

CABINET MEETING – 13 JULY 2023
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

Title of Report:

Grant Funding to Third Sector organisations providing social care related services

Author(s):

Report of the Director of Adult Services

Purpose of Report:

To seek approval to award funding to Third Sector organisations providing social care related services.

Description of Decision:

Cabinet is requested to approve the award of funding for 2023/2024, in the form of a grant to:

- a) Sunderland People First, who are self-advocacy group for people with learning disabilities and autism, and
- b) Washington Mind, who are the lead partner in a consortium with Sunderland Mind and Sunderland Headlight, providing a My Life Support project to people with mental health needs
- c) Bishopwearmouth Co-operative Community Interest Company to provide day / volunteer placements to adults with disabilities at the Elemore Green Space Project

Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework? Yes

If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework

Suggested reason(s) for Decision:

The Council continues to support the important work of Sunderland People First (SPF). A lack of continued funding would be detrimental to not only the organisation and those it employs, but to people with learning disabilities and autism, who require a locally based, independent self-advocacy group.

The grant funding requested will also sustain the My Life Support Project, which is provided by a consortium of local mental health organisations, led by Washington Mind. Without the funding, the project would either need to reduce capacity, meaning less people would benefit from the support or the project would cease, which would impact on the health and well-being of the people it supports.

Bishopwearmouth Co-operative Community Interest Company provide training and work-based placements for vulnerable adults with disabilities. The Council supports the important work that the organisation does, and the funding enables the organisation to deliver on its important objectives with the aim of improving the lives of people with disabilities. The project also supports one of the Council's key priorities within the Coalfield Neighbourhood Investment Plan following significant resident consultation.

Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected

Do not provide funding to SPF - this option is rejected. Funding from the Council ensures the continued delivery of the organisation's objectives and contributes to the overall sustainability of the organisation.

Do not provide funding to Washington Mind, who are the lead consortium partner in the My Life Support Project – this option is rejected. Without continued funding, the My Life Support project would either need to reduce capacity, meaning less people would benefit from the support or the project may cease, which would impact on the health and well-being of the people it supports

Do not provide funding to Bishopwearmouth - this option is rejected as the funding from the Council contributes to the delivery of the organisation's important aims and objectives and it supports one of the Council's key priorities within the Coalfield Neighbourhood Investment Plan following significant resident consultation.

Impacts analysed;

Equality **Privacy** **Sustainability** **Crime and Disorder**

Is the Decision consistent with the Council's Co-Operative Values? Yes

Is this a "Key Decision" as defined in the Constitution? Yes

Is it included in the 28 day Notice of Decisions? Yes

CABINET – 13 JULY 2023

GRANT FUNDING TO THIRD SECTOR ORGANISATIONS PROVIDING SOCIAL CARE RELATED SERVICES

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ADULT SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval to award funding in the form of a grant to third sector organisations providing social care related services.

2. DESCRIPTION OF DECISION (RECOMMENDATIONS)

- 2.1 Cabinet is requested to approve the award of funding in 2023/2024, in the form of a grant to:
 - a) Sunderland People First, who are self-advocacy group for people with learning disabilities and autism, and
 - b) Washington Mind, who are the lead partner in a consortium with Sunderland Mind and Sunderland Headlight, providing a My Life Support project to people with mental health needs
 - c) Bishopwearmouth Co-operative Community Interest Company to provide day / volunteer placements to adults with disabilities at the Elemore Green Space Project

3. SUNDERLAND PEOPLE FIRST (SPF)

3.1 Introduction/Background

- 3.1.1 Sunderland People First (SPF), who are a self-advocacy group for people with learning disabilities and autism, are a community interest company (CIC) that independently represents and campaigns on behalf people with learning disabilities. They originated and are still based in Sunderland.
- 3.1.2 SPF was originally established in 1994 and until 2014 the group was an in-house Council ran day service for people with learning disabilities. In 2013/2014, as part of the Council's then strategic drive to establish alternative models of service delivery the decision was made to set up SPF as an independent company and the Council took the lead on this, working with external advisors.
- 3.1.3 As a result, SPF was set up and registered with Companies House as a social enterprise, in the form of a Co-operative Community Interest Company and staff from the Council TUPE transferred to the new Company, taking on the legal responsibility for the running of the company and the delivery of its business.
- 3.1.4 By the nature of SPF being a Cooperative CIC, this means that its Board of Directors are employees of the organisation, which includes people with a

learning disability and autism. The Company offers opportunities, for paid and unpaid roles, for people with learning disabilities and autism to become Advocates who take forward the work of SPF. It is people with learning disabilities and autism who have real lived experiences, working on behalf of people with learning disabilities and autism to make positive and important changes.

