

Delegated Officer Report

Decision Maker: Rebekah Sutcliffe
Strategic Director of Communities and Reform

Date of Decision: 19th April 2021

Subject: **Award and allocation of Priority Programme and Community Cohesion Funding to the voluntary, community and faith sector in 2021/22**

Report Author: **Natalie Downs, Stronger Communities Manager**

Ward (s): Boroughwide

Reason for the decision: The purpose of this report is to seek approval to award grant funding to the voluntary, community and faith sector, during the financial year 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022, as identified at Appendix 1.

Summary: The proposal seeks to approve funding to the voluntary, community and faith sector from the Council's Priority Programme and community cohesion funds.

In 2019/20, a 10% reduction was imposed upon the overall budget. Oldham CCG has since bridged the gap in funding by providing an allocation of £50k per annum and formalisation of the agreement to extend this to 2021/22 is currently underway.

What are the alternative option(s) to be considered? Please give the reason(s) for recommendation(s): There are no alternative options to be considered at this stage.

Consultation: including any conflict of interest declared by relevant Cabinet Member consulted.

Consultation has been undertaken with the Cabinet Member for Covid-19 recovery.

Separate consultation has taken place with the Chief Executive of Citizen's Advice Oldham (CAO) as a result of the proposal to extend CAO's funding for six months initially to allow time for the Place Based customer and financial support offer to be developed. A revised agreement will be developed with CAO once the review of the customer and financial support offer is completed.

Voluntary, community and faith groups listed at Appendix 1 will be provided with confirmation of their grant allocations following approval of the report.

Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that the proposed allocations are awarded in 2021/22 as outlined at Appendix 1.

Implications:

*What are the **financial** implications?*

The cost of this proposal to award grants to the voluntary, community and faith sector in 2021/22 is £665,400.

The base revenue budget for 2021/22 is £646,940, this amount is to be augmented by a confirmed contribution from Oldham CCG of £50,000 (Mike Ward – Senior Accountant)

*What are the **legal** implications?*

There are no immediate legal issues arising from the report, but in due course, should there be a proposal to reduce or withdraw funding, then any such decision should be informed by appropriate consultation and/or equality impact assessment in due course. (Colin Brittain)

*What are the **procurement** implications?*

The report concerns the commissioning of grants. There are no matters relating to the procurement of services. The grants issued should be backed up with robust grant agreements and managed accordingly to ensure payments match agreed outcomes.

Steve Boyd, Procurement.

What are the **Human Resources** implications?

Not Applicable

Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment attached or not required because (please give reason)

There are no adverse equality and diversity implications arising from the proposals contained within this report. However, an Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken in the event that funding to the groups is to be reduced or withdrawn at any future point.

What are the **property** implications

None

Risks:

There is a high risk that if funding was to be reduced or withdrawn at any future point, the ability to deliver activities, pay overheads and staff wages would be affected.

Co-operative agenda

The grant awards support the Council's Co-operative Agenda by providing funding which contributes towards the core running costs of voluntary, community and faith sector organisations and ensures that they are able to provide services that help communities address disadvantage, equality of opportunity and improve life chances for residents. Furthermore, core funding helps organisations attract further investment into the borough, as well as providing volunteering opportunities to residents.

Has the relevant Legal Officer confirmed that the recommendations within this report are lawful and comply with the Council's Constitution?

Yes

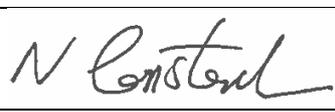
Has the relevant Finance Officer confirmed that any expenditure referred to within this report is consistent with the Council's budget?

Yes

Are any of the recommendations within this report contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council?

No

List of Background Papers under Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972:
None

Report Author Sign-off:	
Neil Consterdine Assistant Director - Youth, Leisure and Communities	
Date: 19 April 2021	

Please list and attach any appendices:-

Appendix number or letter	Description
1	Table of funding awards
2	Background to the decision

In consultation with Executive Director
Rebekah Sutcliffe, Strategic Director of Communities and Reform

Signed:



Date: 20/04/2021

APPENDIX 1 PROPOSED FUNDING AWARD 1ST APRIL 2021 – 31ST MARCH 2022

Organisation	Proposed funding allocation
Action Together *	£265,000
Citizens Advice Oldham **	£260,000
Greenacres Community Association	£32,000
Werneth and Freehold CDP	£32,000
Oldham Credit Union	£36,000
Oldham Interfaith Forum	£36,000
Stop Hate UK	£4,400
Total	£665,400

- * Approval of the grant award to Action Together is subject to a separate decision-making report.
- ** Whilst an allocation of £260,000 is ringfenced within the budget for Citizens Advice Oldham, £130,000 will initially be released for the period 1st April to 31st September 2021 to allow for the design of the Place Based customer and financial support offer to be completed.

APPENDIX 2: BACKGROUND TO THE DECISION

1. Background:

- 1.1 The Council has provided core grant funding to voluntary, community and faith sector organisations through the Priority Programme Fund (PPF) for many years. The allocation of this budget has been reviewed at regular intervals and there are now only a small number of organisations who receive funding as a result of a reduction in the overall budget, changing Council priorities and the need to seek greater efficiencies and value for money.
- 1.2 Grant funding is also allocated as a contribution towards overheads and running costs to organisations which support the Council to deliver community cohesion (CC) related activity. The Stronger Communities Team manage a dedicated budget for community cohesion related activity and along with providing core grant funding, it is used to commission third party support to victims of hate crime, through Stop Hate UK.
- 1.3 The Council is currently leading the development of an approach to Place Based Working, which includes the customer and financial services offer. This new approach will incorporate the services delivered by Citizens Advice Oldham (CAO) and is likely to have implications for their funding agreement later in the year. It is proposed that £130,000 is initially awarded for a six-month period to allow time for the Placed Based Working model to be developed further. The remaining £130,000 will then be awarded to CAO once approval has been granted to implement the customer and financial services offer.
- 1.4 The Council has previously provided a small amount of grant funding as a contribution towards the delivery of annual community festivals, but due to Covid-19, there is no proposal at the current time to award funding for this purpose.

2. Current Position:

- 2.1 The following outlines the proposed funding allocations for the period 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022:

Organisation	Proposed funding allocation in 2020/21	Funding source
Action Together	£265,000	PPF
Citizens Advice Oldham	£260,000	PPF
Greenacres Community Association	£32,000	PPF
Werneth and Freehold CDP	£32,000	PPF
Oldham Credit Union	£36,000	PPF
Oldham Interfaith Forum	£36,000	CC
Stop Hate UK	£4,400	CC

- 2.2 Due to the size of the annual grant award, approval to fund Action Together is subject to a separate report. On that basis, the proposed allocation is presented for information only.