

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

04 April 2023

Report of the Chief Executive

Part 1- Public

Executive Non Key Decisions

1 VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR GRANTS

To review and note progress against Service Level Agreements for ongoing grants and to consider future funding in respect of Citizens Advice North and West Kent

1.1 Background

1.1.1 For many years the Borough Council has provided funding to support key voluntary sector bodies who provide services to residents within the Borough.

1.1.2 Three years ago, we undertook a review of funding arrangements to secure appropriate grant agreements with Maidstone and West Kent Mediation, Imago and Involve. The same process was undertaken last year with Age UK Sevenoaks and Tonbridge. The outcome of these reviews meant that each agency opted to accept a slightly lower grant in return for the security of a fixed amount over a longer term. As a result, all have one further year remaining under the existing terms.

1.1.3 Each organisation was asked to produce a summary of their progress achieved against the objectives set out in their Service Level Agreements (**Annex 1, 2 and 3**).

1.2 Citizens Advice North and West Kent

1.2.1 CANWK have maintained the same level of grant funding for several years. Additional pressure arising from the pandemic and now the cost-of-living crisis, has meant that their services are in ever increasing demand. A summary of progress achieved against the Service Level Agreement is attached (**Annex 4**).

1.2.2 Last year it was felt that any reduction in the level of grant funding from the Council would inevitably mean a reduced service for residents and the situation continues this year. It is therefore suggested that the grant remains the same for another 1-year term.

1.3 Legal Implications

1.3.1 To be addressed via Service Level Agreements

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.4.1 For the three organisations with fixed 4-year grants, the funding as they enter year four of their agreements, remains as follows:

Maidstone and West Kent Mediation Schemes - £4,320

Imago - £3,600

Involve - £3,600

1.4.2 For Age UK Sevenoaks and Tonbridge, the funding as they enter year two of their two-year agreement remains as follows:

Age UK Sevenoaks and Tonbridge - £6,400

1.4.3 For CANWK, it is suggested that another 1-year agreement be offered at the existing level of £95,000.

1.5 Risk Assessment

A review of progress against SLA's is undertaken annually for all organisations on longer term SLA's. Quarterly reporting will be requested for CANWK.

1.6 Equality Impact Assessment

1.6.1 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.

1.7 Policy Considerations

1.7.1 Community

1.7.2 Crime & Disorder Reduction

1.7.3 Health and Safety

1.7.4 Healthy Lifestyles

1.8 Recommendations

1.8.1 That Members **NOTE** the good progress and the support provided to residents from Involve, Imago, the Mediation Schemes and Age UK Sevenoaks and Tonbridge.

1.8.2 That based on the good progress and the support provided to residents from CANWK, grant funding of £95,000 is **AGREED** for the financial year 2023/24.

Background papers:

contact: Gill Fox

Nil

Julie Beilby
Chief Executive