
Cabinet

06 March 2018

Names of Cabinet Members:

Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities – Councillor A Kham

Cabinet Member for Community Development – Councillor L Bigham

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Deputy Chief Executive (People)

Ward(s) affected:

All

Title:

“Building Bridges” – Successful Bid to the Controlling Migration Fund.

Is this a key decision?

No - The Council’s Constitution requires Cabinet or Cabinet Member approval for confirmation of the receipt of grant funding outside of budget setting. As this report covers a successful award of £ 972,472 over areas that are of interest to a number of Cabinet Members this report is presented to full Cabinet for approval.

Executive Summary:

The Government established a £140m Controlling Migration Fund in November 2016 seeking bids from local authorities to manage the impact of increased migration on local communities. The City Council alongside other partners has been awarded £ 972,472 over a 2 year period. As this falls outside of the budget setting process, approval to receive the grant is required. The Council along side several voluntary sector partners has developed a project entitled “Building Bridges”. The project highlights the need to further strengthen Community Cohesion in the city as well as addressing an increased demand on services. The bid also acknowledges the challenges for some newly arrived communities and the limited access to some key services that are further pressured by new arrivals in the city.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is requested to:

- 1) Approve acceptance of grants totalling £ 972,472 over a 2 year period from the Controlling Migration Fund.
- 2) Authorise the City Council to act as accountable body for the project and delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (People).
- 3) Agree to enter into the appropriate grant aid agreements with project partners.

List of Appendices included:

None

Background papers:

None

Other useful documents

None

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: “Building Bridges” – Successful Bid to the Controlling Migration Fund.

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 In November 2016 the then Department for Communities and Local Government announced the Controlling Migration Fund totalling £140 million with £100 million allocated to the “Local Services” element which local authorities could bid against and £40 million for targeted enforcement activities.
- 1.2 As a result of increased migration, local authorities have highlighted a variety of issues impacting on their localities. Authorities were invited to bid and demonstrate how their proposals would benefit the established resident community. The funding rules prevent it being used to duplicate mainstream provision.
- 1.3 Coventry is a “City of Sanctuary” and has a strong track record in this area. A bid was developed using “Coventry’s Local Migration Network” a consortium from the voluntary and statutory sector partners who looked at opportunities to further strengthen the community fabric of the city.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

2.1 Coventry’s Proposal - Building Bridges:

- 2.2 Coventry’s successful bid highlighted the need to further strengthen Community Cohesion in the city as well as addressing an increased demand on services. The bid also acknowledges the challenges for some newly arrived communities and the limited access to some key services that are further pressured by new arrivals in the city.
- 2.3 The bid aims to reduce the impact of migration on host communities and reduce pressure on some service areas. The bid identified the following work streams to address the issues identified.
- 2.4 **Learn/IAG:** This strand will embed ESOL classes within communities by carrying out ‘train the trainer’ sessions, recruiting fluent English speaking volunteers who will lead future sessions to build sustainability. CRMC will also deliver Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) sessions for newly-arrived migrants as they often make unintentional errors due to lack of knowledge of existing systems. Although time limited, information from sessions will feed into an app, which will widen access and capacity.
- 2.5 **Give Back:** This strand will place 60 migrants per year within volunteering roles at various local organisations. Upon completion of the programme, Church of Assisi will work closely with participants in support of their learning, employment and skills development and work towards at least 80% of participants going on to do other volunteering placements for no less than 7 hours per week. In total, this will create 25,128 hours of additional capacity for the voluntary sector in a year and will improve the skills and experience of participants.
- 2.6 **Independent living:** This strand will introduce a letting agency for migrants to the city. Recruiting a dedicated Letting Manager, CRMC will work with local landlords to support more refugees into private accommodation, challenging and overcoming entrenched issues such as the perceived risks of accepting tenants on benefits.
- 2.7 **Youth:** A specialist youth charity, Positive Youth Foundation, will deliver a tailored programme of integration for around 500 young people per year. ‘School Aid Hubs’ will provide intensive support and care and ‘Community Aid Hubs’, based within specialist youth centres will ensure a socially secure environment, benefitting both host and migrant children.

- 2.8 Unfortunately one element of the original bid “Unite through Culture” (£ 103k) which would have been delivered in partnership with Foleshill Women’s Training was not successful and officers are investigating alternative sources of funding for this important work.
- 2.9 The revised outcomes for the project are identified as:
- 20% increase in the number of people from the host community who feel more positively about migration and its impact on public services in Coventry,
 - 30% increase in the number of Coventry migrants who feel more independent and less reliant on public services.
 - 20% increase in the number of Coventry migrants who feel more welcomed and integrated into Coventry life.
- 2.10 Officers did consider the option to not make a bid for this fund. The fund is entitled “Controlling Migration Fund” and aspects of the intent for the funding is to support UK Government policy. This fund however remains the only public funding available to support the impact of national migration policy on local communities and as such recognition was given to the benefits of working with voluntary sector partners to find appropriate proposals which might support community cohesion in the City and facilitate improved outcomes for Coventry’s diverse population.
- 2.11 Alongside the recent successful award of funding from an EU fund “MiFriendly Cities” this funding will provide the City Council with valuable additional resources to manage the impact of migration locally and importantly financial support to three key voluntary sector partners who already successfully work with refugee and migrant communities.
- 2.12 Both “Building Bridges” and “MiFriendly Cities” reflect the response of the Council to recent trends in migration and the impact of this on local services. In response to this officers are developing a partnership approach to overseeing resources and needs based activity to meet the needs of our newly arrive communities. This will be led by a multi-agency steering group soon to be established and chaired by the Director of Public Health.

