

Public Document Pack

**Democratic Services Section
Chief Executive's Department
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS**

6th January, 2017

MEETING OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

In addition to those matters previously notified to you, the following item(s) will also be considered at the meeting to be held at 4.30 pm on Tuesday, 10th January, 2017.

Yours faithfully,

SUZANNE WYLIE

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

- (b) Letter of Variance - Front Line Advice Services (Pages 1 - 12)

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Subject:	<i>DfC Letter of Variance - Front Line Advice Services</i>
Date:	<i>Tuesday 10th January 2016</i>
Reporting Officer:	<i>Nigel Grimshaw (Director of City & Neighbourhood Services)</i>
Contact Officer:	<i>Cate Taggart (Community Development Manager) Clare Mullen (Community Resources Manager)</i>

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	<p>Purpose of Report:</p> <p>The purpose of this report is to invite members to note the correspondence received from The Department for Communities (DfC) on the 16th December with regard to further additional funding for Frontline Advice Services (See appendix 1) and to ask members to agreed to accept the subsequent offer of additional funds.</p>
1.2	<p>Summary of main issues:</p> <p>For members to agree to accept the offer of additional in-year funding of £54,320.00 from DfC. Officers recommend that the additional funding will be allocated to each of the 5 generalist advice consortia based on council's agreed existing allocation model. To support the allocation, each consortium will be required to submit programme proposals in line with the programme objectives for assessment and approval by officers.</p>
1.3	<p>In light of the request for continued financial support from the Belfast Advice Group, officers contacted DfC officials to determine if this additional in-year funding could be used to extend the Citywide Tribunal Service contract. Officials have responded noting this is not permissible, rather the additional offer is conditional on funds being spent on support functions and should be allocated across frontline advice providers in the Belfast area to allow them to purchase support type functions as outlined in Annex A. (See Appendix 1)</p>

2.0	Recommendations												
2.1	<p>Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. accept the offer of additional in-year funding under the Community Support Programme (CSP) from the DfC detailed the Letter of Variance (Appendix 1). ii. consider and agree a mechanism to distribute this additional grant across the five advice consortia based on the agreed allocation model and in line with contract conditions. 												
3.0	Main report												
3.1	<p><u>Letter of Offer</u></p> <p>Correspondence was received on 16 December from the Department for Communities offering further additional in-year funding under the Community Support Programme for Frontline Advice Services. The letter advises that the Voluntary & Community Unit has secured regional funding of £160k with Belfast’s allocation being £54,320 which is conditional on spend in advance of 31 March 2017.</p>												
3.2	<p>The funding is ring-fenced for the delivery of any or all of the objectives outlined in Annex A as part of the LOO. This funding is to enable frontline advice organisations to secure support functions. The funding is in-year and does not require any match funding from BCC.</p>												
3.3	<p><u>Proposed Model of Funding</u></p> <p>Given the time-frame for spend, and the established precedent for front line generalist advice support, officers recommend that this funding is administered using the same model applied in relation to the additional funding received for the Welfare Reform Readiness Programme agreed by committee in October.</p> <p>The table below details the current 2016/17 grant award for each consortium, the previous agreed uplift and this proposed additional grant uplift based on Council’s existing allocation model. The marginal percentage anomaly has been equally spread across neighbourhood consortia to maximise the available budget.</p>												
3.4	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Area</th> <th rowspan="2">Area Alloc. %</th> <th rowspan="2">2016/17 Generalist Advice grant award</th> <th colspan="2">Letter of Variance</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Additional allocation: Welfare Reform Readiness & Training</th> <th>Additional allocation: Frontline Advice Services</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Central</td> <td>10.00</td> <td>£ 82,588.50</td> <td>£26,983.07</td> <td>£5,447.21</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Area	Area Alloc. %	2016/17 Generalist Advice grant award	Letter of Variance		Additional allocation: Welfare Reform Readiness & Training	Additional allocation: Frontline Advice Services	Central	10.00	£ 82,588.50	£26,983.07	£5,447.21
Area	Area Alloc. %				2016/17 Generalist Advice grant award	Letter of Variance							
		Additional allocation: Welfare Reform Readiness & Training	Additional allocation: Frontline Advice Services										
Central	10.00	£ 82,588.50	£26,983.07	£5,447.21									

East	14.41	£134,593.53	£38,849.37	£7,842.72
North	24.71	£241,153.43	£66,564.33	£13,437.68.
South	15.37	£143,538.48	£41,432.51	£8,364.19
West	35.37	£329,891.59	£95,247.97	£19,228.19
Total	99.86	£931,765.53	£269,077.26	£54,320.00

3.5

If this approach is agreeable, each consortium will be required to submit proposals outlining how they intend to meet the programme objectives.

3.6

Following Committee decision, officers will initiate pre-contract discussions with organisations to discuss the proposed 2016/17 grant revision and to outline any specific conditions attached to the funding offer. Officers will assess and approve individual submissions. Further conditions may be attached to letters of offer as deemed necessary.

Members should note that all funding agreements will continue to be subject to receipt of satisfactory monitoring reports.

4.0

4.1.

Financial & Resource Implications

Financial:

Any additional funding contracts issued will be wholly dependent upon additional income from the Department for Community. There is no requirement for BCC match funds.

