

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Adult Services and Public Health
Date:	18 January 2022
Title:	Demand Management and Prevention Grant Award
Report From:	Director of Adults' Health and Care

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Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for making a grant award to the voluntary and community organisations outlined in this report as part of the Demand Management and Prevention Programme

Recommendation(s)

2. That approval be given by the Executive Member for Adult Services and Public Health for the following actions:
 - i) To award grant totalling £20,000 to Age Concern Hampshire to cover a one year period between 1 April 2022 and 31 Mar 2023 as part of the Rural Connections Grant.
 - ii) To award a grant totalling £60,000 to Good Neighbours to cover a 12 month period between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023 as part of the Neighbourhood Care and Support Grant.
 - iii) To seek approval for the closure of the Autism Support Grant from 1 April 2022 for the reasons set out in the report.

Executive Summary

3. This report seeks to...
 - Set out the background to the grants
 - Set out the reason for the recommendations
 - Consider the finance for the project
 - Look at key issues

Contextual information

Background

4. The Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) contributes to improving people's quality of life. The grants programme is one of the ways in which the County Council supports the sector to help people to live fuller more independent lives.
5. A voluntary organisation may be considered for grant aid from the County Council only if its services, projects or activities are in compliance with the aims and objectives, priorities and policies of the County Council.
6. Grants are awarded to support services that are better provided by the voluntary sector e.g. the mobilisation of community resources to help vulnerable people maintain their independence.
7. A grant is defined as a sum of money to support a particular activity. It does not usually cover the entire cost of the activity and it is legally considered to be a one-sided gift, rather than a payment in exchange for services.
8. Voluntary and community organisations provide locally based services that are often rooted in the communities which they serve. Benefit is derived from this activity, often through voluntary action and focused towards activity that clearly assists in providing early intervention and prevention initiatives. Grant funding by the County Council contributes to this activity.
9. Organisations will not normally be eligible for grants where they hold balances in excess of one year's running costs. Those organisations receiving recurring funding which hold in excess of three months' running costs, and where they cannot demonstrate through their reserves policy that these reserves are justified, may receive a reduced grant. To establish the level of reserves, organisations are required to provide a set of their latest accounts and annual report with their application and before grant payment is made – in the case of organisations with an income of £10,000 or above, these must be independently examined or audited. If organisations have reserves in excess of three months, we will apply the reserves policy which is in line with the Charity Commission's policy on these matters.

Demand and Prevention Programme

10. Prevention, incorporating Demand Management, is one of the three key areas identified to achieve the Vision of Adults' Health and Care, as detailed in the Adults' Health and Care Strategy 2018.
11. The Demand Management and Prevention work can build on people's strengths, enabling them to improve their health and take more personal responsibility for looking after themselves with support from their family, friends and community network. The County Council can encourage this by making the healthy choice the easy choice and developing accessible, inclusive and readily available information and advice services. The County Council may also carry out targeted prevention work for certain groups of people who are most at risk of poor health to keep them well and to avoid or delay the need for social care

services. The County Council will seek to work with partners, in particular the NHS, GPs and the Voluntary sector to achieve the above aims.

Rural Connections Grant

12. The Rural Connections Grant purpose is to enable recipients to provide a service that develops and supports local volunteers in rural settings to provide information and advice for vulnerable adults in their communities, and to facilitate connections with other services and assets (e.g. community groups and buildings). In particular the focus is to support people at risk of social isolation and loneliness.
13. The Community Information Service, formally known as the Village Agent service delivered by Age Concern Hampshire has currently over 38 trained volunteers operating in different rural locations across Hampshire offering a service to over 60 rural communities. The service is preventative in nature, aiming to encourage and capacity build so that people stay well and independent in their communities for as long as possible, linking to other local voluntary services including others funded by the County Council. This is of particular importance in rural communities where providing care is more challenging and costly.

