

From: Sarah Hammond, Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education

To: Sue Chandler, Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services

Subject: **Local Children's Partnership Group Grants Programme**

Decision Number: **22/00109**

Key decision Overall service value exceeds £1m and affects more than two Electoral Divisions.

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of report: **Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee – 29 November 2022**

Future Pathway of report: Cabinet Member Decision

Electoral Division: All

Summary: This report provides the Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee with the background and rationale of the proposal to cease the Local Children's Partnership Group Grants funding stream and not initiate the 2023/24 round of grants.

Since 2016, the **Local Children's Partnership Group (LCPG) Grants Programme** has been in place to allow grassroots VCS organisations funding for projects and programmes that support children, young people and families at a community level whilst tackling local priorities set out by the Partnership Board.

The current cost of living crisis, rising inflation and shrinking budgets has required the Local Authority to look at all areas of spend. With no statutory requirement to provide these and with existing grants ending in March 2023, by ceasing these funding streams an indicative savings of approximately £600k could be achieved for the 2023/2024 financial year.

Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services is asked to agree the proposed decision to:

- a) **Cease** the funding for the Local Children's Partnership Group (LCPG) Grants programme from the end of the 2022/23 financial year; and
- b) **Delegate** authority to the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education to take relevant actions including but not limited to entering into legal agreements as necessary to implement this decision.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The LCPG Grants Programme is a county-wide pot of £600,000, divided between the 12 districts, to fund projects to meet local need and support the priorities set out by each of the LCPG's. Projects have been delivered by grassroots organisations that often fail to gain funding through formal procurement due to their size and capacity in putting together winning bids.
- 1.2. The nature of the LCPG grants support smaller organisations to reach funding opportunities which further supports local communities, encourages delivery through lived experience and enables a greater emphasis on social value that other funding opportunities find hard to realise. The impact on the Voluntary Sector as a result of this decision cannot be known.

2. Current Provision

- 2.1. The LCPG Grants Programme is a county-wide pot of £600,000, divided between the 12 districts. The 2022/2023 Grant pot has been split between 29 VCS providers over a total of 54 projects.
- 2.2. The grants range in value from £3,900 to £15,000 and all meet one or more of the following objectives;
 - Helping children to achieve potential through education
 - Improving ambition with access to work, training and education
 - Tackle the attainment gap of disadvantage closed
 - Work to get families out of crisis and children out of care
 - Helping children to have better physical and mental health
 - Getting ready for school at age 5
 - Give children a safe environment to raise children and young people

3. Commissioning Intentions

- 3.1. The Council's financial position has been a significant factor which has influenced the proposal to cease the funding of the LCPG Grants to contribute to the savings required. This can be achieved by not allocating the £600k to the LCPGs (work commences in December 2022 to run the Grants Programme effective 1 April 2023.)
- 3.2. As the current grants for the 2022/2023 period all expire on 31 March 2023 there is no requirement to give notice to providers.

4. Other Considerations

- 4.1. The delivery of the LCPG Grants is not statutory, however, KCC has been supporting the VCS through these arrangements since 2016 to help meet the local priorities as agreed through the Local Children's Partnership Groups. These groups are well attended by stakeholders which include but are not limited to, Health, VCS, Education, Public Health, Police, Fire and Rescue and District Councils. It is therefore likely that partners will also express a view about the cessation of the funding offer.

- 4.2. There would be no TUPE implications for the current LCPG grants
- 4.3. There is insufficient time to plan, prepare and undertake meaningful public consultation ahead of the proposed implementation of this action.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1. These services are currently funded from the KCC base budget reported against the Early Help and Preventative Services Key Service in the Budget Book. By ending provision there will be a potential budget saving of £600k.
- 5.2. There are limited financial risks associated with this proposal as all existing grant provision linked to the LCPGs is due to end 31 March 2023. The 2023/2024 round of grants have not yet commenced.
- 5.3. The current providers are all small to medium voluntary sector organisations. The removal of the LCPG Grants should have limited impact as this funding stream is short term and not guaranteed year to year. Therefore, it is unlikely that removal of the grants would impact on their ongoing viability.

6. Legal implications

- 6.1. There is no statutory requirement for the Local Authority to provide this funding stream for VCS organisations and no contractual obligations to continue funding beyond 31 March 2023.

7. Equalities implications

- 7.1. The decision will impact each of the protected characteristics, though no one group will be disproportionately impacted. This will continue to be developed.

8. Governance

- 8.1. Accountability for the LCPG Grants sits with the Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education. Responsibility sits with the Director for Integrated Children's Services (Early Help Lead).

9. Conclusions

- 9.1. For reasons stated above, approving this action will bring a saving of £600k on the 2023/2024 base budget reported against the Early Help and Preventative Services Key Service in the Budget Book.

10. Recommendation(s):

- 10.1. The Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services is asked to agree the proposed decision to:
 - a) **Cease** the funding for the Local Children's Partnership Group (LCPG) Grants programme from the end of the 2022/23 financial year; and

- b) **Delegate** authority to the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education to take relevant actions including but not limited to entering into legal agreements as necessary to implement this decision.

11. Background Documents

None

12. Contact details

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