

Report to: Executive Cabinet Member - The Deputy Leader

Date: 12th October 2015

Bolton Council

Report of: John Livesey, Acting Director, Children's and Adult Services

Report No:

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Report Title: Review of Children's Services Voluntary, Community & Faith Sector Grant Funding 2015/17

Confidential / Non Confidential:

(Non-Confidential) This report does not contain information which warrants its consideration in the absence of the press or members of the public.

Purpose:

To set out proposals to review Voluntary and Community Grants for Children and Young People (2015).

Recommendations:

The Executive Cabinet Member is recommended to approve the attached report for consultation purposes with the Children's Services Voluntary, Community & Faith Sector.

Decision:

Background Doc(s):

(for use on Exec Rep)

Signed:

Leader / Executive Cabinet Member

Monitoring Officer

Date:

Summary:

An Executive Summary is set out within the report below which includes the following appendices:

- Appendix 1 Children and Adult Services Grant Process
- Appendix 2 Voluntary and Community Grants for Children and Young People
- Appendix 3 Equality Impact Assessment

1.0 Background

- 1.1 On the 10th November 2014, the Council's Cabinet approved the start of consultation on a programme of savings covering the years 2015/16 and 2016/17.
- 1.2 The Council subsequently approved savings options in February 2015, following the December 2014 Local Government settlement, in order to meet an increased savings target of £43m for the 2015/17 period.
- 1.3 Following the significant budget reductions already made by Bolton Council, further savings will be very challenging and will result in a reduction in staffing and resources across the Department that will inevitably impact on the services provided to children, young people and adults in the Borough.
- 1.4 Decisions about where savings can be made within Children's and Adult Services and Public Health are difficult. However, in the budget report of February 2015, the Council identified a set of criteria against which departmental and corporate savings targets will be allocated, to ensure that organisational priorities and values are protected as far as possible. This includes that as much as possible savings should be found from:
- Reductions in management, administration and from further efficiencies
 - Protecting the most vulnerable with lower levels of savings found from children's and adults social care services
 - Protecting services to individuals and areas in greatest need and deprivation
 - Efficiencies and non-frontline reductions where possible.
- 1.5 The community, voluntary and faith sector (voluntary sector) in Bolton has an important role to play in helping the Council's Children's and Adults Services Department and its partners deliver against a wide range of important priorities.
- 1.6 Children's and Adult Services have undertaken a review of current funding to the voluntary sector.
- 1.7 Children's and Adults Services have recently introduced a revised Grant Framework (Appendix 1) and it is intended that this framework be applied as part of the review process. As part of the framework there will be two funding levels available:

Type	Amount	Duration
Small Grant	£5,000	1 year
Full Grant	Up to £50,000	2 years

- 1.8 The financial saving resulting from the proposals set out in this report equals £244,682. This equates to approximately 19% of the total current 2015/16 Budget for Voluntary and Community Grants for Children and Young People with 28% of the funding from the Local Authority (LA) Funding Block.

- 1.9 Whilst this report deals only with the funding that has historically been commissioned or managed by Children's Services, we have worked closely with other Departments across the Council to ensure that a consistent approach has been taken throughout the process. Work has also been undertaken to ensure that the proposals within this report take account of the overarching corporate framework in relation to changes in funding to the voluntary sector.
- 1.10 The Council, through the Chief Executives Department is currently piloting a £500,000 Community Empowerment Fund (CEF) which provides a small, time limited investment to community partners in return for greater involvement of local communities to improve their local areas. The funding aims to help the voluntary sector develop creative ideas and projects to address existing and emerging issues across the borough. Successful projects are expected to provide long term, sustainable solutions by building on the resources which exist in our communities. It is not the intention that this fund creates an on-going funding stream and must be used as an investment, to stimulate initiatives that have a long term impact that must be sustainable.
- 1.11 The CEF is being piloted with priorities around cleaner, greener and safer and opportunities for young people with the specific objectives of:
- Reducing the demand for Council services and
 - Making sustainable improvements to the environment and / or
 - Creating sustainable opportunities for meeting the needs of young people
- 1.12 This report sets out a proposed programme as the basis for consultation which the Executive Member is asked to approve. If approved, we will consult with appropriate groups and stakeholders with a view to bringing back more detailed proposals to the Executive Member. In developing the proposals, we will be mindful of the requirements within the Voluntary Sector Compact and ensure we engage fully with individual groups and give adequate notice of any changes in funding or agreements.