- 3.1.5 As part of the agreements for externalising SPF from the Council, grant funding was given to SPF to ensure the sustainability of the organisation and to provide it with the financial stability to enable it to build capacity and grow so it could continue deliver on its important aims and objectives.
- 3.1.6 The Council has continued to provide funding to SPF to enable the organisation to continue to carry out its important and valuable work representing; championing and campaigning for the rights of people with a learning disability and autism to make sure that they are seen as equal citizens in society; that they have their voices heard so that they can have the best life; access to and experience of services that they can and that their rights are promoted and upheld.
- 3.1.7 SPF are involved in work locally, regionally and nationally and a brief example of vast amount of the work that SPF does and is involved in includes:
- **Training:** SPF attend and deliver training to a range of audiences such as health and social care staff; people with learning disabilities and autism; universities, schools the NHS and health and social care providers. The training delivered aims to raise the profile of the needs of people with disabilities and autism, improve their lives and improve the services they access.
 - **Campaigns:** Stop People Dying Too Young: SPF have continued to be part of the Stop People Dying Too Young Group, taking part in a video around the abuse at Edenfield Centre, Greater Manchester which was reported in a Panorama documentary. Their recent work has included working to help people with a learning disability, autistic people and family carers understand what coroners do and what inquests are and creating easy read guidance which has been shared nationally and working with partners around Emergency Health Care Plans which set out what should happen if a person needs health care or treatment in an emergency.
 - **Easy Read Information:** The production of Easy Read information which makes written information accessible in an easy read version for people with learning disabilities, including documents for Newcastle University; information on psychological services for military veterans and the Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2021/2022.
 - **Attendance at Working/Steering Groups** to ensure that people with learning disabilities and autism are represented: examples are You Are Not Alone – Menopause Focus Group; Women’s Health Steering Group; CNTW Autism Steering Group; Citizenship Steering Group; Sunderland’s Disability Independent Advisory Group

- **Assurance and Challenge Review Panel:** This was set up in response to the scandal at Cawston Park by NHS England. Whereby everyone with a learning disability or autistic people who were currently in specialist mental health hospitals were to have a review of their care and treatment. Three members of Sunderland People First sat on the North Cumbria and North East review panel.
- **CNTW Chief Executive Interview Panel:** Representatives from SPF were part of the interview Panel for the Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Trust Chief Executive position.
- **Safeguarding Adult Review for Whorlton Hall Enquiry:** Representatives from SPF were invited to sit on the expert panel for the Safeguarding Adult Review for Whorlton Hall Enquiry
- Contributing to and influencing policy developments
- Partnership working with Healthwatch Sunderland

3.2 Current Position

- 3.2.1 SPF are funded via a grant until 31 March 2023. The Council continues to support the important work that SPF does. A lack of continued funding would be detrimental to not only the organisation and those it employs, but to people with learning disabilities and autism, who would require a locally based, independent self-advocacy group.
- 3.2.2 Cabinet approval is being sought to award £80,580.75 to support the organisation.
- 3.3.3 SPF provide quarterly monitoring returns to the Council on how the funding has been spent, along with an annual update report detailing the work that they have carried out. These monitoring arrangements will continue throughout the period of funding.

4. MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT SERVICES – MY LIFE SUPPORT PROJECT

4.1 Introduction/Background

- 4.1.1 In 2017 funding was made available through Strengthening Families to develop and sustain capacity within local organisations to provide support and services to people with mental health needs.
- 4.1.2 Washington Mind, Sunderland Mind and Sunderland Headlight, who are all locally based voluntary sector specialist mental health charities, came together as a partnership to offer the My Life Support Project, with Washington Mind as the lead delivery partner.
- 4.1.3 Bringing together each organisation's own specialist expertise and core service offers, the project promotes practical help with day to day living that people with mental health problems often need in order to stay well and live a full life. This includes the additional social support that they are likely to need in connection with their mental health problem; support that can be crucial in keeping people in

the community and out of costly secondary care. The project provides people with information, advice, support and guidance which are essential factors in service users developing capacity to problem solve and reduce risk of relapse.

4.1.4 The types of activities and support the project offers includes:

- **Listening Ear Project** which offers a range of support.
- **Emotional Support** - listening and emotional support to those service users who are feeling unwell and in crisis and signposts them to appropriate support.
- **Brief Interventions** - structured conversations around specific topics or experiences to motivate positive change and encourage recovery e.g. Self Esteem.
- **Regular Wellbeing Calls** - Biweekly or monthly calls to check in and see how the service user is doing.
- **Graded Exposure into social support** - support with building confidence to engage with groups through a graded exposure approach.
- **Steps to Recovery Group** The course emphasis is based on recovery and encourages participants to access the range of other community-based networks, activities and services currently available in the area. Raised awareness will help to further improve their confidence and wellbeing.
- **Connecting with and providing support to service users in a range of ways**, including social sessions, check in calls, chat calls, listening sessions, advice sessions. Along with groups and activities, one of which recently saw its highest unique attendance since the beginning of 2018. This reflects that group activity is beneficial for wellbeing, and through participation increases a reduction of isolation and loneliness.
- **Drama Groups** - gives adults the opportunity to raise their confidence and self-esteem through an activity that they would not have previously accessed.
- **Peer support Groups** including a Mam's group, which provides a safe, non-judgemental space for the parents to talk with their peers. Several women attend who had felt isolated after giving birth during the pandemic.

