

Delegated Cabinet Member Decision Report

Decision Maker and Portfolio area:	Cllr Moores Children and Young People
Date of Decision:	19 April 2022
Subject:	Community Grants
Report Author:	Richard Selwyn
Ward(s) Affected:	All

Reason for the decision: To grow the capacity of voluntary, faith and community groups in Oldham to support children and young people, including through social prescribing.

Summary: The early help demand management strategy is to help more families and to help them earlier. Part of that support will come from the community, either through linking families to additional help, or through more organic connections in a stronger society that build a family's resilience.

This proposal is to invest £60k per year for three years in community capacity, using the proven One Oldham Fund, to create more support and resilience for families.

The Community Grants are supported by the district model for children's services, more all-age social prescribing capacity, and the community connect training programme for all professionals – so we connect the most vulnerable families to local community resources.

Funding is from the Supporting Families grant which was increased by the Chancellor in his Autumn budget statement.

What are the alternative option(s) to be considered? Please give the reason(s) for recommendation(s):

1. Do nothing – this will save immediate expenditure but will not grow capacity in the community and will cost more in the long-term.
2. Agree grant funding of £60k per year for three years to be administered through the One Oldham Fund by Action Together – this will help to reduce acute demand to social care and partner services.

Recommendation(s):

Agree grant funding of £60k per year for three years to be administered through the One Oldham Fund by Action Together.

Implications:

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

The proposal is to invest £60k per year for three years in community capacity, using the One Oldham Fund, to create more support and resilience for families. Funding, totalling £180k over the 3-year period will be provided from the Supporting Families grant; £868k has been received in the 2021/22r and the Chancellor gave a commitment to extend the programme to 2024/25 in his Autumn budget statement.

Andy Cooper, 25 March 22

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

There are no Procurement implications as this report concerns payment of grant funding.

However, as always when paying out monies to external organisations, the Authority must ensure that all due diligence activities on the providers are carried out, fair process has been followed that will comply with any scrutiny and are in line with the specific grant funding conditions.

Mohammad Sharif 25/03/2022

What are the **legal** implications?

Either the existing Grant Agreement with Action Together shall be amended to include the proposal or a new Grant Agreement executed. The existing Grant Agreement provides for 5% of the grant funding to be retained by Action Together to administer onwardly granting monies to community groups and the like, typically of £100 to £1000 in value. The grant agreement needs to specify £60k grant monies to be provided in advance in each year of the 3-year agreement.

Mark Hope 11/04/2022

What are the **Human Resources** implications?

None

What are the **Children and Young People** Implications?

Improve outcomes for children, young people and their families, by offering more help earlier, and building resilience.

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

An EQIA is not necessary as this proposal is for additional investment that will benefit all families in Oldham.

Risks:

There is a risk of insufficient capacity within the VCSF sectors leading to less support for families and reduced benefits. Mitigation is to invest in capacity building for the sectors and through careful monitoring, ensure we do not over-stretch organisations and groups.

There is a risk that clinical professionals do not want to support the model leading to poor take up and low volume of social prescribing. Mitigation is to launch a campaign to promote social prescribing for children and young people, and build on the relationships already established through the adults model.

Co-operative agenda


This proposal supports work in districts, and helps families to access community-based help.


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

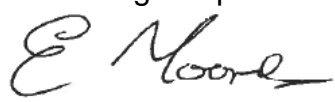
Has the relevant Finance Officer confirmed that any expenditure referred to within this report is consistent with the Council's budget? Yes

Are any of the recommendations within this report contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council? No

There are no background papers for this report

Report Author Sign-off:	Richard Selwyn
	
Date:	11/04/2022

Report Author Sign-off:	Gerard Jones, Managing Director Children and Young People (DCS)
	
Date:	19/04/2022

Report Author Sign-off:	Cllr E Moores, Cabinet Member Children and Young People
	
Date:	27/04/2022

Background

The early help demand management strategy is to support more families and to do so earlier. The first place any family gets support is in their community, be that from friends and extended family, local community resources, etc.



To grow the support for families, we propose a grant of £60k per year for three years. This would be administered by Action Together as part of the Oldham One Fund which has cross-Council backing. (Note there is an administration fee of 5% top-sliced from the fund.)

The children's contribution would be £60k per year of micro-grants of between £100 and £1000. Whilst the administrative process is managed centrally, the evaluation and engagement with bidders would be undertaken in districts, to ensure: the right capacity is being built in each place, there are more opportunities to connect community groups to each other and public services, and there is a feedback loop between evaluating bids, referrals and seeing the impact on families' lives.

Implementation would be aligned to the social prescribing implementation, aiming for a start date of Summer 2022 for both advertising the community grant, and for the social prescribing link-workers to be in post.

The community grants support two main elements of the early help demand management strategy:

1. **Social prescribing** – with funding from the Oldham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) the social prescribing model is extended to all-age, anticipating 2.5 full-time equivalent link workers being deployed to the five districts. There is a big national push to increase social prescribing. CCG funding is for one year, and expected to continue through the Greater Manchester Integrated Care Board in subsequent years.

2. **Community Connect** – we intend to train all professionals in local areas in what local community resources are available to help families, and ensure this support is included in family plans and statutory social work plans. In this way, we are connecting the most vulnerable families to the help in their communities.

As with all early help, it is difficult to quantify a return on investment. In line with the early help demand management business case, we can draw on other evaluations for an indication of the return.

