

Urgent Decision Taken on Behalf of Cabinet

Report to the Leader of the County Council and the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing

Report submitted by: Head of Service - Health Equity, Welfare and Partnerships

Part I

Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);

Community Foundation for Lancashire - Red Rose Responding Fund

(Appendix 'A' refers)

Contact for further information:

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Executive Summary

This report requests that £49,500 from the Community Projects Team project budget, currently unallocated due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, is allocated to The Community Foundation for Lancashire to support the Red Rose Responding Fund. This fund will address key priorities linked to the impact of COVID-19 in relation to mental health and wellbeing and social isolation.

Reason for Urgency

This decision is urgent and cannot await the next meeting of Cabinet on 1 April 2021. The reason for this is that the funding needs to be allocated by 22 March 2021. This decision is therefore being taken on behalf of Cabinet by the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order C16(1).

Recommendation

The Leader of the County Council and the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing are asked to approve that £49,500 from the Community Projects Team project budget currently unallocated due to the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic, is allocated to The Community Foundation for Lancashire to support the Red Rose Responding Fund.

This decision should be implemented immediately for the purposes of Standing Order C29 as any delay could adversely affect the execution of the County Council's

responsibilities. The reason for this is that there is a requirement that funding is allocated by 22 March 2021.

Background and Advice

Reducing social isolation and improving mental wellbeing has been a key priority for the Community Projects Team's work in recent years. The pandemic has had a significant impact and has meant that the team has been unable to work in their usual way out in communities with grassroots groups. As a consequence, £49,500 of the project budget remains unallocated and it is proposed that this funding be used to support The Community Foundations for Lancashire and Merseyside, operating as The Community Foundation for Lancashire. The organisation has established a fund to target the key priorities of mental health and wellbeing, including social isolation, across Lancashire.

The Community Foundation for Lancashire has, to date, secured £90,000 and is in discussion with a number of other potential donors to supplement the funding, with Lancashire Business View Magazine naming The Lancashire Red Rose Responding Fund as its charity of the year. The Community Foundation for Lancashire will ensure that county council funding is targeted to activity in the Lancashire districts.

The Community Foundation for Lancashire managed a £2 million Lancashire COVID-19 Support fund during 2020, in relation to emergency food and wider mental wellbeing. This was funded through the National Emergencies Trust, Lancashire Resilience Forum partners, including Lancashire County Council, and direct charitable donations from members of the public. Moving away from the initial emergency response, and in recognition of the continued and increasing need to address key social issues created or heightened by the pandemic, The Community Foundation for Lancashire has now established the Lancashire Red Rose Responding Fund. The overall aim of the fund is to support local charities, voluntary and community organisations that are helping vulnerable people impacted by the COVID-19 crisis - specifically relating to mental health. The fund will prioritise projects which directly respond to acute need and are delivered by organisations based within their local community and able to provide appropriate provision for the people they support. It is anticipated that the funding will support a number of grass roots projects up to a value of £5,000 each.

It is proposed that of the £49,500 funding available, £45,000 is allocated to the Red Rose Responding Fund to support grass roots activity, and £4,500 to the management costs of The Community Foundation for Lancashire, incurred in order to manage the process outlined at Appendix 'A'.

The timescales that are attached to the funding stream are outlined below:

1. Funding allocated to The Community Foundation for Lancashire by 22 March 2021;
2. Community Foundation for Lancashire advertises total funds available and open application process in the county council areas, plus Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen;

3. Closing date for applications 23 April 2021. The Community Foundation for Lancashire to undertake due diligence/appraisal process;
4. Funding panel to meet in June 2021;
5. Community Foundation for Lancashire notifies the county council of funding decisions;
6. Community Foundation for Lancashire to provide performance metrics/case studies to the Community Projects Team at the county council by September 2021, or once projects are complete; and
7. The Community Projects Team will carry out a review to assess whether this is an appropriate and effective way of supporting grassroots Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector organisations.

Consultations

N/A

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

The impact of the COVID-19 outbreak is significant for groups and organisations which are supporting communities on the front line dealing with the impact of the outbreak. Significant and immediate support is required for organisations to try and limit the long-lasting effects of the outbreak. In order for this to happen, a joined up and co-ordinated effort is required across all agencies in Lancashire. This funding provides some degree of mitigation to those risks.

Financial

The recommendation within the report will approve £49,500 of funding to be allocated to the Community Foundations for Lancashire and Merseyside to supplement the Red Rose Responding Fund. This contribution will be funded from the Community Projects team project budget which is currently underspent due to the impact of COVID-19.

Legal

The county council and the Community Foundations for Lancashire and Merseyside have a Memorandum of Understanding covering contributions for Lancashire COVID-19 support.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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None

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A