

## Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 12 October 2017

### Report of the Head of Service, Wellbeing, Prevention and Early Help Service

#### Part I

Electoral Divisions affected:  
All

### Review of Wellbeing, Prevention and Early Help Small Grants Scheme

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#### Executive Summary

The Young People's Service small grants scheme is administered by the Wellbeing, Prevention and Early Help Service, as a legacy from Lancashire Young People's Service; providing awards to third sector groups and individual young people. A review has taken place which has presented an opportunity to reconfigure the grant award scheme. This proposal will ensure access is maintained, and accessibility improved to funding that is available to support vulnerable communities and young people, and to improve their outcomes. This proposal will also make more effective and efficient use of resources.

#### Recommendation

The Cabinet is recommended to:

- (i) Note and consider the contents of the report.
- (ii) Agree that the provision for small grants for VCFS organisation and individual young people be reconfigured from April 2018.

#### Background and Advice

As part of the revised structural arrangements for the County Council, the Wellbeing, Prevention and Early Help Service (WPEHS) has responsibility for the Young People's Service Small Grants scheme, as a legacy from Lancashire Young People's Service.

The Small Grants scheme supports applications from both voluntary, community and faith sector (VCFS) organisations and individual young people.

In 2017/18, the annual amount of funding made available for the small grants programme is £111,000.00. The funding is divided across each Lancashire district,

with 25% of each of the district allocation ring-fenced for individual young people's applications.

In 2017/18 the amounts available for awarding are:

- third sector £83,250.00
- individual young people £27,750.00

The grants available to VCFS organisations provide support for small scale projects and equipment, which extend the range and quality of places to go and things to do for young people in the local area. Grants up to £2,000 in value can be awarded.

The grants available to individual young people provide direct support of up to £500 to individual young people, where it has been identified that this would remove a blockage that is preventing the young person from doing well.

Small grant applications are received throughout the year and considered monthly. If grants for individual young people are £250.00 or less, the District Youth Council has the authority to approve these. All applications submitted by VCFS organisations and any applications received from individual young people which are for more than £250.00, are considered for approval by Cabinet.

During a period of transition for the Wellbeing, Prevention and Early Help service, the Small Grants Scheme has been maintained with funding provided by Public Health, with the expectation that the scheme would be reviewed. The review has identified a year on year decline in the number of applications received from both individuals and VCFS organisations, with the budget consistently underspent despite activity to promote the scheme. In 2016/17 only 48% of the available budget was spent.

<b>2016/17 Small Grants awards</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Amount awarded</b>	<b>Underspend</b>
Awards to VCFS Organisations	£83,250	£32,994	£50,256
Awards to Individual Young People	£27,750	£20,650	£7,100

The monthly application, assessment and approval cycle is costly to administer. It is also evident that some providers consistently secure funds via this and other routes, whilst other VCFS organisations make no applications to the scheme.

The review has also identified duplication with other sources of funding as indicated below:

### **Wellbeing, Prevention and Early Help Lead Professional Budget**

The Wellbeing, Prevention and Early Help Service provides grant funding in the form of a Lead Professional Budget, which enhances the support offered to an individual family.

The Lead Professional grants are approved by officers, who act as Lead Professional for the family, where this meets a need identified by a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) assessment and actioned in the Team around the Family Action Plan.

If the small grant scheme for individual young people was to cease, the Lead Professional budget could be utilised to support targeted vulnerable young people who WPEH are working with.

### **Corporate Grants Schemes**

Funding is available to support voluntary, community and faith sector organisations to deliver services to children, young people and families through other corporate grants schemes including the Local Initiative Fund and Local Member Grants.

The eligibility criteria for a Local Initiative Fund grant award is a direct duplication of the Small Grants scheme.

### **Wellbeing, Prevention and Early Help service commissioned provision**

The Wellbeing, Prevention and Early Help service has commissioned VCFS providers to deliver a range of additional services for children and young people, including emotional health and wellbeing support, and support for children and young people affected by domestic abuse. The funding provided to the commissioned services for 2017/18 is £1.3m.

The Wellbeing, Prevention and Early Help service is also currently developing a paper for Cabinet, which includes the option of continuing to support VCFS partners, through commissioning for the delivery of community based preventative and early help interventions.

### **Recommendations**

Following this review, it is recommended that the young people's service small grant awards to VCFS organisations and individual young people is reconfigured from 1 April 2018. This redesign will provide clear pathways to access alternative grant schemes across the County.

Subject to funding being agreed annually, VCFS organisations working with young people will continue to be able to apply for funding from the Local Initiative Fund, and families and individual young people will continue to be able to access financial support from the Wellbeing, Prevention & Early Help Lead Professional budget. This will improve accessibility to funding, whilst ensuring a better use of resources to target those children and young people most in need, leading to improved outcomes for children, young people and families.

This recommendation would:

- Eliminate the duplication of small grants schemes;

- Provide a clear pathway to access alternative grant schemes across the County;
- Ensure financial resources are prioritised to vulnerable groups and communities based on assessed levels of need;
- Ensure that requests for financial resources are needs led and identified through the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and the Team around the Family action plan;
- Make more efficient and effective use of financial resource.

## **Consultations**

N/A

## **Implications:**

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

## **Risk management**

The Young People's Service Small Grants Scheme has had no identifiable budget since 2015. If the scheme is to be maintained, additional funding will need to be found from alternative sources.

## **Financial**

The Young People's Service Small Grants Scheme has no identified budget for 2017/18. The £111,000 funding commitment has been met by non-recurrent Public Health reserve.

Maintaining the current arrangements post 2017/18 has not been budgeted for and would therefore cause a financial pressure.

## **List of Background Papers**

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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None

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A