Local Authority Asylum Support Liaison Officers (LAASLOs)

- 2.13 In addition to the above the Council along with all other asylum dispersal cities was also recently invited to bid for £ 100,000 to support the appointment of two Local Authority Asylum Support Liaison Officers. The primary focus of these officers is to deliver a tailored support service for new refugees to facilitate their transition into mainstream society during their move on period by providing advice and information on essential services.
- 2.14 Following these principles, Coventry City Council submitted a successful bid focussing on the importance of connecting asylum seekers to available services whilst they live in the City and preparing them in advance for both a positive and negative decision from the asylum process through these officers.
- 2.15 Supporting early intervention and helping the Council and wider partners to reduce the number of migrants without a valid immigration status, the officers will enable the Council to have a better understanding of the needs of this vulnerable client group.
- 2.16 These officers will also act as a key link between the Home Office, G4S (the Home Office accommodation provider) and the Council for the c550 asylum seekers who at any one time are accommodated in the City awaiting a decision on their asylum claim.

2.17 A key outcome of this funding will be to help reduce unwanted demand on local services as well as have a positive impact on our already established diverse communities. For this part of the bid match funding for the posts was needed for year 2. This will be resourced via the reallocation of other Migration budgets (c £80k).

3. Results of consultation undertaken

3.1 Consultation regarding the proposed funding bid was carried out with internal and external partners taking part in the Coventry Local Migration Network, from which bidding consortia emanated. Each of the organisations taking part in the bid carried out engagement with individuals accessing their services and other stakeholders to determine gaps in provision which this funding might be utilised for.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1.1 Having taken several months to determine this application the now Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has requested approval for the receipt of the grant by 28 Feb 2018 to enable them to transfer the funds by 13 March 2018. Accordingly urgency procedures have been invoked and this report provides confirmation and oversight of this decision.
- 4.1.2 Expenditure is planned to be made during the next two financial years culminating in March 2020. It is not anticipated that there will be any requirement for utilisation of the grant to be extended. More likely is that the City Council will seek to develop further successful bids to this fund.

5. Comments from the Director of Finance and Corporate Services

5.1 Financial implications

- 5.1.1 The total grant award is £ 972,472 of Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) funding with the City Council proposing to be the accountable body for the project. The Council will directly receive £ 341,240 as shown in the table below.
- 5.1.2 As Accountable Body, Council officers will ensure effective governance arrangements are in place to facilitate appropriate control over the allocation of resources and spend against the approved programme outlined above.
- 5.1.3 The grant will be paid in advance and the Council will manage payments to partners.
- 5.1.4 The funding for LAASLOs requires match funding for year 2. This match will be met from within other migration budgets.

5.1.5 Grant breakdown

Building Bridges			
Lead agency	Amount requested-2018-19	Amount requested-2019-20 (3% Inflation rate)	Project management costs breakdown
Coventry City Council	£123,000	£118,240	Project Management/Admin Development of App
Give Back-Foodbank/Love Coventry/Church of Assisi	£58,500	£60,255	
Young People - Positive Youth Foundation	£65,760	£67,733	
Learn / independent Living - Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre	£175,854	£181,130	
External provider TBC	£12,000	£10,000	External project Evaluation.
Total Building Bridges	£435,114	£437,358	
Local Authority Asylum Support Liaison Officers (LAASLOs)			
Coventry City Council	£ 100,000	0	Recruitment of 2 posts.
Total grant funding offered over 2 years	£972,472		

5.2 Legal implications

None

6. Other implications

6.1 How will this contribute to the Council Plan (www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/)

The Council Plan includes a focus on vulnerable groups living in the City. Whilst this project will focus on all newly arrived communities living in the City and links to the host community, specific aspects of the project are intended to provide improved support to asylum seekers dispersed to the City who are amongst some of the most deprived residents living in the City.

6.2 How is risk being managed?

A risk register has been developed for this project and will be monitored by this group. Funding provided to voluntary sector partners will have clear outcomes and KPIs identified which will be monitored by the City Council's Project Manager.

As described in section 2.12 a Newly Arrived Communities steering group chaired by the Director of Public Health will shortly be established which will maintain oversight of this project and other activity related to migration and newly arrived communities.

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

The successful bid includes funding for two City Council posts to project manage “Building Bridges” and contribute to service delivery. Additionally funding is provided for marketing and communications around the project and this may be provided internally or via one of the partners. Two officers will also be appointed as Local Authority Asylum Support Liaison Officers along with similar officers in other West Midlands asylum dispersal authorities.

6.4 Equalities / EIA

The successful implementation of “Building Bridges” is likely to have a positive impact on equalities in the City. Many of the elements of this programme are designed to assist and support some of the most economically disadvantaged communities in the City.

Residents from ethnic minorities and who are newly arrived will make up a significant proportion of those taking part in the various elements of the programme with work focusing on skills development, employment and training support, securing affordable and appropriate housing. It will demonstrate that the Council is meeting its statutory duty in promoting equality of opportunity to employment and in promoting community cohesion, through enabling migrants and residents from well-established communities to live and work together.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

There are no direct environmental impacts from implementation of this project.

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

The funding will have a positive implication for the voluntary sector by bringing in additional resources, capacity and infrastructure into the city. The funding also aims to further promote community cohesion and enhance the contribution residents from diverse communities are making towards the economy and more importantly the social fabric of the city.

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