Neighbourhood Care and Support Grant

14. The Neighbourhood Care and Support Grant purpose is to enable an umbrella organisation to provide advice and support to a network of smaller local organisations, whose purpose is to support vulnerable individuals in the community so that those individuals maintain their independence which may lead to a reduced demand for County Council services.
15. The role of the organisation awarded the grant is to promote, support and develop neighbourhood level groups so that they thrive by helping them provide safe, sustainable support to vulnerable individuals, provide advice to enable people to utilise their resources and assist them to develop support that meets the needs of their community.
16. Good Neighbours Network support over 118 neighbourhood level groups operating within Hampshire providing a wide range of services, such as befriending, social activities and transport assistance. Last year these groups supported Hampshire residents undertaking interventions and acts of kindness with a network of volunteers. Over the period of funding Good Neighbours Network will seek to help support these groups to ensure they continue to best meet the needs of vulnerable residents in line with priorities of the County Council, through best practice, training and development.
17. Previously this grant has been awarded over a 24 month period. The grant award period has been decreased to a 12 month period for this award, with the amount being awarded remaining the same as in the last 12 month period of the previous grant.

Autism Support Grant

18. The Autism Support Grant has been awarded for since March 2017 to fund services to support people with autism and their families before, during and post diagnosis with advice, guidance, signposting/support through referrals from the diagnostic services across Hampshire. The current awarded organisation benefitting from this grant is Autism Hampshire until 31 March 2022.
19. Recently national policy on autism and how the Care Act should be applied was published that strengthened the case for information, advice and guidance to be provided to adults and their families about what services and support they can access. As the Hampshire element of the grant funded service was fully funded by the County Council, it was determined that the service elements which have been provided by the Autism Support Grant could form a contracted Hampshire Information, Advice and Guidance Service.
20. The transfer of the service elements of the Autism Support Grant into a contracted service will provide additional stability, clearer performance monitoring of deliverables and outcomes and an ability for closer working between the County Council and the chosen provider. The contracted service has been awarded to Autism Hampshire, the current grant recipient, who will begin delivery of the contracted service on 1 April 2022.
21. As a result of movement to a commissioned service from 1 April 2022, there is no need to award the Autism Support Grant beyond 31 March 2022, so approval is sought to close the Autism Support Grant from 1 April 2022.

Finance

22. The grant proposal in this report will commit additional expenditure totalling £80,000 over a single financial year (2022/23). Subject to approval of this report the total grants committed for payment will remain within the agreed, (2022/23) annual budget envelope for the Demand Management and Prevention Programme.
23. Payment will be made in two instalments as are traditionally used for awards in excess of £10,000. All grant agreements have conditions that enable the County Council to require repayment of the award or any part of it if it remains unspent at the end of the grant period, or if there is a material breach of the grant agreement.

Performance

24. The provision of grants to voluntary and community sector organisations by statutory bodies always presents a degree of risk. Specific risks that statutory bodies are required to manage include voluntary and community organisations accepting funding without providing any activity; organisations not delivering the service as expected; and there being an under spend on the expected activity. This applies to all grants, however larger grants represent a potentially higher risk to the County Council.

25. A number of mechanisms have been employed successfully over a number of years to mitigate and alleviate these risks. These include nominating a liaison officer from the County Council whose responsibility is to monitor how the grant is spent, specifying within the grant agreement that the grant is 'restricted' funding for the provision of the specified activity only and phasing the payment of grants over the course of the award duration.
26. A comprehensive evaluation assessment tool has been developed and is in use for the beneficiaries of previous grant rounds, ensuring consistency of data capture. The outcomes of this evaluation tool help evidence the impact of the grant and also provide data that can be used by the funded organisation in funding applications to other bodies.
27. All organisations awarded a grant sign a declaration stating they accept that grant funding can only be awarded for the given period and no commitment exists from the County Council to continue funding after this time, or in subsequent years.
28. During the period of any grant award, County Council staff are able to work with the organisations funded to support them to source funding from other sources to support the maintained delivery of funded services in the future. This can include speaking to other agencies and funding bodies in Hampshire to increase their understanding of the services provided and to explore opportunities as to how these services could be supported from other funding streams.

Consultation and Equalities

29. It is for the Executive Member as decision maker to have due regard to the need to: eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
30. Both the Rural Connections Grant and the Neighbourhood Care and Support Grant will maintain funding at the same level as in the previous year. As a result the grant is not expected to have a change in impact on people in any protected characteristic groups, although are expected to continue to positively support older adults, including those with a disability or who live in a rural community, particularly in respect of those people supported by the Rural Connections Grant funded activities.
31. The closure of the Autism Support Grant is not expected to have a change in impact on people in any protected groups as the outcomes and delivery methods of the contracted service will be similar, with the contracted provider being the same organisation who received the previous year's grant funding.