4.2

Human Resources

Officer assistance and support

4.3

Equality or Good Relations Implications

None

5.0

Appendices

Appendix 1: DfC Letter of Variance Cover Letter

Appendix 2: DfC Letter of Variance

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Ms Suzanne Wylie
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Donegall Place
Belfast
BT1 5GS

Voluntary and Community Division
Level 3, The Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast BT7 2JB
Telephone: (028) 9082 9441
Facsimile: (028) 9082 9422
Email: Elaine.downey@communities-ni.gov.uk

Date: 16 December 2016

Dear Ms Wylie,

Re: Community Support Programme 2016-17: Letter of Variance – Frontline Advice Services.

I am pleased to advise you that the Voluntary and Community Division (VCD) has secured an additional £160k for the Community Support Programme in 2016/17. This funding is ring-fenced for the delivery of any or all of the objectives outlined at **Annex A** to enable front line advice organisations to secure support functions directly.

The funding is in year and must be spent by the 31 March 2017. Councils are not required to match this additional funding which much be used to meet the specific objectives referred to above. Additional funding will not be extended into the next financial year.

If you are unable to make use of this additional funding for the purposes outlined, and within the financial year, please alert me as soon as possible. This may allow the Department to re-allocate funds to community support welfare reforms advice provision in other council areas.

If you have any queries about the purpose of these additional funds please contact either:

Donna-Marie Hancock (Donna-Marie.Hancock@communities-ni.gov.uk Tel 028 90829406), or
Pauline Murray (Pauline.murray@communities-ni.gov.uk or Tel 028 90829402).

Yours sincerely

Elaine Downey
Advice Services and Programme Delivery Team
Voluntary and Community Division

Objectives for CSP Delivery of Frontline Advice Services

Management Information Systems

- Provide training identified at a local level for frontline advice service staff and volunteers to support the delivery of the Advice Strategy (Excludes Welfare Reform Training).
- Ensure ongoing training in relation to all aspects of case recording and Management Information Systems.

Training

- Provide general training.
- Provide range of other training initiatives.

Sustainability

- Explore the potential for frontline advice offices to become more sustainable, through options such as social enterprise or development of new services.

IT/Digital

- Promote the availability of information and move towards advice tools which are online and or have a web presence.

Local Signposting and Referrals

- Ensure signposting/referral guides are updated, distributed and in use.

Local Merger Support

- Further develop effective collaborative processes to support mergers, consortiums and other forms of collaborative working.

Local Publications and Awareness

- Develop local guides in line with the Northern Ireland Advice Quality Standard.

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**Ms Suzanne Wylie
Belfast City Council
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Donegall Place
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BT1 5GS**

Voluntary and Community Division
Level 3, The Lighthouse Building
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road
Belfast BT7 2JB
Telephone: (028) 9082 9441
Facsimile: (028) 9082 9422
Email: Elaine.downey@communities-ni.gov.uk

Date: 16 December 2016

Dear Ms Wylie,

Community Support Programme: Letter of Variance for 2016-2017

Revised Approval

The purpose of this letter is to amend the **Belfast City Council's** Community Support Programme (CSP) Letter of Offer dated **31st March 2016**, following the Department's decision to revise the financial offer by allocating funding for Frontline Advice Services. The figure "Frontline Advice Services" shows your Council's additional allocation. Accordingly upon your Council's acceptance of this offer as hereinafter provided, the said Letter of Offer shall be amended and have effect as if:-

for third paragraph beginning "The award is as follows "for the words

Community Support General	£863,964.00
Advice Grant	£540,036.00
Welfare Reform Readiness *	£203,677.26
Welfare Reform Training *	£65,400.00
Pride of Place Gala Awards	£10,000.00
Total Community Support Award for 2016-17	£1,683,077.26

*Note: Council is not required to match fund the Welfare Reform Readiness and Welfare Reform Training Grants.

There was substituted the words

Community Support General	£863,964.00
Advice Grant	£540,036.00
Welfare Reform Readiness *	£203,677.26
Welfare Reform Training *	£65,400.00
Pride of Place Gala Awards	£10,000.00
Frontline Advice Services	£54,320.00
Total Community Support Award for 2016-17	£1,737,397.26

*Note: Council is not required to match fund the Welfare Reform Readiness and Welfare Reform Training Grants.

Acceptance

This letter is issued in duplicate and accordingly if your council is prepared to accept the variance to the original Letter of Offer and Memorandum of Understanding please return one complete copy of this letter duly signed and dated on behalf of the council.

Failure to return the signed documentation within 28 days from the date of this letter **shall** result in the revised offer being deemed as withdrawn.

Yours sincerely

Elaine Downey
Advice Services and Programme Delivery Team
Voluntary and Community Division

1. OFFICIAL GRANT ACCEPTANCE

I _____ have authority **on behalf of**
(Name of Chief Executive in Block Capitals)

(Name of Council in Block Capitals)

accept the revised offer of Grant set out in the Letter of Variance dated 16 December 2016 and agree to deliver the above programme on the terms and conditions contained in the Letter of Offer and the Memorandum of Understanding dated **31st March 2016**.

_____ Date _____

Signed Chief Executive

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