2.0 Proposals

- 2.1 The proposals for savings and efficiencies are part of a review of the Voluntary and Community Grants for Children and Young People and the commissioning of the existing resource for 2015/16 and 2016/17.
- 2.2 It is recognised that the sector is complex with many different groups and organisations and a mix of funding/grant arrangements.
- 2.3 Historically, funding to develop activity came from specific government grants. The withdrawal of these grants in previous years has resulted in this support falling to mainstream funding and with the need to make significant savings it is necessary to undertake a full review of the current funding and the activity it supports.

2.4 The intention is to undertake a further detailed review of each area of work with Heads of Services /Budget Holders to update and develop revised specifications to ensure they are meeting the priorities of the Council. New and existing providers will have the opportunity to submit revised bids based on the new specifications.

2.5 Funding bids based on revised specifications will be invited from Autumn of 2015 and implemented from 1st April 2016.

3.0 Review of Children's Services framework and funding to the voluntary sector

3.1 The review of Children's Services funding to the voluntary sector has been undertaken within an agreed framework and each contract or grant will be assessed against the principles and priorities set out within this framework.

3.2 Many voluntary organisations have detailed understanding of specific local needs, high levels of trust and engagement with local communities and the ability to work across multiple services to provide "holistic" services for individuals as well as:

- Acting as a `critical friend` in helping the council improve the quality of services
- Attracting additional external resources and funding to Bolton
- Being able to reach excluded communities statutory services sometimes cannot
- Harnessing the time, talents and ambitions of local residents who wish to volunteer
- Provide evening, weekend and holiday services
- Providing a local `community voice`.

3.3 The commissioning intentions will focus on funding priorities that are linked to the Councils key themes of:

- Protecting the most vulnerable
- Target those most in need
- Targeted in deprived areas
- Keeping citizens and the organisation safe

3.4 Due to government funding reductions the Council will not be able to continue to fund voluntary sector to the level of previous years. However, there will be a continued commitment to community cohesion and integration, ensuring we continue to have good community relations and a culture that recognises and celebrates diversity. There will also be a commitment that the voluntary sector should not be expected to have to carry an unfair burden of funding reductions and any changes should be in line with those experienced within Children's and Adult Services.

3.5 Children's and Adults Service will continue to support key infrastructure or umbrella organisations, i.e. Bolton Together and CVS, through in-kind i.e. support with funding bids, strategic representation, networking and partnership support rather than a direct grant.

- 3.6 There will be a prioritisation of funding to organisations who support children and young people who have been identified and as being the most in need, for example, children with disabilities, looked after children, terminally ill children, children affected by domestic violence, homeless young people and young carers.
- 3.7 Based on the above principles, it is proposed that the new programme for 2016/17 will total £1,007,430 annually, which signifies the Council's significant on-going commitment to voluntary sector organisations working with children and young people in Bolton.
- 3.8 A full summary of the savings and the proposed reductions can be seen in Appendix 2 and a summary of the budget categories and percentage reductions is illustrated in the table below:

Table 1. Summary of funding changes to voluntary sector organisations, by category.

Budget Category	DSG	LA	Funding	LA Funding	Reduction %
	Funding £'000	Funding £'000	Reduction £'000	£'000	
	Current		Proposed		
Youth and Play Services Positive Activities 5 -19	26	280	112	168	40
Short Breaks for Disabled Children and Young People	0	247	47	200	20
Vulnerable Children and Young People	0	306	61	245	20
Early Years Ages 0 – 5	358	0	0	0	0
In Year Savings	0	25	25	0	100
Total	384	858	245	613	28%

- 3.9 Vulnerable Children includes a contribution of £15k to Derian House (terminally ill children) and it is proposed that this funding is protected and will not receive any cut.
- 3.10 Although there are no proposal to reduce the Early Years budget the intention is to recommission services as part of the review of Children's Centres.
- 3.11 The Council will ensure that performance management systems are in place to ensure that organisations are accountable for the effective and efficient delivery of services and are allocated in the best possible way to ensure high quality and value-for-money. Consequently, the proposed option in this report is one which matches the Council's and the Department's priorities and seeks to minimise the impact on the most vulnerable.