Climate Impact Assessment

32. Hampshire County Council utilises two decision-making tools to assess the carbon emissions and resilience of its projects and decisions. These tools provide a clear, robust, and transparent way of assessing how projects, policies

and initiatives contribute towards the County Council's climate change targets of being carbon neutral and resilient to the impacts of a 2°C temperature rise by 2050. This process ensures that climate change considerations are built into everything the Authority does.

33. A full assessment of climate change vulnerability was not completed as the initial vulnerability assessment showed that the project is at minimal risk from the climate vulnerabilities because the projects delivered will be operated from premises not owned by the County Council or the organisation in receipt of the grant.
34. The Carbon Mitigation Tool assessment was not applicable as the grant recipients do not have evidence as to the carbon impact of their projects or collect data relating to fuel consumption in the transport of service users.

Conclusions

35. The Rural Connections Grant would seek to connect individuals in rural locations to the facilities and services in their local community and reduce social isolation and loneliness in users.
36. The Neighbourhood Care and Support Grant would continue to support local volunteer groups to support older residents in day to day tasks, ensuring they remain healthy, active and able to attend essential medical appointments.
37. The closure of the Autism Support Grant would not impact previous beneficiaries due to it being replaced by a contracted service with similar outcomes and methods of delivery.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	no
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	no
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u> Demand Management and Prevention Grant Award Demand Management and Prevention Grant Award Demand Management and Prevention Grant Award	<u>Date</u> 15 January 2020
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>

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.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

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 by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

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

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

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

The award of grants to the voluntary and community sector to support people to live long, healthy and happy lives with the maximum possible independence, as part of the demand management and prevention programme and in-line with Adult's Health and Care Strategy 2018.

Grants in this paper:

Rural Connections Grant and Neighbourhood Care and Support Grants (both countywide) - period 1 April 2022 - 31 Mar 2023. Total Pot: £80,000

Geographical impact: Countywide

Proposed Change: The two grants proposed in this paper are continuations of funding, awarding the same amount has been distributed under both of these

grants in the past 12 months. There will be no changes to the terms or objectives for either of the grants.

The closure of the Autism Support Grant is as a result of the same provision, outcomes and measures being delivered through a newly agreed contracted service. The new service replicates the provision which has been granted for many years under the terms of the Autism Support Grant and as such the grant stream is no longer required.

As a result of the proposals contained within this Executive Member Decision Report we do not anticipate any changes to service provision, rather these are extensions to existing services.

Will the proposed project/service change affect people in the protected characteristics groups or any of the other groups for consideration? No

Who does this impact assessment cover?: All

Has engagement or consultation been carried out?: Yes

Describe the consultation or engagement you have performed or are intending to perform: Both grants proposed for award have been awarded in previous years with the outcomes and benefits monitored in line with Adults' Health and Care objectives and commitments. Both projects funded under these grants have demonstrated value and benefit across Hampshire, particularly in light of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and therefore the decision was made to extend them by an additional year whilst a decision is reached on any future funding.

Consultation and engagement between HCC and the funded organisations will continue throughout the duration of these grants, as part of the regular monitoring meetings between the various lead representatives of the grant recipient organisations and County Council officers. These meetings determine progress of the grant against the Public Sector Equality Duty and will be used to raise specific issues as they arise - ensuring that this provision is responsive to changing situations and the needs of individual groups.

The Autism Support grant has been monitored throughout the years of its award in line with departmental commitments and goals. Recently national policy on autism and how the Care Act should be applied was published that strengthened the case for information advice and guidance to be provided to adults and their families about what services and support they can access. As the Hampshire element of the grant funded service was fully funded by the County Council, it was determined that the service elements which have been provided by the Autism Support Grant could form a contracted Hampshire Information, Advice and Guidance Service. Consultation around this highlighted that the transfer of the service elements of the Autism Support Grant into a contracted service will provide additional stability, clearer performance monitoring of deliverables and outcomes and an ability for closer working between the County Council and the chosen provider. The contracted service has been awarded to Autism Hampshire,

the current grant recipient, who will begin delivery of the contracted service on 1 April 2022.