntary sector infrastructure organisations is to ensure that groups and organisations are helped to develop their effectiveness, particularly in supporting vulnerable groups. Core grant funding also promotes individual voluntary action to benefit vulnerable people, including those who participate and those who receive help as a result of that activity.

2.2. The health of the sector and level of voluntary action is fundamental to the wellbeing of residents including the most vulnerable and consequently to the demand on public services. For this reason, this report recommends grant funding remains at a consistent level.

2.3. The Assistant Chief Executive will work closely with the Chief Executive of Citizens Advice Hampshire to ensure that the revised grant purpose documents continue to be directed towards supporting vulnerable communities. The grant purpose will include a requirement to support local offices to promote equality, diversity and inclusiveness within the voluntary sector.