

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMMUNITIES and HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD

16 February 2021

Report of the Chief Executive

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)

1 ANNUAL GRANTS TO KEY VOLUNTARY SECTOR BODIES

To endorse the grants for key voluntary and community sector organisations

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 For many years the Borough Council has provided funding to support a number of key voluntary sector bodies who provide support services to residents within the Borough.
- 1.1.2 This time last year, we undertook a review of funding arrangements to secure appropriate grant agreements with each of our key organisations. The outcome of this review meant that three agencies opted to accept a slightly lower amount in return for the security of a fixed amount for the following 4 years. These were: Involve, Imago and Maidstone and West Kent Mediation Scheme.
- 1.1.3 Each of the above three organisations have produced a brief summary of their progress achieved against the objectives set out in the Service Level Agreements **[Annex 1]**. Obviously the pandemic has added increased pressure and changed methods of operating for all, but the reports highlight the excellent and vital work that has been undertaken over this very difficult period.
- 1.1.4 At the review last year, Age UK Sevenoaks and Tonbridge and Citizens Advice North and West Kent (CANWK) felt it would be difficult to continue to offer their support services on a lower amount. Both organisations opted to maintain their existing grant amount, but to undertake a full review of the grant arrangements over the coming year via the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.1.5 This review has been postponed as we are fully aware that the pandemic has increased demand for the services offered by both organisations. We therefore do not feel we can consider any grant reductions whilst the organisations deal with the emergency and provide vital support services in the community. Both

organisations have provided a brief summary of progress over the last 12 months [Annex 2].

1.2 Legal Implications

1.2.1 To be addressed via Service Level Agreements.

1.3 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.3.1 For the three organisations with fixed 4 year grants, the funding as they enter year two of their agreements, will remain as follows:

Maidstone and West Kent Mediation Schemes - £4,320

Imago - £3,600

Involve - £ 3,600

1.3.2 For CANWK and Age UK Sevenoaks and Tonbridge, it is suggested that another 1 year agreement be maintained at existing levels:

CANWK - £95,000

Age UK Sevenoaks and Tonbridge - £8,000

1.4 Risk Assessment

1.4.1 N/A

1.5 Equality Impact Assessment

1.5.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

1.6 Policy Considerations

1.6.1 Community

1.6.2 Health and Safety

1.6.3 Healthy Lifestyles

1.7 Recommendations

1.7.1 That based on the good progress and the vital support provided to residents from Involve, Imago and the Mediation Schemes, that grant funding is **CONTINUED** for year 2 of the 4 year agreement.

1.7.2 That based on the good progress and vital support provided to residents from Age UK Sevenoaks and Tonbridge and CANWK, grant funding is **MAINTAINED** at current levels for the financial year 2021/22.

The Chief Executive confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers:

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Nil

Julie Beilby
Chief Executive