

CABINET MEETING – 22 MARCH 2022

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

Title of Report:

Grant Funding to Third Sector organisations providing social care related services

Author(s):

Report of the Executive Director of Neighbourhoods

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 2022-2023, 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

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 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.

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.

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.

Impacts analysed;

Equality

N/A

Privacy

N/A

Sustainability

N/A

Crime and Disorder

N/A

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 – 22 MARCH 2022

GRANT FUNDING TO THIRD SECTOR ORGANISATIONS PROVIDING SOCIAL CARE RELATED SERVICES

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOODS

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 2022-2023, 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

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 2013/14, 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 an example of the nature of the work that SPF do includes:
- Enabling and supporting people with learning disabilities and autism to stay socially engaged and connected during Covid
 - Training, both attending training courses and also delivering training to a range of audiences such as health and social care staff; people with learning disabilities and autism; schools
 - Taking part in consultations to ensure people with learning disabilities and autism have their views represented
 - Contributing to policy developments
 - Parliamentary Outreach work where they visited the Palace of Westminster to support their forward planning and restoration work.
 - Working with the NHS, including the local NHS and NHS England
 - Quality Checking local health services to ensure that they are accessible to people with learning disabilities and autism and to check that people have a positive experience of using services
 - Health promotion work with people with a learning disability and autism, such as cancer awareness
 - Partnership working with Healthwatch Sunderland
 - Taking part in a national research study looking at the impact of Coronavirus for people with learning disabilities and autism
 - Campaigning on numerous important topics such as:
 - **Right2Home**: this campaign calls on Government to stop use of Mental Health Hospitals for detention of people with learning disabilities and autistic people
 - **STOMP/STAMP**: campaign to make sure that adults, children and young people with a learning disability and/or autism are only prescribed the right medication at the right times and for the right reasons.
 - **Positive about Inclusion**: SPF created a training course for people with a learning disability and autistic people around LGBTQ+.
 - Provision of Easy Read information which makes written information accessible in an easy read version for people with learning disabilities

3.2 Current Position

- 3.2.1 SPF are funded via a grant until 31 March 2022. 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 The Council is therefore seeking approval to continue funding the organisation in 2022/2023 to the value of £101,274.
- 3.2.3 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 2022. 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 The Council is therefore seeking approval to continue funding in 2022-2023 to the value of £100,000.

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. Reasons for the Decision

5.1 The Council continues to support the important work that 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.

5.2 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 may cease, which would impact on the health and well-being of the people it supports.

6. Alternative Options

- 6.1 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.
- 6.2 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. Other Relevant Considerations / Consultations

- 7.1 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.
- 7.2 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.
- 7.3 Legal Implications:** 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.

