



Subject:	Welfare Reform Support Project Funding - Department for Communities
Date:	19 January 2018
Reporting Officer:	Nigel Grimshaw, Director City and Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Cate Taggart, Community Development Manager

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes No

If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision

After Council Decision

Some time in the future

Never

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in?

Yes No

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Note correspondence received from the Department for Communities (DfC) 12th January 2018 seeking Council's support to facilitate funding of Citizen Advice for the provision of frontline advice services in relation to Welfare Reform;▪ Seek Member agreement for Council to facilitate the payment of £64,589.43 to Citizen Advice for frontline welfare reform services to be delivered by 31st March 2018;▪ Note that the funding will be administered through the Community Support Programme, the Council's current funding contract with the DfC. A letter of variance will be issued.

2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Agree the request from DfC to administer funding for the Welfare Reform Support Project to Citizen Advice through the current Community Support Programme arrangement pending receipt of the formal Letter of Variance.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>In preparation for the introduction and roll-out of Welfare Reform, DfC has supported front-line advice organisations via grant-aid and capacity development. The Council currently administers an annual grant programme of £931,765 for generalist advice, with levered income via the DfC’s Community Support Programme, to five Advice Consortia covering east, north, south, west and central Belfast for generalist advice services.</p>
3.2	<p>At December’s People and Communities Committee meeting, Members agreed to accept an additional in-year allocation of £61,103 from DfC through the Community Support Programme towards the provision of the City-Wide Tribunal Service.</p>
3.3	<p>DfC is now seeking support from Council to facilitate payment of £64,589.43 to Citizen Advice for the provision of frontline services relating to welfare reform. The total funding allocation covers the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Belfast Citizens Advice Adviser Salaries (6 Advisers): Total £44,234.94 for period 1 October 2017 – 31 March 2018 ▪ Hosting Costs: Total £11,349.74 for 2017/2018 year ▪ Additional Welfare Reform Support: Total £5,404.75 for 2017/2018 year ▪ Training Package for 6 Welfare Reform Advisers @ £600 each, total £3,600.00 for year 2017/2018
3.4	<p>This additional allocation of £64,589.43 will be administered via the current Community Support Programme arrangements with DfC and a letter of variance will be issued.</p>

3.5	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>The funding does not require BCC to match funds. All expenditure relating to the project must be incurred before the end of the 2017/18 financial period.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p>
3.6	<p>The programme is Citywide and open and accessible to all sections of the community.</p>
4.0	<p>Appendices – Documents Attached</p>
	<p>Appendix 1: Letter from DfC</p>