

<b>COVID 19 Advice, Guidance and Support Grant Funding</b>
<b>Cllr David Seaton, Cabinet Member for Finance</b>
<b>January 2021</b>
<b>Deadline date: N/a</b>

Cabinet portfolio holder: Responsible Director:	Cllr David Seaton, Cabinet Member for Finance Adrian Chapman, Service Director for Communities and Partnerships
Is this a Key Decision?	NO
Is this decision eligible for call-in?	NO (waiver of call-in invoked)
Does this Public report have any annex that contains exempt information?	NO
Is this a project and if so has it been registered on Verto?	NO

<b>R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S</b>
The Cabinet Member is recommended to approve the award of grant funding to the following organisations for the period of 12 months, up to 31 March 2021:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Citizens Advice Peterborough - £294,790.68</li> <li>2. Kingsgate Community Church (Care Zone) - £95,771.40</li> <li>3. Cambridgeshire Community Foundation - £20,000</li> <li>4. Peterborough Council of Voluntary services - £53,000</li> </ol>

**1. PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT**

- 1.1 This report is for Cabinet Member for Finance to consider exercising delegated authority under paragraph 3.4.3 of Part 3 of the constitution in accordance with the terms of their portfolio at paragraph (f)
- 1.2 With the approval of the Chair of the Growth, Environment and Resource Scrutiny waiver of call-in procedure has been invoked. This procedure has been invoked following the

urgency required in providing services to vulnerable residents dealing with the impact of Covid 19.

## 2. **TIMESCALES**

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	<b>NO</b>	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	n/a
---	-----------	----------------------------------	-----

## 3. **BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES**

- 3.1 Throughout 2020, the council and its partners have provided significant support to individuals, families and businesses impacted by the Covid 19 pandemic. Peterborough, like many other towns and cities, has seen a significant impact which has left many people facing unemployment, debt and financial hardship.
- 3.2 Citizens Advice report that they have seen a sharp rise in COVID-19 related issues leading to benefits issues, growing debt, rent arrears, court action and potential eviction and homelessness which in turn impacts on family life, relationships, wellbeing and mental health.
- 3.3 People who remain employed may still be facing reduced income and financial pressures. Many of those in work, do in fact work in poverty and are not able to earn enough to feed and clothe their family, pay utilities, council tax, let alone pay their rent. Without support, these people will end up in crisis and at risk of homelessness and the need for statutory support.
- 3.4 To mitigate these impacts, the council has provided grants to businesses, payments to people who cannot work due to self-isolation and a broad range of support to people who have needed to shield due to medical reasons throughout the pandemic. The council has previously commissioned Citizens Advice and Kingsgate Community Church to deliver the Peterborough Community Assistance Scheme (PCAS) and throughout the pandemic, these partners have continued to provide essential support to vulnerable individuals and families.
- 3.5 As demand for help has grown, the council has provided additional grant funding to both organisations.
- 3.6 Grant funding authorised within this CMDN shall enable Citizens Advice to continue to support people manage their budgets, apply for welfare benefits, manage debts and provide housing related support.
- 3.7 Kingsgate Community Church operate the Care Zone scheme and also provide the management and infrastructure for the network of food banks. Care Zone take furniture donations from private companies and the public and repair/recycle to eligible households who lack basic items such as beds, sofas, tables/chairs etc. In addition, they also provide essential white goods and electrical items such as washing machine, fridge, microwave, kettle etc. The grant funding requested within this CMDN shall allow the Kingsgate Community Church to operate this support.
- 3.8 Cambridgeshire Community Foundation deliver the Stay Well project across Cambridgeshire and funded through the County Council. The scheme was previously delivered in Peterborough but ended last year due to financial pressures. It is proposed that the scheme is extended to Peterborough over the winter months to help mitigate financial hardship that the pandemic has caused and may lead to people not being able to

afford to heat their homes. Grants of up to £300 will be provided for future energy costs and payable to an applicant's energy provider. Cambridgeshire Community Foundation administer the scheme and assess suitability for funding.

- 3.9 Peterborough Community Voluntary Sector (PCVS) to enable them to increase capacity within the voluntary sector by facilitating the recruitment of 5 workers to meet the increased demand for emergency support as a result of COVID19 and to help deliver the outcomes of the Winter Support Grant - (in ensuring that no family goes hungry over the Christmas holidays and beyond). Multifunctional workers will ensure direct access to emergency supplies within the community voluntary sector to make best use of the resources that are available and manage demand for services into the Local Authority. The grant fund requested within this CMDN shall allow PCVS to operate this support.

### Summary of funding

- 4.0 Funding to these organisations has partly made through PCC core funding and funding received from Government as set out below:

Organisation	PCC Funding	DWP Local Welfare Assistance Funding	DWP Winter Support Grant	Total
Citizens Advice	£150,000	£120,000	£24,791	£294,791
Kingsgate Community Church	£55,000	Nil	£40,771.40	£95,771.40
Cambridgeshire Community Fund	Nil	Nil	£20,000	£20,000
PCVS	Nil	Nil	£53,000	£53,000

## 4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Stakeholders have been consulted and the recipients of grant funding.

## 5. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT

- 5.1 Funding of these organisations will help them to deliver vital support to people who have been impacted by the pandemic, particularly over the winter months. This will ensure vulnerable households are able to afford to heat their homes, can access food and address wider financial problems such as debt or budgeting issues.

## 6. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 The Winter Support Grant and Local Welfare Assistance funding has been provided by Government to local authorities specifically to support people meet their energy costs and other essential areas of need, including free school meals during the school holidays. Without this support, organisations will not be able to meet the increased demand for their service and many people will therefore not receive the support they require.

## 7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 7.1 Do not fund the organisations to deliver the support. This has been rejected as the Winter Support Grant has been provided by Government to local authorities specifically to support people meet their energy costs and other essential needs during the pandemic. Not funding

the organisations will result in fewer people receiving the support they need and lead to increased poverty, poor health and increased referrals to statutory services.

## **8. IMPLICATIONS**

### **Financial Implications**

- 8.1 Funding is available via grants provided to the council from Government and core funding as identified in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

### **Legal Implications**

- 8.2 The Council has the legal power to make grant awards under the general power of competence contained in section 1 of the Localism Act 2011.

The Council has considered State Aid in the application of the grants.

Grant agreements shall be issued to all recipients of grant funding.

### **Equalities Implications**

- 8.3 None

### **Carbon Impact Assessment**

- 8.5 As part of the Stay Well project, energy advice will be provided including referrals to agencies that can help to a household improve their energy efficiency through insulation and other measures.

Citizens Advice services are delivered over the phone, or virtually avoiding the need for people to travel to the city centre to access services.

## **9. DECLARATIONS / CONFLICTS OF INTEREST & DISPENSATIONS GRANTED**

- 9.1 *None*

## **10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985) and The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

- 10.1 *None*

## **11. APPENDICES**

- 11.1 *None*