4.0 THE PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The proposal is to adopt a single integrated Children's and Adult Services Grants Framework which will:

- make sure that spend is delivering against outcomes
 - provide a fair process for sharing out limited funding
 - encourage the development of new types of services and organisations, in line with developing choice and control for local people
 - invest in early intervention and prevention services that will reduce demand for statutory services
 - lift the burden of formal tendering processes from small voluntary organisations
 - ensure that the Council funding of local, Bolton based voluntary and community groups is prioritised.
- 4.2 The revised Grants Framework documentation has already been trialled through the Adults Services Prevention and Carers Grants process and the intention is to use the new process which includes a Full Grant application process for up to £50k per year for two years or a Small Grant application of £5k for 12 months.
- 4.3 To create a level playing field and to encourage providers to apply for funding in specified categories. This approach will also allow for identification of targeted and/or niche provision i.e. geographical area, target group.
- 4.4 The intention is to assess the best method of re-contracting i.e. grants programme, competitive tender and framework contract depending on the value and specialist nature of the contract. There are some statutory services that are currently commissioned and it is intended that these services may be tendered and procured separately at a later date.
- 4.5 Commissioning opportunities will be developed based on needs analysis and prioritisation of the outcomes to be achieved. The revised specifications will clearly state the aims and objectives and will be influenced by statutory requirements and local priorities.
- 4.6 The Council also recognises that some smaller organisations will not wish to take on commissioned services or activities through a competitive tendering and procurement process and therefore the Small Grants programme has been designed to support these smaller groups to access funding of up to £5,000.
- 4.8 The following criteria will apply to funding applications:
- Only organisations with a Bolton address can apply for a grant
 - Organisations do not have to have their head office in Bolton, but they will need to have some form of office based in Bolton
 - Have an income of less than £1,000,000 per year. This will impact on some organisations. The Council reserves the right to make an exception to this criteria where we recognise that the grant application is of particular importance and that public intervention is required to ensure that the services which the Provider intends to deliver under the grant application are available in the Bolton borough.

- 4.9 Only the following organisation types will be considered:
- registered charities
 - voluntary organisation that have a formal written constitution or
 - a registered social enterprise
- 4.10 It is recommended that this be a competitive grants processes and awards will depend on the relevance and likely impact of the various proposals which will need to be balanced against the needs of different communities and localities.
- 4.12 It is recognised that the period of grant needs to be long enough for organisations to develop sustainable services, build awareness and use of services and recruit and retain any support staff and systems needed. This needs to be balanced against over-committing the Council in a time of financial constraints and the changing needs and aspirations of local people. In order to move to a more regular award programme it is recognised that initially grants are awarded on an annual (Small Grant) or 2 year (Full Grant) basis.
- 4.13 Commissioning opportunities will be advertised and the process and timescales will be made clear. Opportunities will be advertised via the North West's Local Authority Procurement Portal 'The Chest', <https://www.the-chest.org.uk>, CVS and Bolton Together.
- 4.14 New and existing providers will be invited to attend a provider briefing sessions and given support with accessing the Chest etc. Once organisations have ascertained their eligibility and ensured their proposals meet at least one of the council's target outcomes, they will be required to submit an application form online. Bids will be assessed by individual members of Awards Panel (Appendix 1) using the Councils e-procurement system 'Award Solution'.
- 4.15 The outcome of all commissioning activity will be reported to the Executive Member for consideration and final approval.
- 4.16 The proposed scheme has been designed to recognise the important types of service already provided, whilst also making sure that there is a fair way to distribute limited resources by investing in services that deliver outcomes that improve lives, as well as reduce demand for high level care and support services. This should limit the impact where existing providers can demonstrate that this is what they deliver for Bolton.
- 4.17 The continued investment in some non-statutory services recognises that these services are valued and are in line with the Council' desire to ensure care and support for the health and wellbeing of vulnerable children and adults is provided.
- 4.18 To allow a smooth transition, the Cabinet is requested to allow existing providers to be notified in writing of the intention to end contract in line with the schedule in Table 2 below. All contract are due to end on the 1st April 2016 (Appendix 2). Where deemed necessary contract may be extended inline with the proposed programme of activities and dates.

- 4.19 Overall, the total reduction in funding to voluntary sector organisations working with children and young people is broadly in line with the anticipated reduction in funding to children’s services over the coming years.
- 4.20 The Department for Education (DfE) Dedicated Schools Budget (DSG) is a ring fenced budget which funds educational activity delivered through the voluntary sector totalling £393,400. Savings generated in the DSG must be retained within the ring-fenced budget and therefore cannot contribute to the savings target for the LA. However, the intention is to recommission these activities in the light of other reviews of services.
- 4.21 In line with the Council’s commitment to prioritise services for the most vulnerable, some services have had a proportionally less reduction.
- 4.22 In-Year savings of £28k have already been agreed and relate to end of contracts for Bolton Together (£10k) and NACRO (£15k).
- 4.23 Details of the proposed 2015 - 2017 programme of funding to voluntary sector organisations working with children and young people in Bolton are set out below.