4.1.5 The funding provided by the Council contributes to the sustainability of this important project which supports people to stay well, healthy and independent. Without the funding, the projects would either need to reduce capacity, meaning less people would benefit from the support or the projects may cease, which would impact on the health and well-being of the people it supports.

4.2 Current Position

4.2.1 My Life Support is funded via a grant to Washington Mind as the consortium lead partner until 31 March 2023. The Council continues to support the important work of the project and recognises that without continued funding the project would either need to reduce capacity, meaning less people would benefit from the support or the project may cease, which would impact on the health and well-being of the people it supports.

4.2.2 Cabinet approval is being sought to award £99,153.75 to support the project.

4.2.3 Washington Mind, as project lead, provide quarterly monitoring returns to the Council on how the funding has been spent, along with an annual update report detailing the work that they have carried out. These monitoring arrangements will continue throughout the period of funding.

5. BISHOPWEARMOUTH CO-OPERATIVE COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY (CIC)

5.1 Bishopwearmouth Community Interest Company are a co-operative organisation provide training and work-based placements for vulnerable adults with disabilities. The organisation focuses on reducing inequalities for disabled adults and helping support them to move on to greater independence, promote social inclusion, equality and involvement within their local community. The organisation does this through delivering a wide range of horticultural and floristry services.

5.2 The organisation works closely with Sunderland City Council's Bishopwearmouth Horticultural Nursery, which is a Council operated day care service for adults with disabilities. It has also been working with the Council on the development of the Elemore Green Space Project, where it will support training for adults with disabilities in the café and garden centre.

5.3 Cabinet approval is being sought to award £20,000 to support the project.

5.4 Bishopwearmouth Co-operative Community Interest Company will provide quarterly monitoring returns to the Council on how the funding has been spent, along with an annual update report detailing the work that they have carried out.

6. Reasons for the Decision

6.1 The Council continues to support the important work that Sunderland People First (SPF) does. A lack of continued funding would be detrimental to not only the organisation and those it employs, but to people with learning disabilities and autism, who require a locally based, independent self-advocacy group.

6.2 The funding provided by the Council contributes to the sustainability of the My Life Support Project, which is provided by a consortium of local mental health organisations, led by Washington Mind. Without the funding, the project would either need to reduce capacity, meaning less people would benefit from the support or the project would cease, which would impact on the health and well-being of the people it supports.

6.3 Bishopwearmouth Co-operative Community Interest Company provide training and work-based placements for vulnerable adults with disabilities. The Council supports the important work that the organisation does, and the funding enables the organisation to deliver on its important objectives with the aim of improving the lives of people with disabilities. The project also supports one of the

Council's key priorities within the Coalfields Neighbourhood Investment Plan following significant resident consultation.

7. Alternative Options

7.1 **Do not provide funding to SPF** - this option is rejected. Funding from the Council ensures the continued delivery of the organisation's objectives and contributes to the overall sustainability of the organisation.

7.2 **Do not provide funding to Washington Mind, who are the lead consortium partner in the My Life Support Project** – this option is rejected. Without continued funding, the My Life Support project would either need to reduce capacity, meaning less people would benefit from the support or the project would cease, which would impact on the health and well-being of the people it supports

7.3 **Do not provide grant funding to Bishopwearmouth** - this option is rejected as the funding from the Council contributes to the delivery of the organisation's important aims and objectives and it supports one of the Council's key priorities within the Coalfields Neighbourhood Investment Plan following significant resident consultation.

8. Other Relevant Considerations / Consultations

8.1 **Co-operative Values:** Sunderland City Council is a co-operative Council and will act ethically in all its actions whilst adhering to and actively promoting its co-operative values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. These values will underpin our decision making and actions.

8.2 **Financial Implications:** The funding implications are outlined in the main body of the report and it is confirmed that funding is allocated within the Adult Social Care budgets for these projects.

8.3 Legal Implications:

8.3.1 In accordance with Part 4, Section 7 of the Council's Financial Procedure Rules (FPR16 Payment of Grants and Benefits) approval of Cabinet must be sought before Chief Officers provide assistance to any third party by way of loan, grant or guarantee of over £50,000 to any one body in any one financial year.

8.3.2 Subsidy Consideration:

- The financial assistance by way of grants to all three organisations has been considered with reference to the Subsidy Control Act 2022. It is considered, the financial assistance offered to each organisation does not meet the definition of a subsidy under the Act on the basis they are not an enterprise as they carry out primarily non-economic activities with only some small, ancillary economic activity.

- In respect to the persons accessing the services via Washington Mind's My Life Support Project and Bishopwearmouth Community Interest Company, all support services are provided free of charge on entry and the services are not offered within a specified market.
- Although Bishopwearmouth Community Interest Company does have some economic activity via its horticultural and floristry services, these are ancillary to its non-economic activities and exist to support their main objectives by offering day/volunteer opportunities for vulnerable adults at the project
- SPF do not offer services within a market but instead their work involves representing; championing and campaigning for the rights of people with a learning disability and autism to make sure that they are seen as equal citizens in society.
- The terms of the financial assistance being offered to all three organisations will be ring-fenced for use within its non-economic activities only.