The most significant evaluation was undertaken by the Supporting Families programme (previously Troubled Families) which required the largest government dataset outside of the security services in order to demonstrate attribution. The Supporting Families evaluation proves the impact of early intervention on demand for social care, and identifies a return of £1.51 of fiscal benefits for every £1 spend, or £2.28 benefits when including non-cashable savings.

Funding for the community grants would be from the Supporting Families annual grant from the Department for Levelling up, as set out by the Chancellor in the Autumn 2021 budget.

In consultation with Gerard Jones.

Annex: Grant agreement



Grant Agreement
One Oldham Fund 22.

Annex: Schedule to grant agreement

Action Together has been granted £60,000 per year for three years for distributing micro-grants to improve children, young people and families' outcomes in Oldham.

The funding is only to be used to improve outcomes of children, including pre-birth, young people aged under 25 years, and the outcomes of families with children and young people.

Grants should be awarded to Voluntary, Faith, Community and Social Enterprise organisations, and are for building capacity within these sectors to sustainably improve outcomes. Grant decision making should be made in partnership with multi-agency professionals working in each District.

Grant Framework

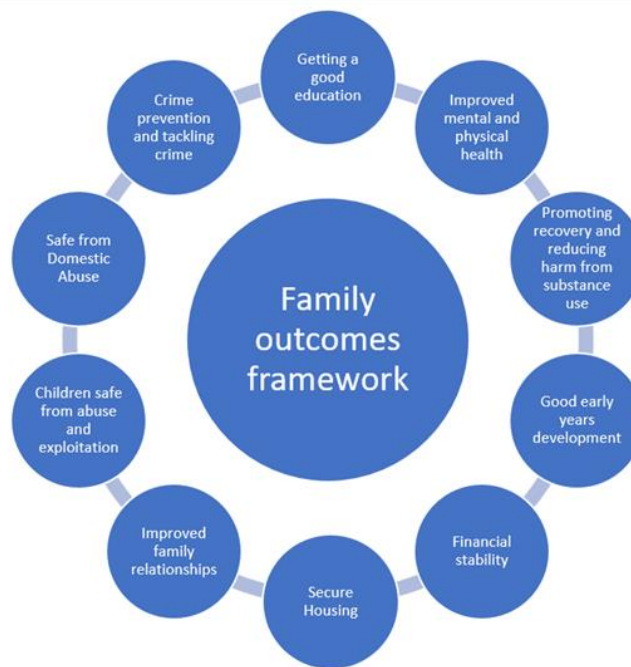
Grants are to be awarded based on Action Together's framework for investment, based on the Institute for Voluntary Action Research (IVAR) framework, and including the eight principles of open and trusted grant-making (www.ivar.org.uk/flexible-funders/). This includes codesign work with the VCFSE to ensure that the processes are inclusive and mitigate potential equalities barriers to access funding.

Grant Investment	Micro
Award Levels	Up to £1,000
Who can apply	Informal social action groups, constituted VCFSE groups
Monitoring individual grants	Light touch. Reporting on activity and outcome impact. Request for case study.
Monitoring frequency	Check in after 4 weeks, monitoring at end of project
Participation in VCFSE networks	Yes
Max project length	1 year
Decision making mechanism	Action Together and multi-agency District team
Decision making timescale	Up to 4 weeks – sent to panel upon receipt
Available Funding 2021/2022	£60,000 including administration fee
Launch Date	To be agreed

Outcomes Framework

We are currently developing a refreshed vision for children and families. In the meantime, the following Supporting Families outcomes framework provides a guide to the range of impact we anticipate from grants. The framework describes ten national priority outcomes. Monitoring reports should be based around this outcomes framework.

The emphasis is on building sustainable capacity in Oldham communities that support children, young people and families, and increase their resilience.



Note: we anticipate social prescribing needs around mental health and sleep deprivation to be early priorities for support requests from Primary Care Networks.

To safeguard children and young people accessing support that is funded via community grants, all voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise groups are expected to follow Oldham Safeguarding Partnership procedures as appropriate to the support or service. See www.olscb.org/professionals/policies/.

Fund Management, Governance and Oversight

Action Together administration fees are 7.5% of the overall grant total (i.e. £4.5k for administration with the remaining amount for grantees of £55.5k).

This includes:

- Managing the application process end to end
- Providing community development to groups and organisations to support the development and implementation of bids
- Coordination and administration of decision-making panels
- Putting in place grant agreements and outcome monitoring arrangements with all grantees

Decision making for the award of grants will be undertaken at the District level. This is so the teams working in each District (including social prescribing link workers) will have final approval of which grants are taken forward, and what needs of children, young people and families are prioritised in each District. This is to encourage a feedback loop between the needs that are being met by District teams, and the capacity that is grown in the community to help families. And to ensure close links between multi-agency professionals and local community, voluntary, faith and social enterprise groups. District teams are in development, so local arrangements and leadership will vary of the course of the grant term.

Oversight will be provided by the Early Help Alliance (to be established). Whilst this board is being established, oversight will be from the strategic Children's Alliance. Monitoring information should be provided on a quarterly basis to these boards.

It is recognised that additional funding from Oldham Council will benefit the outcomes of children, young people and families. This should be reported alongside the core £60k grant agreement. We would welcome children's District teams being involved in decision making for additional funding, where appropriate.