Table 2: Summary of funding, timescales and independencies:

Budget Category	Total £	Timescale	Interdependency
Youth and Play Activities (5 -19’s)	193,660	Nov 2015 – Jan 2016	Following the Youth and Play Review and focus on emerging gaps.
Short Breaks for Disabled Children	200,441	Feb 2016 – Apr 2016	Following a review of the overall provision.
Vulnerable Children	245,129	May 2016 – July 2016	Following a programme by programme review
Early Years (0 – 5’s)	368,200	TBC	Early Years/Children’s Centres Review
Total	1,007,430		

5.0. Transitional Arrangements

- 5.1 It is important to note that all of the funding arrangements and grants to voluntary sector organisations made through Children’s Services end on 31st March 2015. The Council has given no commitment to any organisation that funding will continue beyond April 2016.
- 5.2 The Council has engaged closely with the voluntary sector about the proposed reductions in funding to the sector and began discussions with the sector and its groups at an early stage, as soon as possible after the announcement of the Council’s funding by central government.
- 5.3 The Council wrote to all voluntary sector organisations on 26th February 2015 to notify them of the likely overall reduction in funding and to outline the need for a

review of funding/grant arrangements with voluntary sector organisations. Since notifying voluntary sector organisations of the review of funding council officers have attended Bolton Together, has undertaken briefing and advice sessions for all third sector groups working with children and young people in the Borough and has received representations directly from the representatives of these groups. Further meetings are planned through the consultation period.

6.0 Consultation and Implementation

6.1 The proposals set out in this report are for consultation. The report and the proposals will be shared with all affected organisations and Council officers will be available during the consultation period to meet with each individual organisation.

6.2 We will be mindful of the Compact that we are fully committed, to but also hope that groups will want to work with us constructively to help find a sensible way through these difficult circumstances.

6.3 There will be a 60 day period of consultation which will close at 5pm on Monday 14th December 2016. Following this, a final set of proposals will be drawn up for consideration by the Executive Member. Affected organisations will be notified of the final funding decisions immediately following the decision of the Executive Member.

7.0 Equality Impact Assessment

7.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the council must have due regard to:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

7.2 It is therefore important to consider how the proposals contained within this report may positively or negatively affect this work. To support this analysis, an Equality Impact Assessment (“EIA”) screening form has been completed for the proposals outlined in this report, and is attached at Appendix 3.

7.3 The EIA looks at the anticipated (positive and/or negative) impacts of the proposal on people from Bolton’s diverse communities, and whether any group (or groups) is likely to be directly or indirectly differentially affected.

7.4 Due to the nature of the proposals, it is possible that there could be some adverse impact for the following groups [insert groups]. This analysis is set out in more detail in the EIA.

7.5 The analysis of equality impact will be tested during consultation, and an updated EIA will be included with the report setting out the final proposals.

8.0 Recommendations

8.1 The Executive Cabinet Member is recommended to approve the attached report for consultation purposes with the Children's Services Voluntary, Community & Faith Sector.

Appendix 2: Voluntary and Community Grants for Children and Young People

Youth and Play Activities Ages 5-19								
Current Provider	Service Description	Current Funding £				Proposed Savings Target from LA - Children Services		Proposed LA (Children and Other Departments) Funding 2016-2017 £
		DSG	LA - Childrens	LA - Other Departments	Total	%	Amount £	
BCoM	Targeted positive activities for young BME women in targeted areas of the borough including opportunities to gain accredited qualifications.	25,600			25,600			
Bolton Lads & Girls Club (BLGC)	Positive activities provision for young people 13-19s		68,340	18,000	86,340			
Fortalice	Support to children affected by domestic violence; 1:1 sessions, on-going support, group work and opportunities to gain accreditation.		24,000		24,000			
HAFWAY	Targeted positive activities in targeted areas of the borough.		5,200		5,200			
Harmony Project	Targeted positive activities for young BME children; opportunities to gain accredited qualifications in sport, health and improve general educational attainment and personal and social development.		14,400		14,400			
Hibbert Street	Provision of building resource		15,000		15,000			
Johnson Fold Youth Club	Open access recreational activities for children in targeted area of the borough		9,600		9,600			
Nightingale Centre	Predominantly diversionary activities for BME young men; opportunities to gain accredited qualifications in sport, health and improve general educational attainment and personal and social development.		24,000		24,000			
Sycamore Project (Zacs)	Targeted positive activities for children and young people		19,960		19,960			
Urban Solutions	Parenting support to the BME community via delivery of parenting programmes and capacity building in the BME communities throughout Bolton.		24,000		24,000			
YMCA	Targeted positive activities for children aged 5 to 19, including provision of a varied programme of activities.		57,600		57,600			
Total Youth and Play Activities Ages 5 - 19		25,600	262,100	18,000	305,700	40%	112,040	168,060

Appendix 2: continued/ ... Voluntary and Community Grants for Children and Young People

SEN Short Breaks								
Current Provider	Service Description	Current Funding				Proposed Savings		Proposed LA (Children and Other)
		DSG	LA - Childrens	LA - Other Departments	Total	%	Amount £	
Heartlift	Positive activities for disabled children offered through access to sport and recreational activities.		59,000		59,000			
Kidz2gether	Positive activities for autistic children		55,000		55,000			
Sycamore Project (Zacs)	SEN provision for young people including weekend provision and short breaks.		48,200		48,200			
Autistic Society	Positive activities for older autistic children		10,500		10,500			
Bolton Bullets	Positive activities for disabled children – Wheel Chair Football		5,000		5,000			
Bolton Crossroads	Support, information and advice to young carers.		8,000		8,000			
Day Trippers	Short breaks for disabled children - provides days out and activity for disabled children and their families.		10,000		10,000			
Bolton Lads & Girls Club (BLGC)	Short breaks for children with disabilities		16,101		16,101			
Bolton Lads & Girls Club (BLGC)	Short breaks for young carers		10,000		10,000			
Bolton Lads & Girls Club (BLGC)	Short breaks for young adults			10,000	10,000			
Total of contracts in scope		0	221,801	10,000	231,801	20%	46,360	185,441
Derian House	Contribution to the support to terminally ill children/young people. (PROTECTED)		15,000		15,000			15,000
Total SEN Short Breaks		0	236,801	10,000	246,801		46,360	200,441

Appendix 2: continued/ ... Voluntary and Community Grants for Children and Young People

Vulnerable Children								
Current Provider	Service Description	Current Funding £				Proposed Savings Target from LA - Children Services		Proposed LA (Children and Other Departments) Funding 2016-2017 £
		DSG	LA - Childrens	LA - Other Departments	Total	%	Amount £	
Action for Children	Independent advocacy for Looked After Children and family support for vulnerable children, young people and their families.		90,000		90,000			
Barnardos	Family Group Conferencing		52,560		52,560			
Bolton Lads & Girls Club (BLGC)	Mentoring Support for looked after young people and young carers.		17,000		17,000			
Bolton Lads & Girls Club (BLGC)	Staying Safe and Think Family		7,051		7,051			
Bolton Lads & Girls Club (BLGC)	CAMHS - Mental Health support for young people		20,000		20,000			
Fortalice	Staying Safe		32,000		32,000			
Time to Talk	Mediation support for vulnerable children and young people (Not vol org – internal to the council)		16,000		16,000			
Urban Outreach	"Runa" Project - Support to homeless young people or those young people that have run away from home.		50,000		50,000			
Children's Opportunities Group (COG)	Parent Partnership - Statutory Educational Service		21,800		21,800			
Total Vulnerable Children		0	306,411	0	306,411	20%	61,282	245,129

Appendix 2: continued/ ... Voluntary and Community Grants for Children and Young People

Early Years Ages 0 - 5								
Current Provider	Service Description	Current Funding				Proposed Savings		Proposed LA (Children and Other)
		DSG	LA - Childrens	LA - Other Departments	Total	%	Amount £	
Homestart	Provides support to young families and a volunteering support programme for new parents.	80,000			80,000			
Bolton Toy Library	Provision of toy loan service via Children's Centres to groups, child-minders and families	25,000			25,000			
Special Needs Under 5's	Supporting families and school with SEN children under five.	40,000			40,000			
Children's Opportunites Group (COG)	Provides independent information advice & support to parents/carers for SEN children. Out of School, playgroups and nursery provision.	213,200			213,200			
Total Early Years Ages 0 - 5		358,200	0	0	358,200	0%	0	0
		383,800	805,312	28,000	1,217,112	60%	219,682	613,630
In Year Savings								
Bolton Under Fives Forum		10,000			10,000			
Third Sector 5-19 Forum (Birtenshaw)			10,000		10,000		10,000	
NACRO			15,000		15,000		15,000	
Total Funding and Proposed Savings		393,800	830,312	28,000	1,252,112		244,682	613,630